

Tappan Presbyterian Association
LIBRARY.

Presented by HON. D. BETHUNE DUFFIELD.

From Library of Rev. Geo. Duffield, D.D.



Geo Duffield

Section _____

No. _____

BS
649
J5
L96



A

296 29

3960.

DISSERTATION

ON THE

CONVERSION AND RESTORATION

OF THE

J E W S:

WHEREIN IT IS SHEWN, THAT THE TIME WHEN THESE IMPORTANT
EVENTS ARE DESTINED TO HAPPEN, IS, IN ALL
PROBABILITY, VERY NEAR.

ISAIAH xliii. 21.

"This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise."

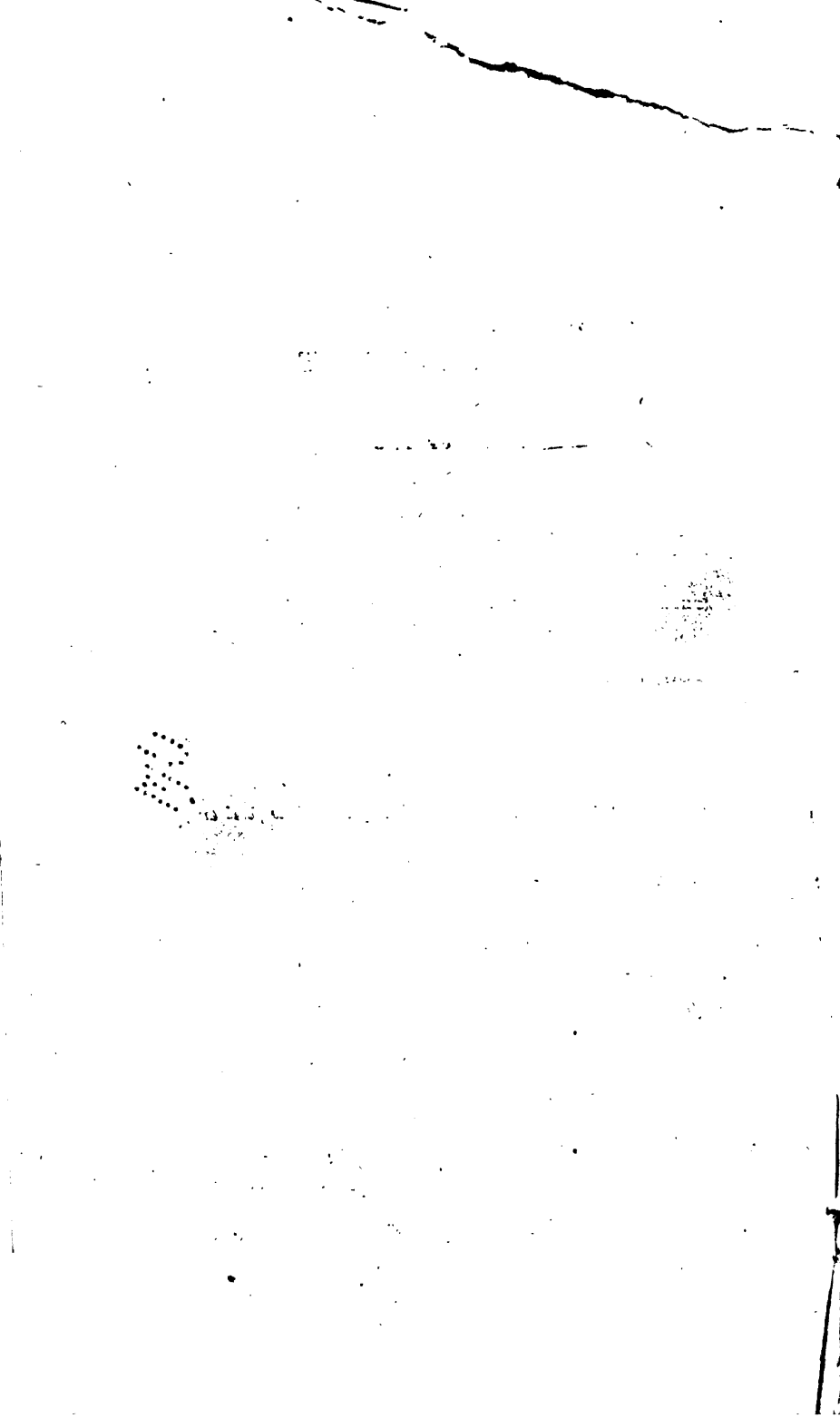
BY JAMES LUNN,

PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL.

EDINBURGH:

Printed by J. MORREN, for the AUTHOR, and sold by
the principal Booksellers in Great Britain.

1804.



Gift
Tajjiman Press, Cal.
1931-11-1931

T H E

P R E F A C E.



THE events that have lately taken place in Europe, and those which are likely to result from the war in which we are at present engaged, are so great, important, and interesting, that one cannot help being anxious to know whether God is leading us in the course of his Providence, and saying as the prophet did to the angel, Dan. x. 6. "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" or, as it is in Isa. xxi. 11. "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" or, How much of this long night of trouble is past, and how much is there yet to come? or, When will it be morning? To solve this important question, to shew, if possible, what part of the prophecies corresponds with the present times; which
of

PREFACE.

of the vials we are at present under, and from thence to form a rational conjecture concerning the time when the great events mentioned in the prophecies are destined to happen, was, in part, my design in writing the following discourse; in which, though I have not had all the success I could wish, yet I have succeeded so far. I have made it exceeding probable, that the principal step of Antichrist's fall will be either in the year 12 or 28 of the present century; and that his final overthrow will be at least an hundred years sooner than the time that Lowman and Bishop Newton have set for it. I could have said a great deal more in proof of this point, and have actually done it in a separate treatise, *On the Rise and Fall of the Papacy*, which I intended to have published along with this, *On the Conversion of the Jews*; but am unable, through want of health and bodily infirmity, to bear the fatigue of doing it at present.

A
DISSERTATION
ON THE
CONVERSION AND RESTORATION
OF
THE JEWS.

A DISCOURSE ON ROMANS xi. 11.

*I Say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall?
God forbid: but through their fall salvation is come
to the Gentiles, to provoke them to jealousy.*

THE design of the Apostle in this and the two preceding chapters, is to vindicate the justice, wisdom, and goodness of the Almighty, in one of the most remarkable dispensations of his providence that has ever happened since the beginning of time; I mean, the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews. And, in prosecution of this design, he first shows us, that the divine conduct, in this dispensation, was perfectly agreeable to the natural notions that men have of equity and justice: That the blessings of the gospel, like all the other benefits which God has bestowed upon men, are the
A effects

effects of his own free bounty and goodness; and as none of his creatures could be supposed to have any claim upon him, so it was wholly in his option, whether to bestow these blessings at all on mankind or not, and to confer them upon whom, and in whatsoever measure, he pleased. He might have mercy on whom he would have mercy; and there could be no injustice in denying that to some, which he was not obliged to bestow upon any: That as the potter hath power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour; so was the great Creator of the world at liberty, not only to make his creatures of different ranks and orders, and to endue them with different talents and capacities, but even, of the same race and order of beings, to raise some to higher degrees of perfection and happiness than others, and to place them in circumstances more or less advantageous, as to his infinite wisdom should seem most proper, for answering the wise ends of his providence. He reasons also from analogy, which is the surest guide to man in all his inquiries into the nature of God's moral government; and shows us, that the conduct of Providence, in choosing the Gentiles to be his church and people in the room of the Jews, is exactly conformable to the dispensations of his grace in former ages. He instances in the case of Isaac, who was the only person, of all the numerous posterity of Abraham, that God chose to be the father of his church, and heir of the promises: As likewise in that of Jacob, who was preferred to the same honour, in the room of his elder brother Esau, who was the natural heir: and betwixt whose rejection, and that
of

of the Jews, there was, on this account, the greater resemblance; "For unto them," as the Apostle observes, "pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law," &c. But the same sensual and worldly disposition which cost Esau his birth-right, proved also the cause of their rejection; for being more concerned for their temporal welfare than for their eternal happiness, and more ambitious of the riches and honours of this present life than of the joys of a better, they despised their Messiah, because his coming did not answer their carnal and groundless expectations. He likewise vindicates the justice of Providence in rejecting the Jews, from the nature of those sins which brought this judgment upon them; *viz.* their unbelief and disobedience to the call of the gospel: and certainly it was but reasonable, that they who would not embrace the gospel, when in their offer, should be deprived of its benefits and privileges; that they should be rejected from being the people of God, who had rejected the message of his only Son, resisted the testimony of the holy Spirit, and hardened themselves against the most powerful means of conviction. And having vindicated the justice of this dispensation, the Apostle proceeds, in the verse we have now read, and those which follow, to illustrate the wisdom and goodness thereof. He shows us, that the Almighty, in rejecting the Jews, had not acted arbitrarily or without reason, much less from any pleasure he had in their sufferings, nor yet merely from a regard to his authority, or as a punishment upon them for their unbelief and disobedience to the call of the gospel, though it was such as mighty sufficiently justify the

divine

divine conduct towards them ; but chiefly from a view to the good of the rest of mankind, as this gave occasion to the preaching of the gospel among the Gentiles, and contributed both to the propagation of the Christian religion at first in the world, and was also a means of preserving and maintaining it in after ages. “ I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles.”

In discoursing farther from these words, I propose, through divine assistance, first, To explain the words ; and, then, To deduce from them a few observations, one or more of which I shall prosecute as your time will allow.

First, I am to explain the words. The design of this verse, as it stands connected with the preceding context, is to prevent a mistake concerning the doctrine there inculcated. The Apostle had asserted, that God intended to cast off the Jews from being his people, and to exclude them from the church of Christ ; and, in proof of this, had cited two passages from the Old Testament, where the blindness and infidelity of that people are foretold. But that none might mistake his meaning, as if that blindness was to be perpetual, or to last for ever, he adds, “ I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall :” as if he had said, I have shown it is the will of God, that the Jews, for their abuse of his mercies, their unbelief and disobedience to the call of the gospel, should be rejected from being his people, and deprived of all the advantages they enjoyed from so honourable a relation ; that they should be excluded from the church of Christ, and given up to a spirit of blindness
and

and infidelity; and have endeavoured to vindicate the divine justice, in inflicting this dreadful judgment upon them: but would not be so understood, as if God intended to leave them in this deplorable state, nor ever more to receive them into his favour. I am persuaded of the contrary, not only from the predictions of the former prophets, who have foretold a glorious restoration to the people of God in the latter days, but also from the testimony of the holy Spirit, who has been graciously pleased to grant me a particular revelation of this, for my own and the church's comfort: *viz.* That there is a time coming, when the Lord shall bring back the captivity of Israel, and again acknowledge them for his people; when the veil shall be removed from their hearts, in the reading of the scriptures, and their eyes opened, to see the accomplishment of them in the person of our Saviour. It is not therefore the design of Providence to cast off the Jews for ever, but only to exclude them from the church for a time, in order to make way for the conversion of the Gentiles; neither is it to be considered so much as a token of his aversion to the former, as of his love and mercy to the latter. As the wise Governor of the world never acts arbitrarily, or without reason, in any of his dealings with his creatures, but least of all in the distribution of punishment; so his severity to the Jews is intended for good to the rest of mankind, and hath, in fact, been productive of the greatest blessings to the world in general, as it has been a means of spreading the gospel among the Gentiles, of enlightening the understanding, and reforming the lives of many thousands of mankind formerly sunk in superstition and vice, of purifying their

their hearts by faith, and bringing them, through the knowledge of the truth, to a state of eternal happiness in a better world; which happy effects of the gospel are intended, in the wisdom of God, to be a means of bringing the Jews to repentance, and the acknowledgment of the truth as it is in Christ, by exciting in them a holy emulation to see the Gentiles substituted in their stead, and possessed of all those distinguishing blessings and privileges which they, as the people of God, formerly enjoyed.

From the words thus explained, these observations do naturally occur: First, That the fall of the Jews was the rise of the Gentiles; or, That the rejecting of the gospel by the former, was a means of propagating the Christian religion at first in the world, and also of preserving and maintaining it in after ages. Secondly, That this apostasy of the Jews is not final, or to continue for ever; but, at a time appointed by infinite wisdom, to end in their conversion to the Christian faith, and restoration to their former privileges.

First, I say, The fall of the Jews was the rise of the Gentiles: To this end it contributed several ways; 1st, As it was that chiefly which gave occasion to the preaching of the gospel among the Gentiles.

The Apostles, having been educated in all the false principles and tenets of the corrupt Jewish church, had, at first, this notion in common with the rest of their countrymen, that the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom belonged only to them, and that the Gentiles were still to be excluded from the church of God. They thought, that the promises made to the Patriarchs extended only to their posterity, or natural offspring; and as salvation was of the Jews, so they alone

alone were to partake of it. The Jews had received so many tokens of the divine favour, had met with so many temporal deliverances, and so long enjoyed the inestimable blessing of being the peculiar church and people of God, that they began to presume on the divine goodness, and to think themselves possessed of his favour by a kind of hereditary and indefeasible right. The Gentiles, on the other hand, had been so long in a state of distance and alienation from God, so long excluded from his church, and under the power of darkness and superstition, that the Jews began to despair of their recovery, and to think that God, in punishment of their idolatry and wilful desertion of the truth, had given them over to a final blindness and impenitence; which mistake, for some time, possessed the minds of the Apostles, as well as the rest of their countrymen. Though there are many passages that expressly foretel the calling of the Gentiles, and that all kingdoms of the earth were to be blessed in the Messiah, and Christ himself had let fall several hints concerning his design of bringing the Gentiles into his church, and admitting them to the privileges of the gospel, yet such was the force of their prejudices, that, at first, they neither understood the one or the other, but continued, for several years, to preach the gospel to the Jews only. Accordingly we find, that when a door of mercy was to be opened to the Gentiles by the ministry of Peter, the Spirit of God thought it necessary to remove his prejudices, and prepare him for that office, by a vision from heaven: That his brethren, when they understood that he had dispensed gospel-privileges to those of another nation, questioned him somewhat sharply

sharply for it : and on declaring to them his commission and authority for what he had done, they express themselves with a kind of surprize, that plainly discovers their former ignorance of God's merciful designs towards the Gentiles ; “ Then hath God also “ to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life :” Acts xi. 18. Partly from these prejudices, and partly from the love they bore to their native country, a passion which is always strongest in virtuous minds, they continued for several years preaching the gospel, chiefly with a view to the conversion of their own nation : But after many unsuccessful attempts, finding the greater part of them hardened in unbelief, and deaf to the voice both of scripture and reason, and that instead of obeying the call, and welcoming the glad tidings of the gospel, they blasphemed its blessed Author, and reviled and persecuted his ministers ; this opened their eyes, and lessened that extravagant opinion they had of their own nation, and as the Jews sunk in the one scale, the Gentiles rose in the other. This effectually removed their prejudices, and rendered them more zealous and active in carrying on the great work of publishing among the Gentiles the principles and doctrines of Christ. That this was the effect which the unbelief of the Jews had upon the Apostles, we learn from the history of their Acts ; where we are told, that, upon an occasion of the Apostles preaching the gospel at Antioch, when the Jews, who were in that city, opposed his doctrine, contradicted and blasphemed, as it is said, then he and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, “ It was necessary that the word of God should first have been “ spoken to you : but seeing you put it from you, “ and

“ and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life,
 “ lo, we turn to the Gentiles :” Acts xiii. 46.

2dly, The unbelief of the Jews contributed to the conversion of the Gentiles, as it afforded them one of the strongest proofs of the truth of the gospel : I mean, a testimony in its favour from those that were its bitterest enemies ; for though the Jews denied the truth of the gospel, yet they acknowledged the greater part of the facts on which the proof of it is founded. They not only acknowledged, that there was such a person as Jesus Christ, who was the Author of the Christian religion—that he lived in Judea, and at such a time, and was put to death by the command of the Roman governor, but likewise many other facts, that tend more directly to prove the truth of the gospel. For example, they acknowledged, that he was a worker of miracles ; or that, in proof of his divine mission, he performed many wonderful works, such as, to the nature of them, or the manner in which they were wrought, exceeded all the art of man, or the power of natural causes. This, both the Jews and other enemies of Christianity, in ancient times, acknowledged ; and in order to evade the force of it, foolishly endeavoured to account for it by the power of magic, or some other hypothesis still more ridiculous and absurd.

They acknowledged, that he was born of mean parents, or those whose worldly circumstances were poor and low ; and, consequently, such as could not enable them to give him a liberal education. This was a matter of some importance to the Christian cause ; for from hence it was evident, as it still is, that neither the miracles he wrought, nor the sublime

discourses with which he entertained the people, could be the effect of great learning, or a superior knowledge of the mysteries and powers of nature. Another fact, acknowledged by the Jews of old, and which contributed greatly to the conversion of the Gentiles, is, that our Saviour never made any attempt upon the government, or discovered any signs of such a design. He never put on any of the ensigns of royalty, or affected the style and title of a king. He never employed his authority with the people, to excite them to rebellion, or exhorted them to take up arms, in order to force his way to the throne, though he wanted not motives to tempt him to such an enterprize, as he was descended from a race of ancestors that had for many ages swayed the sceptre over the Jewish nation; had a numerous party among the people, that, upon the least intimation of such a design, would have been ready to assert his pretensions; and the nation in general was, at that time, weary of the Roman yoke, and ripe for a revolt: yet, in spite of all these advantages, and so great a prospect of success, he never made any attempt to seize the government, or discovered the smallest signs of a worldly ambition. This they acknowledged; and for this they rejected him. But what procured him the scorn and contempt of the Jews, has, in all ages, raised his esteem among the Gentiles, and contributed very much to the confirmation of their faith; for hereby it is evident, that it was neither the love of riches, nor power, nor any temporal motive whatever, that induced him to act the part that he did. It must indeed be owned, that the history of our Saviour's trial seems to contradict what we have now asserted.

asserted. We there find him accused by the Jews, of perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, and making himself a king: But this they did, not because they had any evidence of his ever having acted in this manner; but they drew it as a consequence, from a very different part which our Saviour is indeed acknowledged to have acted: he owned, that he was the Messiah, the Saviour foretold by the Prophets: but the Messiah, according to their notions of him, was to be a temporal prince and deliverer; and therefore they concluded, that whoever pretended to the one character, must necessarily be supposed to have laid claim to the other. Besides, as the falsehood of this charge immediately appeared upon the examination of the witnesses, there is reason to believe, that the Jews afterwards gave it up: which leads me to another fact, acknowledged by the Jews of old, and which must have contributed greatly to the conversion of the Gentiles; and that is, our Saviour's public acquittal at the bar of Pilate. They could not deny, that his conduct was there freely exposed to the examination of those who wanted neither capacity nor inclination to do it; and yet all their malice could not fasten one blot upon his character, or prove him guilty of the smallest offence, either against the laws of God or man. This the governor declared oftener than once, in the hearing of the multitude; and though, to ingratiate himself with them, as he was already obnoxious to them on several accounts, and for fear lest they should accuse him to Cesar, he at last consented to our Saviour's crucifixion, yet it was with all the signs of reluctance, and not till he had tried every

every possible method to appease their rage. As this was a transaction of a very public nature, carried on in broad day-light, and before a vast multitude of spectators of different nations, the Jews, notwithstanding their prejudices, cannot be supposed to have denied it.

But the most important of all the facts, which the Jews of old acknowledged concerning our Saviour, and which contributed most to the conversion of the Gentiles, are those relating to his death and resurrection; such as, the supernatural darkness that happened at the time of his passion; the earthquake that followed it; the rending of the rocks, and the vail of the temple. These were all facts of a public nature, and the subject of every body's observation; and therefore we cannot imagine, that the Jews would have the confidence to deny them. They did not indeed acknowledge our Saviour's resurrection, but they acknowledged what was equivalent to it; *viz.* that he forewarned them of it, and also fixed the day when it was to happen, and so gave them an opportunity of convincing themselves of the truth, or detecting the falsehood of his prediction. They acknowledged, that, in consequence of this warning, they had placed a strong guard over his sepulchre, in order to watch the event, and prevent his body from being stolen; and to secure it against all private attempts, set a seal on the stone that was rolled to the door of the sepulchre: but that notwithstanding all their care, ere the time appointed by him for his resurrection was expired, his body was amissing, and the sepulchre empty. This they could not deny; and in order to evade the force of it, pretended, that while the guards slept, his disciples had come and stolen

stolen him away : a pretence that carries its own confutation along with it ; for if they were asleep, how could they know he was stolen ? or who it was that had stolen him ? and how improbable is it, that such a number of men should all fall asleep at the same time, when not only their honour, but their lives, were at stake !

Such a sleep as this, would have been as miraculous as our Lord's resurrection. But let us suppose, for argument's sake, that, through some unaccountable infatuation, these guards did so far neglect their duty ; yet how improbable is it, that a handful of timid men, who had but two nights before deserted their Master in his greatest distress, should all at once assume such courage, as to venture on carrying off his body through a numerous band of armed men, who, for ought they knew, were all upon their guard, and ready to resist them ! or supposing they had courage for such an enterprise, yet how improbable is it, that they should manage their business with such dexterity, as not to awaken some of the guards, especially as they had the great stone which lay at the door of the sepulchre to remove, which one would think could not have been so easily done !

These are some of the facts on which the truth of our holy religion is founded, and which were acknowledged by the Jews of old : for though perhaps some, and even such as had been eye-witnesses of them, were wicked enough to deny them, yet considering the nature of these facts, it is not to be supposed, but that the greater part of the Jews, notwithstanding their enmity to the Christian name, were honest enough to confess them, and whose testimony,

testimony, without doubt, contributed greatly to the conversion of the Gentiles; nay, the greater part of the facts now mentioned, are even acknowledged by the Jews at this present time. And here I cannot but take notice of the futility of an objection, in which our adversaries seem very much to triumph: The Jews, say they, were our Saviour's countrymen, and had the best access to know the truth of the facts recorded in the gospel: they lived upon the spot, and many of them are supposed to have been eye-witnesses of his miracles; and therefore their disbelief of the gospel must be a strong presumption against it. This objection would indeed signify something, if it were true. But the truth is, the Jews do not deny the facts on which the proof of the gospel is founded; they only deny the inference that we, Christians, have drawn from them; and whether their reasoning, or ours, is just, we leave it to the world to judge: for we cannot but conclude, that if these facts are true, as most certainly they are, that then the gospel must be a divine revelation.

3dly, The unbelief of the Jews did at first contribute to the conversion of the Gentiles, and still contributes thereto, as it has furnished men, in all ages, with one of the strongest proofs of the authenticity of the prophecies of the Old Testament. In these prophecies, we have a very full and particular account of the character, life, and death of our blessed Saviour; of the nature of his offices, and the success of his gospel: And therefore if it can be shewn, that these prophecies were in being before the times of the gospel, and have been faithfully handed down to us without suffering any material alteration, we need

no more to prove either the truth of divine revelation in general, or of the gospel in particular: and of this, the unbelief of the Jews furnishes us with the most demonstrative proof; for it is impossible that ever the Christians could have corrupted the prophecies, seeing the books, in which they are contained, were every where in the hands of their enemies, and it would have been the easiest thing in the world to have convicted them of the forgery: Neither is it to be supposed, that the Jews would have done any violence to the sacred text, in favours of a doctrine so contrary to their inclination: But least of all was it possible, for both to agree in corrupting the scriptures, as the personal enmity of the one was so great, and the religious opinions of both, especially their notions concerning the Messiah, so very different. The Saviour whom the Jews expected, was a mighty warlike prince, who was to free them from the Roman yoke, and to subdue the nations under them by force of arms. The Saviour in whom the Christians believe, was a prince of a meek and quiet spirit; who came, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them; not to shed the blood of the innocent, but to pour out his own for the sake of the guilty; not to deliver one particular nation only, but to save the human race, and that, not from a temporal bondage, but from eternal death; who should conquer the nations, not by force of arms, but by the demonstration of the Spirit, and of reason. This great difference betwixt the Jews and Christians, concerning the character of the Messiah, renders it morally impossible, that one tittle of the descriptions which is given of it in the Old Testament, could have been corrupted by the agreement
of

of both parties; and as I have shown you, it was impossible for either of them to do it separately—it remains, that these scriptures must be authentic and genuine.

Thus, whilst the Jews denied the doctrines of the gospel, and at the same time acknowledged the divine authority of the Scriptures, as also the greater part of the facts on which the Christian religion is founded, they have contributed more to the conviction of the Gentiles, than if they themselves had embraced the faith, and joined with the Apostles in propagating the same. Besides, had they done this, it might have been objected, that the whole history of the gospel was a political contrivance of that ambitious and vain-glorious people, to advance the honour of their nation, and facilitate their conquest over the Gentiles. We know, that, at the time of our Saviour's appearance, and for several years both before and after, the Jewish nation was big with the hopes of universal empire, to be obtained under the reign of the Messiah; the fame of which, having spread itself through the neighbouring nations and provinces of the Roman empire, had excited their jealousy, and rendered them suspicious of every step taken by a people, whose hopes were so dangerous to the peace and liberty of others. Had the gospel then made its appearance under the patronage and countenance of the Jewish nation, as they were then on such bad terms with their neighbours, this would have greatly increased the prejudices of the Gentiles against it, and laid such a stumbling-block in their way, as, it is to be feared, few would have been able to surmount. Again, had the body of the Jewish nation been converted

verted to the Christian religion, and incorporated with the Gentiles in the church of Christ, it is more than probable they would have usurped an authority therein, that might have been extremely prejudicial to the interests of religion, and the liberties of their Christian brethren. They might have claimed a superiority over the Gentiles, on account of their affinity to our Saviour's person, their being the children of Abraham, and heirs of the promises. They might have pleaded farther, in support of their pretensions, that the church of Judea was the primitive or mother church, the place where the gospel took its rise, which had given birth to our Saviour and his Apostles, had been the guardian of the sacred oracles, the channel through which the true religion, and all its blessings, had been derived to the Gentiles. We know what an extensive authority, not only in ecclesiastical, but also in civil matters, a neighbouring church has assumed, upon a much slighter foundation than all this; and there is little reason to think that the Jews, who were an ambitious people, would not have availed themselves of these advantages, or that they would have been easily persuaded to quit the hopes they had so long entertained of a temporal kingdom. Had the Jews then been admitted into the church of Christ, it is probable they would have usurped the same authority therein that the Church of Rome has done; and the mischief that would have attended this, is, that, as their pretensions to it were better founded, it is likely this usurpation would have taken place long before the date of the Popes supremacy, and perhaps or ever Christianity had got footing in the world, which would have greatly hindered, if not wholly

G

prevented,

prevented, its farther progress. We see, from the history of the Acts, with what difficulty the Jewish converts were restrained from lording it over the Gentiles, and imposing their burdensome ceremonies upon them: But how much more difficult would it have been to have restrained such an abuse, had the whole nation set up for it, and that at a time when there were none in the church invested with apostolical authority to restrain them? But now that the Jews have been so long in a state of affliction and banishment, and again to be restored to the divine favour, and admitted to the privileges of the gospel, as is probable, by the ministry of the Gentiles, all occasion of boasting, and lording it in the church of Christ, is prevented.

24
4thly, The rejection of the Jews has contributed to the salvation of the Gentiles, as it brought upon that people such dreadful calamities as struck a terror into the world, and has served to convince men, in all ages, of the sin and danger of unbelief. There is such a striking resemblance betwixt the sufferings of that miserable people, and their sin in crucifying the Saviour, that it is easy to see the one was the cause of the other. In the first place, it is evident, if we consider the greatness of their sufferings. So dreadful were they, that there is not, in the whole compass of history, an instance to be found that can equal them: For besides the utter destruction of their city, and the many hardships they underwent in time of the siege, from the sword, famine, and pestilence, there were many thousands of them afterwards slain in cold blood: of the rest, some were condemned to work in the mines; some sold for slaves
into

into different countries; others exposed to wild beasts on the theatre; and such as escaped the hand of their enemies, were driven into banishment, and dispersed all over the world, where they continue to this day a miserable and vagabond people, without any settled residence, without a king, without government, and without the free exercise of their religion. Now, the greatness of the punishment argues the heinousness of the offence. And what greater offence could they have been guilty of, than of putting the Lord of life and glory to death, of condemning and crucifying the innocent and holy Jesus, contrary to the conviction of their own consciences, and without the least shadow of evidence for the crimes laid to his charge? This was such an offence, as no nation under heaven, nor any of the sons of men, either before or since, ever committed, or had an opportunity of committing. Another circumstance that points out the cause of the Jews sufferings, is the universality or extent of them: For it was not the inhabitants of Judea only that were involved in the calamities of that time, but the whole nation of the Jews, wherever scattered throughout the world: for the enemy came upon them at the time of one of those solemn festivals, when all their males were commanded by the law to present themselves before the Lord; and we are told, there were such multitudes of them assembled, from all quarters at Jerusalem, on that occasion, that the like concourse had not been known for many years. Thus they, who formerly had led the Saviour of mankind as a lamb to the slaughter, were themselves led, by the invisible hand of a just Providence, to Jerusalem, as to a place of slaughter, to become

become a prey to that very people into whose hands they had betrayed him. Another circumstance that points out the cause of the Jews sufferings, is, that they who had been accessory to the death of Christ, or, by rejecting the gospel, had approved of that wicked deed, were the only sufferers in that calamity; for the believing Jews, as we learn from the history of those times, taking warning from the predictions of our Saviour, when they saw the approach of the Roman army, forsook the place, and took refuge beyond Jordan, in a city called Pella, where they laid till the end of the siege, and the country was again settled in peace under the Romans. There are several other particulars relating to the sufferings of the Jews, which point out the cause that occasioned them, and which, for brevity's sake, I shall but just mention: Such as, their suffering for rebellion against the Roman government, the very crime of which they had falsely accused our Saviour: their suffering the same kind of death to which they had unjustly procured his condemnation—I mean, crucifixion; for so great was the number that died in this manner, that, as Josephus informs us, ‘room was wanting for crosses, and crosses for persons.’ Lastly, Their suffering from the hands of their own countrymen, or those who should have befriended them; I mean, the fierce and bloody zealots, mentioned by the same historian, who, under pretence of religion and the defence of their country, took an opportunity to commit all kinds of cruelty.

In a word, the resemblance betwixt the Jews sin and their punishment is so great, that we cannot
conceive

conceive any circumstance awaiting that could have rendered it more complete.

Their sin was national, and so was their punishment: their sin was the greatest that ever was committed by the sons of men, and there is not, in all history, an instance to be found that can equal their sufferings: their sin was highly deserving the divine cognizance, and their punishment had all the marks of divine vengeance. They were punished by the same instruments, at the same season of the year, and many of them by the same kind of death, that is, first scourged, and then crucified. And if to this we add, the long duration of their misery, which continues to this very day, we must acknowledge, that there never was a more signal instance of divine vengeance.

To the above argument, taken from the resemblance there was betwixt the sin and punishment of the Jews, it may be objected, that crucifixion was a Roman death; and though the Romans seldom or never crucified the inhabitants of the cities they conquered, yet considering the obstinacy of the Jews, it was no wonder that Titus used them in this manner. To this it may be answered, That their crucifixion was perhaps the effect, or consequence, of their obstinacy: but then no natural cause, or reason, can be assigned for their obstinacy; neither did it flow so much from their wickedness, as from a certain unaccountable infatuation or judicial blindness. Wickedness, for the most part, does not imbolden men, or prompt them to hazardous enterprises, but rather weakens and enervates them: The wicked, saith Solomon, “ flieth, when no man pursueth; ”

“sueth; and is in great fear, where no fear is:” And therefore the conduct of the Jews, in undertaking the war, especially in holding out so long against the Romans, cannot be ascribed to their wickedness, but to an extraordinary infatuation, or a train of causes leading them to it, and which could not have been laid but by an omniscient Being; for how came the Jews to be so obstinate at that time? They were not so in the days of Pompey: neither did he crucify any of them, though he was a Roman as well as Titus. Besides, the hand of God is to be seen in this, that the Jews did not take away our Saviour’s life in some other way than by crucifixion, in which case the resemblance betwixt the Jews sin and their punishment must have failed; that they did not take away his life in a popular tumult, or by private assassination, as they intended to have done to Paul; or that they did not accept the offer which Pilate gave them, of judging him according to their own law; in all which cases he must have suffered a different kind of death from that which he suffered, and the resemblance betwixt the Jews sin and their punishment must have failed in one of its principal circumstances. Besides, what shall we say as to the other circumstances of their punishment; such as, the time when the siege commenced, *viz.* when the passover was just at hand, the very time when they crucified our Saviour; their being punished by the same instruments they had employed in crucifying him, *viz.* the Roman soldiers? To which we may add, the greatness, and long duration of their sufferings; both of them circumstances that serve to point out the cause of the divine displeasure against that people,
and

and serve to render the resemblance betwixt their sin and punishment complete.

I now proceed to the second thing proposed in the method; namely, To show that there is a period coming, when the Jews, by their repentance and conversion to the Christian faith, shall again be received into the bosom of the church, and restored to their ancient privileges. In handling this part of my subject, I shall first inquire, What assurance the scripture gives us of this event. 2dly, What reason there is, in the nature of things, to expect it.

And, 1st, With respect to the assurance scripture gives us of this event, we may observe, there is hardly any thing oftener, or more expressly foretold, both in the Old and New Testament. To quote all the passages relating to it, would be an endless task; I shall therefore content myself with some of the chief: The first is, Jer. xxxi. 31. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt," &c.

That the covenant, here spoken of, can be no other than the gospel covenant or dispensation, is evident, not only from the application which the Apostle makes of this passage in his Epistle to the Hebrews, but also from the whole scope and tenor of it. 1. It is called a new covenant; which, as the Apostle observes, implies, that it was to supplant the former covenant, and to occasion the abrogation thereof.

2. It

2. It is said, not to be according to the covenant which God made with their fathers ; which implies, that it was to be a better and more perfect covenant. It is also described as containing a promise of divine aid, which the Sinai covenant did not : “ I will put “ my law in their inward parts, and write it in their “ hearts.” All which characters agree so exactly with the gospel-covenant, that there can be no room to doubt that it is the thing here meant.

This covenant God hath already made with spiritual Israel, or the Gentile churches ; which, being substituted in the room of the Jews, and enjoying the same privileges which they formerly did, are sometimes, in scripture, called by the same name. It was also made with part of the seed of Israel, according to the flesh—when, in the time of the Apostles, multitudes, of that nation, were converted to the Christian faith.

But as the greater part of them did then, and still do reject the offer of the gospel, it is evident this prophecy must refer to an event that is still future ; and can never be fully and literally accomplished, but by the general conversion of that people. And that this prophecy is to be literally understood, not of spiritual Israel, but of the Jewish nation, or Israel according to the flesh, is evident from what follows in the 38th and following verses ; where the restoration of that people to their former privileges, and the possession of their native country, is mentioned as one of the circumstances that should attend their conversion : “ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that “ the city shall be built to the Lord, from the tower “ of Hananeel, unto the gate of the corner.”

Another

Another prophecy to this purpose, we have in the thirty-seventh of Ezekiel, from the 21st verse to the end: "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the Heathen whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land." And ver. 25, 26. "They shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant—they and their children, and their childrens children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant," &c. Now, I appeal to the intelligent reader, whether this promise has ever yet been fulfilled, or can be fulfilled, but by a general conversion and restoration of that people to their former privileges. Another promise to this purpose we have, Hosea iii. 4. "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice. Afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, in the latter days."

But the most remarkable of all the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the conversion of the Jews, is that of Zech. xii. 10. "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one that mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." Ver. 11. "In that day shall there be a

D

" great

“ great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of
 “ Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.”

To understand this prophecy, it is necessary to observe, that the Prophets, when they speak in the first person, always mean either themselves, or the Deity, whose ambassadors they are. This is evident from the whole strain of prophecy; nor is there a single instance of the contrary to be found in all the prophetic writings. But the smallest reflection may serve to convince any one, that it is not the Prophet himself who is here meant; for with what propriety can these words be applied to him, “ I will pour upon the
 “ house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem,
 “ the spirit of grace and of supplication?” Besides, in the next sentence, the Prophet changes the style, and speaks of the person here mentioned, as of one different from himself; “ and they shall mourn, and
 “ be in bitterness for him.”

This prophecy therefore must be understood of some of the persons of the glorious Trinity: and what follows, evidently shows which of them it is; “ and they shall look upon me whom they have
 “ pierced.” This can only be applied to the second Person, who, having in the fulness of time, assumed our nature, did therein suffer as an atonement for sin, was wounded and pierced by the Jews, and upon whom they shall look in the latter days, and mourn.

We may farther observe, that, in the prophetic parts of scripture, there are many instances of an abrupt transition; or, the inspired writer often changes the person of the speaker, without giving any previous notice of it. An instance of this we have

in

in the third chapter of Malachi, ver. 1. "Behold, I
 " will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the
 " way before me," &c. These are the words of our
 blessed Saviour himself, informing the church of his
 future advent. The next, are the Prophet's own
 words: "And the Lord whom ye seek, shall sud-
 " denly come to his temple." A like transition
 we have in the passage now under our consideration,
 where the Prophet first speaks to us in the name of
 the eternal Word, and then in his own name:
 "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon
 " the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace
 " and of supplication:" These are the words of our
 blessed Saviour. "And they shall mourn, and be
 " in bitterness for him," are the Prophet's own
 words.

This prophecy was in some measure accomplished,
 by the repentance of the Jews, who were converted
 by the miracles which happened at our Saviour's
 death; and still farther, by the repentance of those
 who were afterwards converted by the preaching of
 the Apostles. But all these partial conversions come
 far short of that here foretold by the Prophet, which
 is plainly described as an universal or national thing,
 like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of
 Megiddon; that is, like the mourning of the Jews
 for the death of Josiah, who was slain at Hadadrim-
 mon, which was the greatest mourning the Jews
 were acquainted with, and on that account grew up
 into a proverb.

And still more clearly to show, that this mourning
 of the Jews, for the crucifixion of their Messiah, is
 to be a national thing, the Prophet adds, in the
 verses

pect it : nor is this an idle speculation ; for, since the conversion of the Jews is an event foretold in scripture, an event that is greatly for the honour and interest of Christianity, it cannot but be matter of joy to every well-disposed mind, and help to strengthen his faith, to see that, notwithstanding any objections that can be made to the probability of it, there is still the greatest reason to believe it will one day take place.

And, in the first place, one ground we have to hope for the conversion of the Jews, is, that they still acknowledge the divine authority of the scriptures of the Old Testament ; this, as it makes their conviction the easier, so it renders their conversion the more probable.

There is so close a connection between the Old and New Testament, that it is surprising how any that own the divine authority of the one, can deny that of the other. There are, in the former, so many prophecies that never were, nor can be accomplished, but by the events recorded in the latter ; so many precepts which, abstracting from their relation to the gospel, have no beneficial or moral tendency ; so many mysteries and obscurities that can never be explained, without having recourse to the doctrines of Christianity, that to acknowledge the divine authority of the one, without owning that of the other, seems to be of all things the most absurd. And though the Jews, notwithstanding the force of this argument, still continue to deny our Saviour's divine authority, and to look for another Messiah, yet if there is reason in man, the absurdity of any opinion

is

is at least a probable argument that men will, some time or other, give it up.

The Deist, who denies divine revelation altogether, is apparently not so easily to be convinced, because, in reasoning with him, you have fewer principles to go upon. There are comparatively few religious or moral truths owned by him, from which you can deduce any arguments in favour of Christianity, that may be of use to convince him. But the Jews acknowledge most of the truths that are believed by the Christian; not only that there is one God, but also that there is one Saviour, or Messiah, and that the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning him, were dictated by the holy Spirit. The principal difference between them and us, is, whether he be yet come; and certainly the less difference there is betwixt two parties, one would imagine it should be the easier to reconcile them. It is indeed surprising, that the Jews should have so long resisted the clear evidences of scripture; but this is no reason why we should despair of their conversion. The long continuance of any thing, is no proof of its perpetual duration. How long did the errors and corruptions of Popery overspread the Christian church, and yet the light of divine truth broke out at length? and how did the gospel, which is the only true religion, prevail over the idolatry of the Heathen world? and is there not reason to think it will at length prevail over the errors and prejudices of the Jews, that, having been so long disappointed of a temporal kingdom, wearied with the persecutions they have suffered on account of their religion, and ashamed of the many extravagancies into which their carnal notions concern-

ing

ing the Messiah have betrayed them, they will at length give them up, and acquiesce in Christ Jesus, as the only Saviour promised to their fathers?

2/ Another reason we have to hope for the conversion of the Jews, is, that they have access to the means of conviction. They live generally amidst a people professing Christianity; and, by, conversing with them, have an opportunity of learning the principles and grounds of our religion, which, we trust, are sufficiently clear to convince any impartial inquirer of their truth. And though the Jews prejudices, and hopes of a temporal kingdom, have hitherto shut their eyes, and hindered them from discerning the evidences of our religion, yet it is to be hoped, that, when length of time hath weakened their prejudices, and cooled their enmity at the Christian name, a more impartial inquiry will lead them to a discovery of the truth.

Some, perhaps, will imagine this argument to have rather a contrary tendency, and that instead of adding to the probability of the conversion of the Jews, it seems rather to detract from it. A person's having long had access to the means of grace, without being converted or reformed by them, seems rather to exclude the hope of his conversion; yet certainly there is more reason to hope for the conversion of such a person, if he still has access to the means of grace, than if he were in a situation where he could have no access to them.

A person who has long been under the hands of the physician, and on whom the power of medicine has often been tried in vain, is evidently in a more hopeless condition, than if no attempt had ever been
made

made for the recovery of his health; yet if he still has access to the proper remedy, or to the aid of able and faithful Physicians, there is certainly more hope of his recovery, than if he were in a situation in which he could have no access to these things.

Had the Jews, during their present state of infidelity, obtained a settlement either in their own country, or any other part of the world, at a distance from the nations that make profession of the Christian Religion, or where they should have had less access to converse with them, their conversion would also have been less probable: But their continuing to live in such numbers among Christians, and to be in a situation that gives them access to know the evidences of Christianity, affords, at least, some ground to hope that they may one day be brought to the acknowledgement of it; and though they have hitherto been proof against all attempts made to convince them, yet as Divinity, and the knowledge of the Scriptures, as well as of the Arts and Sciences, is daily improving and advancing towards perfection, by which means many new proofs in support of Christianity have been of late discovered, and many prophecies of the Old Testament concerning our Saviour set in a clearer light, it is probable we shall at length be able to demonstrate the truth of our religion with such evidence, as shall be sufficient to conquer the prejudices of that obstinate people. But to this it may be objected, that seeing the Jews withstood the force of the preaching and miracles of our Saviour and his Apostles, there is little reason to think that any arguments we can now produce will prevail with them. To this it may be answered,

E

that,

that, in order to convince the Jews of the truth of the Gospel, it does not seem necessary that they should have the same evidence of it which they had who lived in the times of the Apostles. The same degree of evidence is not necessary to the conviction of all men, nor of the same person at different times. Faith depends as much on the inward disposition of the mind, as on the strength and number of external proofs; and a much less degree of evidence will satisfy a good man, than one of an opposite character. This being granted, (which might be proved if necessary) the unbelief of the Jews, in the times of the Apostles, can be no objection to the possibility of their conversion in after ages, unless we could prove them equally wicked and abandoned; a task that would be as difficult as uncharitable

The Jews, in the times of our Saviour, were the most wicked generation that ever existed, as appears from the account given of them by the Evangelists and their own historian Josephus; and though their posterity are not much beholden to fame, yet there is no reason to think they are quite so bad, much less that they both are, and will be so, in all succeeding ages.

It is indeed difficult to determine the degrees in which virtue or vice prevail amongst a people in different ages. But if we may judge of the present temper of the Jewish nation by the things they have suffered, and by the natural tendency of the dispensations of Providence towards them since their dispersion, there is reason to think it is considerably meliorated. Many are the persecutions they have suffered, not only among Christians, but in all parts of the world

world where they have resided : Often have they been deluded by false Messiah's, and disappointed in their carnal hopes ; and as these things have a natural tendency to humble their pride, and convince them of their error, it is hardly to be supposed but they have had some good effect, though they have not yet produced the one that we could wish. Though they are not yet convinced of the falsehood of their peculiar tenets, yet the assent, by which they adhere to them, may be considerably weakened ; and therefore the same evidence for the truth of the gospel does not seem necessary to the conversion of the Jews now as in the days of the Apostles, and yet it may doubted whether the evidences of Christianity are any thing at all diminished from what they were then. It is true, we see no miracles wrought in confirmation of it ; but we have all the reason in the world to believe that they were wrought. Besides the testimony of the sacred writers, and ancient fathers of the Christian church, we have the acknowledgement of some of the bitterest enemies of Christianity in ancient times in favour of our Saviour's miracles. We have not the lively preachings of the apostles to persuade us, but we have their writings and many of their sermons still on record. We have also many proofs of the Gospel which they who lived in the time of its publication wanted ; such as the care of Providence in preserving it so long in the world ; in supporting it against so many enemies, and rescuing it when buried under the rubbish of antichristian errors : To which we may add, the accomplishment of the prophecies both of the Old and New Testament concerning the
lot

lot of the church in the latter days, particularly concerning the rise and fall of the Papacy. So that there is no reason to despair of the conversion of the Jews for want of evidence to convince them.

3 / Another reason we have to hope for the conversion of the Jews, is the success that the Gospel had amongst them at the first promulgation thereof.

In handling the last head, I asserted, that the Jews of that time were the most wicked generation of men that ever existed. But this is only to be understood of the greater part of them; for we are informed by the Evangelist, that great numbers of them were converted by the preaching of the apostles; which shews the possibility of the Jews' conversion, and so removes a doubt which is apt to rise in the mind when reflecting on this subject, viz. that there is something naturally in the disposition of that people incompatible with the belief of the Gospel: It shews also the probability of their conversion; for the Jews, who were brought in at that time, were a kind of first fruits or earnest of the general conversion, and ingathering of that people: It was a sign, that Providence had still a kindness for them; that though he had determined, for his own wise ends, to exclude them from the church for a time, yet he would not finally cast them off. Had he not had some designs of mercy towards them, he might have rejected them altogether, which would have rendered his justice in inflicting that judgment more remarkable, and consequently, so far as we can judge, have answered the design of it better. He would not in all probability have admitted such numbers of them into the Christian church, seeing a much
less

less number might have served for propagating the Christian religion, it being only a few of those who had embraced the Gospel that were thus employed. Nay, it appears from the words of the apostle Peter in his first sermon to the Jews, that even some of those who had been accessory to our Saviour's crucifixion, were among the number of those that were converted thereby; which shews, that the sin of crucifying the Saviour, great as it was, was not unpardonable, at least in those who did it through ignorance: And if it did not hinder the mercy of God from reaching them that were actually guilty, much less can it prove an insuperable bar to the conversion of their posterity.

Another reason which renders the future conversion of the Jews, as well as of the Heathen and Mahometan nations, probable, is founded in the effect that learning and the culture of the liberal arts has upon the human mind. These have made a wonderful progress among Christians in these last ages; and if ever they shall extend their beneficial influence to the other nations of the earth, as there is reason to think they will, it is to be hoped they may be a means of opening their eyes and convincing them of the truth of the Gospel. That learning is calculated to produce this effect, there can be no room to doubt, if we attend to the effect which it is known to have in other cases. It enlightens the mind, and enables it to comprehend the force of an argument; it cures us of our prejudices, and lays us open to conviction, by undeceiving our abused imaginations, and shewing us the falsehood of many opinions we take up in our youth; it lessens the
conceit

conceit we naturally have of our own judgment, and disposes us to lean to the judgment of others; by exercising our reason it improves it, and qualifies the mind for the investigation of truth. The faculty of reason, like all others, is improved by exercise. By being accustomed to the search of truth, we acquire a facility in tracing it; and not only so, but it also strengthens our natural love of it, and, by prompting us to pursue it with ardour, contributes greatly to the discovery of it. Therefore, if ever learning shall happen to prevail amongst the Jews and other unbelieving nations, it must be of great use to the propagation of Christianity amongst them.

If it should be objected, that many of the Jews, and some also of the other unbelieving nations, are already enlightened to a considerable degree, and yet their learning has produced no such effect upon them, the answer is easy, that learning does not produce this effect of itself, but is only a means; besides, it is not every degree of learning that is effectual to remove our prejudices, and a greater measure of it may produce that effect which a lesser cannot. To which we may add, that the number of those who truly deserve the name of learned among the Jews, as well as other unbelieving nations, has been hitherto comparatively speaking very small; and when this is the case, the effect that learning has upon the mind is neither so considerable, nor so easily known.

That learning will one day have a larger spread, and extend itself to all the dark corners of the earth, there is the greatest reason to believe, both from the
astonishing

astounding progress it has already made, and also from the temporal advantages that flow from it.

It is only but three hundred years since the whole world was overspread with ignorance and barbarism, and now all the useful branches of learning are cultivated to greater perfection than ever they were in any former age, not only through all Europe, but also by means of our colonies in many other parts of the world. This amazing progress of learning, as it cannot be ascribed to any thing but the kindness of Providence, so it seems to prognosticate some great revolution for the good of mankind; and as it is still increasing, so there is reason, from the same ground, to hope that it will increase more and more, until it has overspread the whole habitable world, especially as the barbarous nations that formerly put a stop to its progress, are now in a great measure civilized, so that there seems to be nothing to fear from that quarter.

Another reason we have to hope for the conversion of the Jews is the declension of Popery, or the decay of the Roman Catholic religion.

Of all the causes that have contributed to harden that people in their infidelity, there is none that has had a greater effect than the idolatry and persecuting spirit of the church of Rome.

The Jews having, from their sufferings in time of the Babylonish captivity, justly conceived the strongest aversion to idolatry, and not being able to distinguish between the pure genuine doctrines of Christianity, and those that are held by its degenerate professors, it is impossible but they must have the strongest

15

strongest aversion to a religion, the greater part of whose professors are given to the worship of images; and the cruel persecutions they have so often suffered from these idolatrous Christians, must have added to their prejudices, and imbittered their spirits still more against the Christian religion. But now that Popery is visibly on the decline, it is to be hoped this obstacle to the conversion of the Jews will ere long be removed. The total overthrow of Popery is perhaps an event yet at some distance; but as it is now long since it began to fall, and has been continually falling almost ever since, we need not doubt but Providence will in his good time give it a blow at the root: And though it has of late set up a head in these countries, and it may be is making the same efforts in other parts of the world also, yet these we trust are only like the last efforts or struggles of a dying man, the signs not of returning health, but of approaching dissolution.

But the conversion of the Jews will appear still more probable, if we consider the wonderful effects of time, which not only delights to produce the most surprising and unexpected events, such as this we are now talking of, but has also a wonderful effect to cool our passions, and cure us of our prejudices. The prejudices of nations and of families are indeed generally more lasting, as is also the subject in which they reside; yet time we see puts an end to them too.

Many feuds and animosities that have subsisted for ages betwixt different families and kingdoms of the world, are now happily extinguished, and it is to be hoped that time will also extinguish the resentment and prejudices of the Jews. Indeed their prejudices have.

have already lasted so long, that they cannot be accounted for, without having recourse to a particular Providence, either to what is commonly called a judicial blindness, or to a train of external causes serving to keep them up; and whether we ascribe it to the first or second of these causes, it appears equally to be the work of God, since it is impossible, that a train of events, or external causes should combine to keep up the prejudices of any people so long without a special direction of Providence. But if ever it shall please God to remove these causes, as there is the greatest reason, both from his goodness and the promises of Scriptures, to believe he will, then the prejudices of the Jews, like those of other people, must fall of course.

Another reason for expecting the conversion of the Jews, is, that truth is of a prevailing nature.

When I spoke of the effect that time has on the opinions of men, it was chiefly to be understood of their erroneous opinions; for though it sometimes proves fatal to the truth also, yet those opinions which have this for their support, are generally of a nature more durable and lasting. The more we examine such opinions the more we are confirmed in our belief of them, whereas a little time and reflection is often all that is necessary to the destruction of error. It must indeed be owned, that religious truths are exposed to greater dangers than others, because the corruption of human nature is against them, and men are often prompted by passion and prejudice to oppose them; but then they have also a more powerful assistance from the God of truth, whose interest and honour are concerned to support them.

61
 Another reason for expecting the conversion of the Jews, is founded on the connection it seems to have with their worldly interest. It is interest that rules the world, and there is no greater probability that a man will act such a part, than if it appears clearly to be for his worldly advantage. What effect the conversion of the Jews would have on their worldly state and circumstances, without the aid of divine revelation, we could not positively say; but so far as we can judge, it would be much every way for their advantage. It would not only free them from the scorn and persecution they have so long sustained on account of their religion, and procure them the esteem of all good men, but also intitle them to the rights and privileges of citizens in all parts of the Christian world. This is an advantage which they have on many occasions shown great anxiety to obtain, and which it is to be hoped may one day be a means of persuading them to embrace Christianity: not that I imagine the Jews will ever change their religion for the sake of worldly gain, much less do I mean that they ought to do it from such a motive; yet certainly the consideration, that it is for their worldly interest to embrace the Gospel, added to the other grounds we have to expect their conversion, increases the probability thereof. But it will be objected, that the present state of the Jews is not without its advantages. They are generally rich, and seemingly as happy as other people; and therefore the consideration of the temporal advantages that are likely to attend a change in their religion, must have but little weight with them. But it is enough to my purpose, to show that the Jews do
 not

not like their situation; for he that thinks himself unhappy in his present situation, is every whit as desirous of a change as he that really is so. And that the Jews have always looked upon themselves as unhappy in their present state, is evident from the many attempts they have made to change it; I mean not only their attempts to recover their old inheritance, but likewise their endeavours to obtain the privileges of citizens in other countries. And the numberless disappointments they have met with, shew that it is in vain for them to expect a redress of their grievances, till, by their repentance and acknowledgment of the truth, they have made their peace with Christ. "Behold your house is left unto you desolate; for verily I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:" That is, ye shall not enjoy my countenance and favour till you acknowledge your errors, and join with the Christian church in saying, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:" That is, looking and longing for my second appearance; or, taking the words literally, "Ye shall not see me," &c. may signify, from this time ye shall see me no more, till after your conversion and acknowledgment of the truth, when ye shall long to see me, and join with my people in praying for my second coming. These words of our Saviour, taking them in the literal sense, do not imply that his second coming was to be either immediately or soon after the conversion of the Jews, but only that it was not to be till then, They seem to me rather to imply the contrary, viz. that

that there would be some considerable time betwixt these two events; that seeing they had despised and rejected him, they should not see him again till they were made to long and pray for his appearance. But whatever is of this, they certainly imply, that the Jews are to be converted some time or other before the coming of our Saviour; for he says expressly, that he will not come, or, which is the same thing, that they shall not see him again till they acknowledge him as their Saviour, and join with the church in praying for his coming. And therefore, as certainly as it is decreed of God that he shall once more appear in our world; so certain is it that the Jews shall one day make the profession of the Christian religion: or, taking the words literally, "Ye shall not see me henceforth;" that is, from this time forth ye shall see me no more till my coming to judgment, when, having been previously converted, ye shall join with my people in saying, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

9/ I shall conclude this head with the words of our Apostle, verse 24th of this chapter: For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more shall these which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? That is, in plain language, the conversion of the Jews is apparently a thing much easier to be effected, and more likely to happen, than that of the Gentiles seemed to be before the publication of the Gospel; and that for the following reasons: The religion of the Gentiles was totally different from the Christian, both as
to

to the object and manner of their worship; whereas the religion of the Jews has a very near affinity with it. Both Jews and Christians agree in having an abhorrence of idolatry and image-worship; both believe in one God, the creator of all things, in his providence, in a judgment to come, the resurrection of the dead, and many other articles of religion; and therefore one would think it were easier to reconcile the Jews to those other points wherein they and Christians differ, than it was to persuade the Gentiles to embrace a religion that was totally different from their own. The Gentiles were aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise. They knew little or nothing of the Messiah or his kingdom, of the promises made to the fathers, or of the predictions of the prophets; in a word, every thing relating to the Messiah was a mystery to them, contrary to their former notions, and the religious tenets handed down to them by their ancestors. This is not the case with the modern Jews. They are many of them well versed in the Scriptures, and nothing but a fair impartial examination of them seems necessary to their conversion. We may add to this, that as the apostles and first preachers of the Gospel were of the Jewish nation, nay, Christ himself, the blessed author of our religion, was according to the flesh of the seed of Judah, one would imagine that the ties of blood, added to other motives, must one day help to draw them to the acknowledgment of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

I now proceed to the practical improvement of what has been said.

I doubt not but some of you have been saying in your hearts, to what purpose is this long discourse concerning the Jews, we doubt not of their conversion, or of the truth of any thing that has been said; but what is that to us. In answer to this, it were perhaps sufficient to say, that the Scriptures are full of this doctrine, and therefore it is certainly worth our while to bestow a little serious consideration upon it. To deny this, were to arraign the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, who has been pleased to reveal so much to us concerning it, and indeed the use of it is obvious.

In the first place, this doctrine may serve to strengthen and confirm our faith. Faith in the best is often weak, and needs to be strengthened; and I know not any means more likely to do it than a serious consideration of the argument I am now upon.

The preservation of the Jews, through a series of so many ages, notwithstanding the many calamities and persecutions they have sustained, is a standing miracle and testimony to the truth of our religion.

To this very day we behold the people of whom so many wonderful things are recorded in Scripture, though it is now above seventeen hundred years since their dispersion, and they have undergone more and greater changes than any other people in the world ever did. Had it not been for this, some of our modern infidels would have denied that ever there was such a people. Is it not something extraordinary, and like a miracle, that, amidst all the changes and revolutions that have happened in the world, the irruption of the barbarous nations, the rise and fall of empires, the many persecutions they themselves have sustained,

ed,

ed, and their emigrations from one country to another, they have neither been totally extirpated, nor confounded with the rest of mankind, nor yet prevailed upon to change their religion, though they have had every worldly motive to induce them so to do. They who deny there is any thing extraordinary in this, ought either to produce some instance similar to it from history, or to account for it in a rational way; neither of which has yet been done, and I dare say, never will.

To ascribe this to peculiarity of temper, is foolish to the last degree? The Jews are naturally, just like other people, some better, some worse; some men of capacity, others of a weak understanding; nor is there any real difference betwixt them and other men but what is owing to their unbelief, and the curse of God that lies upon them. But this is not the only proof that the history of the Jewish nation affords of the truth of the Gospel: The unparalleled sufferings which befel them shortly after their rejecting the call of the Gospel; the numberless persecutions they have since endured, not only among Christians, but in every part of the world where they have resided; the repeated disappointments they have met with, in endeavouring to recover the possession of their native country; their present unsettled vagabond state, and the contempt in which they are held by almost all nations; as they cannot be ascribed to any other cause but the indignation of Providence against them for their unbelief, and sin of crucifying the Messiah, so they afford one of the strongest proofs that can be desired of the truth of our religion.

The

The apostle tells us, that for their unbelief they were broken off, and we may defy the wit of man to assign any other reason for it. But that their sin in crucifying the Messiah, and continuing to reject the offers of the Gospel, is the only cause of their sufferings, is evident from this, that no other sin can be imputed to them of which other nations have not been as guilty as they. And yet, I think Providence never afflicted any other nation under heaven as long and as severely as he has done them. But are there not other nations who disbelieve the Gospel as well as the Jews, and yet never suffered such things? why then should we ascribe their sufferings to that cause? the answer is easy, No other nation ever had such access to know the truth of the Gospel; no other nation ever crucified the Saviour, or shewed such bitter enmity to the Christian name; and therefore their unbelief is not so heinous.

Had the Jews been converted to the Christian faith, and still subject to the same sufferings; or had they, notwithstanding their continued impenitence and opposition to the Christian faith, been able to obtain a redress of their grievances, either a settlement in their own country, or any other part of the world, the enemies of Christianity would have had something to say; but as the sufferings of that people first began with their rejecting of the Gospel, and have all along kept pace with their unbelief, can there be a clearer proof, that the one is the cause of the other. But this is not all: In the preservation of the Jews as a distinct people, and in their present afflicted state, there are fulfilled a vast number of prophecies, both in the
Old

Old and New Testament concerning them. Even while they were in the wilderness, it was prophesied of them by Balaam, "Behold the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." So Jeremiah xxx. 11. "Though I make a full end of all the nations, whether I have scattered thee; or as it may be rendered, by whom I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee."

All the ancient enemies of the Jews, that Providence formerly employed to chastise them, the Babylonians, Grecians, Romans, &c. are now no more; while the Jews, who, in comparison of these nations, were originally but a handful, still continue a distinct people, and probably as numerous as ever they were in any former age. But that of Hof. chap. iii. 4, and 5 verses, is still more remarkable: "For the children of Israel 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. Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days."

To the same purpose, is that of Amos, ix. 8. "Behold, the eyes of the Lord are upon the sinful nation, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob: For lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon earth." To which we may add, these words of our Saviour; "And Jerusalem shall be trodden

“ trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the
 “ Gentiles be fulfilled. Behold, your house is left unto
 “ you desolate ; for verily, I say unto you, ye shall not
 “ see my face, till ye say, blessed is he that cometh in
 “ the name of the Lord.” All which prophecies, and
 many more that might be mentioned, have been and
 are so exactly fulfilled in the history and present state
 of the Jewish nation, as must convince every reason-
 able mind, that the penmen of them were divinely
 inspired.

Thus, my friends, I have shewn you, by a variety
 of arguments taken from this one subject, the history
 and present state of the Jews, that Scripture is God’s
 word, and the Gospel of Christ the only true religion;
 and if so, then it concerns us above all things to be
 truly religious, to fear God, and keep his command-
 ments; for if we do so, then the Gospel assures us that
 everlasting happiness and glory will be our reward at
 last.

Again, is it so that the Jews are to be converted,
 and brought into the Christian church? This should
 be matter of joy to every well-disposed mind. The
 addition of so great a body of men as the Jews to the
 Christian church, must bring great glory to the name
 of Christ, and be the means of saving many precious
 souls; and therefore, if we have any sincere love to
 our Redeemer, or charity towards our fellow-crea-
 tures, we should rejoice at the prospect of it. And
 the more probable it appears, the greater should our
 joy be. It should also comfort us under the melan-
 choly thoughts, which the present state of our religi-
 on is apt to suggest.

It

It cannot but affect every well-disposed mind to see how infidelity has increased of late; how the ordinances of God, and the doctrines of his religion are despised by men of all ranks; how thin our meetings for Divine Worship generally are; and how seldom honoured by the great: how much religious conversation is out of fashion, and how few there are now a-days who make conscience of worshipping God in their families: I say, to see these, and many other signs of the decay of piety among us, cannot but affect every well-disposed mind; and it may be, even raise doubts in them concerning the reality of religion.

Well Christian, let this be thy comfort, there is a time coming, and probably not very distant, when religion shall flourish again, and flourish more gloriously than it hath ever yet done; when God will fulfill all his promises concerning the glory of the latter days, when both Jew and Gentile shall be brought in, and the earth be full of the glory of the Lord. O that it would please God to hasten that happy time, that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion, when the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel be glad.

HAVING,

HAVING, in the preceding discourse, shown that the conversion of the Jews is an event which we have all imaginable ground to expect, I shall now add a few thoughts concerning their restoration or return to their native country. This is an event nearly connected with the former, as being to happen at the same time with it, and is indeed the consequence of it. For if their captivity and dispersion was at first a punishment inflicted on them for their disobedience to the call of the Gospel, as has been already proved, then the dissolution of their captivity and restoration to their native country, must be the consequence of their repentance: For the cause being removed, the effect must also cease. It is true, Providence does not always restore to men, upon their repentance, the temporal blessings they have forfeited by sin; because, with respect to individuals, the reward promised to repentance is reserved to a future state; but his manner of dealing with nations is somewhat different: These being incapable of any reward hereafter, are, for the most part, recompensed in this world. Thus we find that the Israelites of old no sooner repented and sought the Lord, than he forgave them, and restored them to their former prosperity; and if ever they repent of the sin which at present cleaves to them, there is no reason to doubt but he will do so still. But besides this argument from reason, Scripture is no less positive with respect to the restoration of the Jews, than it is with respect to their conversion.

Thus,

Thus, Levit. xxvi. 40, 41, 42. God, after forewarning them of the consequence, in case they forsook him, and broke his commandments, viz. that he would scatter them among the Heathen, and make their land desolate, adds in the 40th and following verses, " If
 " they shall confess their iniquity and the iniquity of
 " their fathers, that they have walked contrary to
 " me, and that I also have walked contrary to them,
 " and have brought them into the land of their ene-
 " mies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be hum-
 " bled, and they then accept of the punishment of their
 " iniquity, then will I remember my covenant with
 " Jacob, &c. and I will remember the land." But what was the covenant that God made with these patriarchs but this, that he would give the land of Canaan as an inheritance, and a perpetual possession to their posterity, in case they continued obedient to his commands; and therefore, when God promises in this place to remember that covenant, what can it signify, but his restoring to them the possession of their ancient inheritance; or what else can be the meaning of these words, " And I will remember the
 " land," but this, that God would put an end to its desolations, by restoring it to its ancient inhabitants to be cultivate and replenished by them. It therefore follows, that if ever the Jews repent and turn to the Lord, he is bound by this promise to restore to them the possession of their native country. This promise is repeated, and in still stronger terms, in the xxxth of Deut. from the beginning to the 6th verse.
 " And it shall come to pass when all these things are
 " come upon thee, the blessing and the curse which

" I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to
 " mind among all the nations whether the Lord thy
 " God hath driven thee, and shall return unto the
 " Lord thy God and obey his voice," &c. verse 3d,
 " That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity,
 " and have compassion on thee, and will return and
 " gather thee from all nations whither he hath scat-
 " tered thee : If any of thine be driven out unto the
 " utmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord
 " thy God gather, and from thence will he fetch
 " thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee un-
 " to the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou
 " shalt possess it," &c. If it should be said, that this
 prophecy was fulfilled in the return of the Jews
 from the Babylonish captivity ; I answer, there is no
 particular time here mentioned ; but it is said in ge-
 neral terms, that whensoever the Jews, for their sins,
 should be led into captivity by their enemies, and
 scattered among the nations as they are at present ;
 if they shall then repent and turn to the Lord, he
 will have mercy on them, and bring them again to
 the land which he gave to their fathers. Their re-
 storation, therefore, must be the consequence of their
 conversion. The same may be inferred, also from
 the words of the prayer which Solomon put up at the
 dedication of the temple, and the answer which God
 gave to it. In that prayer, Solomon begs of God,
 that in case his people Israel should be led captive
 for their sins, and turn again to him, and make sup-
 plication toward his house, that he would forgive
 them, and bring them again to the land he had given
 to their fathers. 1 Kings chap. viiith from the 47th
 to

to the 50th verse; and in the following chapter we are told, that God accepted his prayer.

Another proof of the future restoration of the Jews, is, that in many places of Scripture the return of the ten tribes is foretold; but as this event has never yet happened, it must be still future: and if the ten tribes are yet to be restored, most certainly the Jews also. That very few of the ten tribes returned in Zerubbabel's time, appears from this, that there is no express mention made of them by Ezra as there is of the other tribes, Ezra, Chap. i. and 5. We find indeed from the history of the Maccabees, Chap. vii, ix. and xv. that there were great numbers of Israelites in Palestine at that time; and in the Gospel, there is mention made of some of the other tribes, as of one Anna, a prophetess, of the tribe of Asher: but notwithstanding of this, it is the opinion of most learned men, that the greater part of the ten tribes have never yet returned. See Stackhouse, or the Universal history. But that these tribes were to return, appears from the whole tenor of prophecy. To quote all the passages to this purpose would be tedious. Let these, therefore, which follow, suffice: Jer. xxxi. 4.
 " Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O
 " virgin of Israel. Verse 5. Thou shalt yet plant
 " vines upon the mountains of Samaria; the plant-
 " ers shall plant, and eat them as common things.
 " Verse 8. Behold I will bring them from the north
 " country, and gather them from the coasts of the
 " earth; and with them the blind and the lame, the
 " woman with child, and her that travaileth with
 " child together; a great company shall return thi-
 " ther:

“ ther : And verse 17. There is hope in thine end,
 “ faith the Lord, that thy children shall come again
 “ to their own border.” This verse deserves parti-
 cular notice, as it not only shews that the return of
 the Israelites here spoken of is not yet past, but also
 that it is to happen in the latter days, or towards the
 end of the world ; for what else can be the meaning
 of these words, There is hope in thine end. That
 the Israelites are never to cease from being a nation,
 or to continue to the end of time, is expressly asserted
 in this very chapter, and several other places ; and
 therefore their end also must be the end of the world.
 That the return of the Israelites is to be in the latter
 days, is also asserted Hof. iii. iv. v. verse 27th. “ Be-
 “ hold the days come, faith the Lord, that I will sow
 “ the house of Israel, and the house of Judah, with
 “ the seed of man, and with the seed of beast ; and it
 “ shall come to pass, that like as I have watched o-
 “ ver them to pluck up, and to break down, and to
 “ destroy ; so will I watch over them, to build and
 “ to plant, faith the Lord.” And that this is to be
 in Gospel times, is evident from what follows, verse
 31. “ Behold the days come, faith the Lord, that I
 “ will make a new covenant with the house of Israel,
 “ and with the house of Judah, &c.” So Jeremiah,
 xxxiii. and 7. “ And I will cause the captivity of
 “ Judah, and the captivity of Israel to return, and
 “ will build them as at the first ; and I will cleanse
 “ them from all their iniquity, and so forth to the
 “ end of the chapter.” and chap. xxiii. 7. “ Be-
 “ hold the days come, faith the Lord, that they shall
 “ no more say the Lord liveth which brought up
 “ the

“ the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt ;
 “ but the Lord liveth which brought up, and which
 “ led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north
 “ country, and from all countries whither I had
 “ driven them, and they shall dwell in their own
 “ land.” See also Ezek. xx. 23. and chap. xxxvi.
 from the 9th verse unto the end. In these, and many
 other places that might be quoted if necessary, the
 restoration of the Israelites, or ten tribes, as they are
 commonly called, along with that of the Jews, is ex-
 pressly foretold ; but as the former were not restored
 at the time when the Jews were brought back from
 the Babylonish captivity, there must be a time, still
 future, when all the tribes, both Jews and Israelites,
 shall be restored.

But besides these passages, which prove the restora-
 tion of the Jews by way of inference, there are many
 in which it is expressly foretold. Thus Isaiah, in
 the xi. chap. of his prophecy, at the 11th verse,
 “ And it shall come to pass in that day, that the
 “ Lord shall set his hand the second time to recover
 “ the remnant of his people that shall be left, from
 “ Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and
 “ from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up
 “ an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the
 “ outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dis-
 “ persed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.
 “ The Lord shall set his hand the second time to re-
 “ cover the remnant of his people.” This certainly
 refers to a time that is still future, and means, that
 as the Lord brought back his people from their first
 captivity, in the time of Zerubbabel, so he will also

bring them back from their present captivity. There were indeed three different returns from the Babylonish captivity, as may be seen in Prideaux's history of that period; but none of these can be the return here spoken of; for they were all but parts of the same deliverance, or partial accomplishments of the same promise, viz. that, at the end of seventy years, God would turn back the captivity of his people, and did, properly speaking, make but one return, having all happened within the space of forty years. Accordingly they are by historians commonly clashed together, and considered as one; therefore none of them can be the return here spoken of by Isaiah. Besides, it is expressly said, that this return is to happen in the times of the Gospel, or after the coming of the Messiah. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand the second time:" which phrase, "that day," as is evident from the context, can mean nothing but that this event was to happen in Gospel times, and consequently is still future. Another of those passages where the return of the Jews is expressly foretold, is in the xxxvii. chap. of Ezek. from the 15th verse to the end, which, as it is too long to be quoted, I would have the reader to consult for his own satisfaction. That this prophecy was not fulfilled in the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity is evident, 1st, Because it is expressly said, that both the nations into which the Israelites were divided, viz. Ephraim, and the tribes that joined with him, and Judah, together with his associate tribes, are to return, and to become one nation upon the mountains of Israel, which was not the case when
the

the Jews returned from Babylon. 2dly, It is there also declared, in the strongest terms, that God would never again cast them off, or disinherit them, which was not true of their first return neither; for they were in a very few centuries after that cast off a second time, and more miserably wasted than before. "And they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob my servant; even they and their children, and their childrens children for ever: And my servant David shall be their prince for ever." Another remarkable passage to this purpose, is that famous prophecy concerning Gog, in the xxxviii. and xxxix. chap. of Ezek. In this passage there is indeed no express mention of the return of the Jews, because the Prophet had spoken of it in the plainest terms several times before, particularly in the two preceding chapters; but what is equally to our purpose, we have a long and particular account of an invasion that is to be made upon the Jews by some great and powerful enemy. after they are brought back and again settled in Palestine. Among the circumstances relative to this event mentioned by the Prophet, there are several which clearly shew, that this passage cannot be understood of any past event, and is only a continuation of the prophecy which we have in the two preceding chapters concerning the future restoration of the Jews, and the happiness then to be enjoyed by them. Some indeed think that it refers to the time of the Seleucidæ; and the reason they give is, because when Croesus, the grandson of Gyges, or Gog, who gave name to the country, was conquered by Cyrus, his kingdom became subject to the Persians, and afterwards fell into the

the

the hands of the Seleucidæ; so that they reigning over the same country and people over which Gog had formerly reigned, may, not without some ground, be thought to be here intended: and of all the Seleucidæ, the 6th from Seleucus stands fairest for it, viz. Antiochus Epiphanes, a type of Antichrist, and fierce enemy of the Jews. But as there are several particulars in this prophecy which do not agree with the times of Antiochus, if it is to be understood of him at all, it must be understood of him only in a lower sense, and as a type of a greater and more formidable enemy. For, in the first place, this invasion of Judea by Gog, is described as happening soon after the return of the Jews from captivity, verses 8. 11. 12.

“ In the latter days thou shalt come into the land
 “ that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered
 “ out of many people against the mountains of
 “ Israel which have been always waste, and thou
 “ shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled vil-
 “ lages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell
 “ safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and
 “ having neither bars nor gates,” &c. This I say
 looks as if the people were but newly settled; whereas at the time when Antiochus Epiphanes invaded the land, the Jews were fully established, and had been in possession of it for near three hundred and fifty years. They had, moreover, fortified Jerusalem with much labour and expence; and as this was done near two hundred years before the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, it is probable they had other fortified cities also; but when Gog invades them, they have no fortified cities, neither bars nor gates. 2dly, The vast preparations

preparations that Gog makes for this expedition, the greatness of his army, the multitude of nations that he calls to his assistance, and that join with him in it, do not correspond with the invasion and exploits of Antiochus; who, as he was only going to plunder a small province that had revolted from him, or rather that was obnoxious to him on account of their religion, did not need such mighty preparations, or so many assistants for that purpose: but were all the Jews and Israelites that are at present scattered throughout the world, assembled and again settled in the land of Canaan, I believe it would require all the forces that any power on earth could raise to dispossess them; it would at least seem much more necessary to raise such an army as Gog's for that purpose. 3dly, Though the precise time when the events foretold in this prophecy are to happen is not mentioned, yet there are several things in it which plainly intimate that there was to be a succession of many ages betwixt the publication of it and the events to which it refers; and, therefore, it may reasonably be thought to look beyond the times of Antiochus Epiphanes. Verse 8. it is said, "After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword." Verse 16. "It shall be in the latter days;" and verse 17. "Thus saith the Lord, Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets." This last phrase is very much to our purpose, as it is seldom or ever used in Scripture, but to denote something very ancient, or remote from the present time: So the Psalmist, "Of
" old

"old thou hast laid the foundations of the earth,"
 Psalm cii. 25. and Micah, v. 2. "Whose goings forth
 "were from of old, from everlasting." What is said
 in the 8th verse, is still stronger: "Thou shalt come
 "into the land that is brought back from the sword,
 "against the mountains of Israel, which have been
 "always waste." But it could not be said in the days
 of Antiochus Epiphanes, nor indeed at any time prior
 to the taking of Jerusalem by Titus Vespasian, that
 the mountains of Israel had been always waste; for
 the first captivity lasted but forty, or at the utmost
 but seventy years. But it may be truly said of them
 now; for since the days of Titus Vespasian, or rather
 of Adrian, to this present time, which is upwards of
 seventeen hundred years, it has been little better than
 a desert, in comparison of what it once was. But
 what puts it out of all doubt that this prophecy is
 not to be understood of Antiochus, or of any event
 that is yet past, is, that the destruction of the enemy
 here spoken of, and the deliverance of the church by
 means thereof, is ascribed to the immediate hand and
 power of God, or to a miracle, and that too of the
 most extraordinary kind, chap. xxxviii. 22. "And
 "I will plead against him with pestilence and with
 "blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon the
 "many people that are with him, an overflowing
 "rain, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone:
 "thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself;
 "and I will be known in the eyes of many nations,
 "and they shall know that I am the Lord." But
 since the days of Ezekiel to this present time, no
 such miraculous destruction has happened to any of
 the

the enemies of the Jews. From what has been said, I think we may, with certainty, conclude that this prophecy refers to an event that is still future, and which is not to happen till after the Jews are converted, and again settled in the land of Canaan; that they are then to be invaded by some great and powerful enemy, whom God will destroy by a miraculous exertion of his almighty power, like that which we read of, Joshua x. 11. All this, I say, is clear from the prophecy itself, and from what we have said upon it; but who this great enemy may be, is not so certain. It is, however, probable from several particulars here mentioned by the Prophet concerning him, as well as from the present state of things in the political world, that the opinion commonly received is true, viz. that Gog is the Great Turk. For, 1st, he it is who is at present in possession of the holy land, and who has had it for several hundreds of years bygone; and should the Jews, by stealing a march upon him, or by any favourable concurrence of events in the course of Providence, get possession of that country, it is natural to think that he will exert his utmost force to conquer or dispossess them; and, to effect this, will collect such an army as is here described by the Prophet. 2dly, The Turks came originally out of Scythia, or the south of Tartary; and the Scythians, according to Bochart and divers learned men, are descended from Magog, the second son of Japhet. See Mede on the ixth chapter of the Revelation, and 14th verse. He is also styled chief Prince of Mesech and Tubal; that is, Cappadocia and Armenia, according to Mede, who gives the following



following reason for this opinion : The Cappadocians were anciently called Moschi, and their chief town Mazaca. The mountains called Moschi were also in that country; which names makes it probable that the inhabitants were derived from Mesech. The Further Armenia is at this day called Turcomania, where was formerly the city of Thelbalana, which is not unlike Thubal or Tubal; but these countries are at present subject to the Turk, and therefore he must be Gog. 3dly, This army of Gog is described as consisting chiefly of horsemen, chap. xxxviii, verses 14. and 15.; a description that agrees exactly to the Turk, whose armies abound so much in cavalry, that a horse's tail is carried before the General and principal officers, as an ensign expressive of their military exploits, and shewing where their main strength lies. This also is the very character by which the army of the four angels, in the ixth of the Revelation, are designed; which passage all commentators agree in applying to the Turks. In both places they are represented as innumerable; another circumstance that points out the meaning, and serves to shew that the same nation or people is intended in both. 4thly, That the Turk is Gog, will appear further evident, if we consider the character and situation of the nations that are here represented as joining with him. These are at present all Mahometans, which makes it probable that he himself is also of that religion. But it cannot be the Persians, for they are here mentioned as his allies or assistants; nor the Great Mogul, who is also Mahometan and of Scythian extract; for his dominions lie to the east, or rather south east of Judea; whereas

whereas Gog is said to come from his place, out of the north parts. It cannot be the Arabians, for they lie directly south, and are probably the Cushites, or Ethiopians, here mentioned among the allies of Gog; for according to the best historians and geographers, the posterity of Cush were the first that took possession of Arabia, and do at present occupy the greater part of that extensive country; and therefore, by the Ethiopians in this place, we are not to understand the inhabitants of the African Ethiopia, or Abyssinia, as it is called, but the Arabians, or Asiatic posterity of Cush, who are all Mahometans, and very likely to join with Gog against the Jews, as they are here said to do; but for this reason, as well as for that mentioned above, they cannot be Gog himself. Neither can it be any of the Mahometan nations inhabiting the north of Africa, for they lie to the S. W. of Judaea, and are also mentioned among the allies of Gog, under the name of Lybians. Thus it appears, that the description which the prophet here gives of Gog, agrees to none of these nations, and besides these there is no other nation or power that professes the Mahometan religion at present in the world but the Turk: He therefore must of necessity be the person intended by Gog. And as a farther proof of this, we may observe, that the Lybians, or states of Barbary, who are here mentioned among the allies of Gog, are intimately connected with the Turk. They are not only of the same religion with him as the Persians and Cushites, or Arabians also are; but their forms of government and laws are the same. They were once subject to the Turk, and though now independ-

ent, their armies still consist chiefly of Turkish soldiers, and some of them pay a sort of homage and tribute to him: Who therefore is so likely in a time of need to solicit their aid, or to obtain it, as He? Another remarkable circumstance in this prophecy, which proves that the Turk is Gog, is that the isles are mentioned as subject to him, and said to suffer with him; for immediately after describing his fall in the 4th and 5th verses of the 39th chapter, it is added, "And I will send a fire upon Magog, and on them that dwell carelessly in the isles." By the isles in Scripture, is commonly meant those of the Mediterranean, as they lie nearest to Judea, and were those with which the sacred writers were best acquainted; but these are almost all subject to the Turk; besides, he possesses all the countries of Greece and Lesser Asia, which being of an insular nature, are in Scripture sometimes called islands, as Genesis x. and 5th. By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their families, where, by the isles, all interpreters understand the Mediterranean islands, together with the two great peninsulas of Greece and Lesser Asia. Farther, that by the isles, in this place, we are to understand those of the Mediterranean, is evident, because they are represented as subject to Gog, and Gog is said, chap. xxxviii. 15. to come out of the north parts; but there is no power to the north of Judea, that has so many fine islands subject to him as the Turk: and as this proves that he is Gog, so it proves also that the isles of the Mediterranean, which are subject to him, must be the isles here meant. "And I will send a fire upon Magog, and on them that dwell carelessly in the isles."

By

By Magog in this place, we are most probably to understand Lesser Asia; not only because it is here joined with the isles, as it is naturally connected with them, most of them being situated near its coast; but also because it is here that the famous Gyges or Gog, the grandfather of Croesus, formerly reigned. It was long the chief residence of the Turk before he crossed the Hellespont and conquered Greece; and it may be said to be his residence still, as it continues subject to him, and Constantinople, where his residence is, is separated from it only by a narrow strait; and for this reason, he may very properly be called Gog, as being his successor, and reigning over the same countries over which Gog formerly reigned, and them that dwell carelessly in the isles. The inhabitants of the Mediterranean isles may be said to dwell carelessly, because their insular situation is a sort of defence to them, and being under the protection of the Turk (to whom they belong), and who is one of the most formidable powers in the known world, they have long enjoyed the blessing of peace. They may be said to live carelessly also, because these islands are of so happy a climate, and so exceeding fruitful, that the inhabitants do not need so much to toil either for food or raiment as other men. Indeed, it may be said of the Turks in general, that they dwell carelessly. They are a thoughtless indolent people, who mind nothing but their pleasures. For these reasons, we imagine that the islands here mentioned, can be no other than the Grecian Archipelago, including the great peninsula of Greece itself, and other islands of the Mediterranean, which, as they are subject to the
Turk.

Turk, are most likely to suffer with him, as they are here said to do; and if by Magog we understand Lesser Asia, as I have shewn you we ought to do, we will have here the principal part, the main strength and body of the Turkish empire. What is meant by sending a fire upon these places cannot (we imagine) be particularly or with certainty known till the prophecy is fulfilled. Perhaps it is intended to signify the distress and terror that will seize the inhabitants when they shall hear from Judea of the dreadful overthrow of Gog, and of their friends and relations that have perished with him; or it may signify some great calamity that is immediately to succeed the former; and perhaps to touch them still more nearly. "And I will send a fire upon Magog, and on them that dwell carelessly in the Isles." Thus we have taken a view of all the nations that are here mentioned as subject to Gog, or joining with him, except the two last, viz. Gomer, and the house of Togarmah. Who these are, is not so easy to determine; nor is it very material, as the general meaning and intent of the prophecy can be ascertained without it. The most probable opinion is, that they are some of the nations of Europe, who, from covetousness or such like motives, will at that time join with the Turk in his expedition against the Jews. Gomer (it is generally thought) was the father of most of the nations that first settled in Europe, such as the Celtae and Teutones. See the Universal History. Pool thinks that by Gomer, we are to understand the inhabitants of Galatia, Phrygia, Bythinia, and by the house of Togarmah, those of Paphlagonia and Cappadocia, all countries

tries of Lesser Asia: And it is true that some of the posterity of Gomer did at first settle in these parts; but it is also true, that others of them passed over into Europe, either by the Hellespont or elsewhere; for that several of the nations of Europe are descended from that Patriarch, has been sufficiently proved by the authors above mentioned and others. I say therefore, it is probable, that some of the European nations are here meant; but which of them it is, time only can discover: For there is no great connection betwixt the Turk and any of these nations at present. Some of them indeed have made treaties of peace and commerce with him, and some of them do too much resemble him in their antichristian principles and temper; but that is all: There is at least no such connection betwixt him and any of them as there is betwixt him and the nations above mentioned. Leaving therefore Gomer and the house of Togarmah out of the account, as we are still in a great measure uncertain what nations are meant by these names, we have here a great many besides whose situation and character are pretty well known, and have been ascertained, viz. the Persians, the Cushites or Arabians, the Lybians or nations of Barbary, Magog or Lesser Asia, the inhabitants of Greece and of the Mediterranean isles; and these, as we have shewn, are all connected by their religion, and some of them also by other ties, which makes what is here foretold of their future combination against the Jews the more probable.

And here we cannot help observing, that the connection which at present subsists betwixt these powers
affords

affords no contemptible argument in favour of Divine Revelation. For here it is plainly intimated, that in some future period there would be a connection betwixt these powers ; for a combination without a connection, without some principle or motive to induce men to combine or unite, never was or can be ; and who, without the spirit of prophecy, could at such a distance of time, foresee that ever there was to be any connection betwixt the powers here mentioned. There was no connection betwixt them in the prophet's time, nor the smallest likelihood that ever there would be any, much less such a connection as would induce them all to join together in a war against the people of God. The Persians, the people at Constantinople or in Lesser Asia ; the inhabitants of Algiers, Morocco, and Tunis, were in those days too unlike in their manners, and lay at too great a distance from one another, to give the smallest ground for thinking that ever there would be any connection betwixt them. The bond of connection which at present subsists between these nations, is therefore in part a fulfilling of this prophecy of Ezekiel's a proof of its divine inspiration, and a sure pledge of the full accomplishment thereof in due season.

That the Jews will one day be converted and settled again in their native country, has been already proved by a variety of arguments, and will appear still more probable from what we have farther to add upon this subject : That the Turk, if his power and government continue so long, will not be an idle spectator of the revolution, will not tamely suffer them both to get and keep possession, is natural to think.

Judea

Judea is one of the finest provinces of his empire, and it is not to be expected that he will easily give it up, but rather that he will stir up all his strength and might to oppose them, either to hinder their getting possession at first, or afterwards to wrest it from them: and the religious connections that at present subsist betwixt him and the nations before mentioned, make it exceeding probable that they will join with him; for not to speak of their regard for the Turk, which I believe with many of them is not great, yet concern for the honour and safety of the Mahometan religion, of which the Turk is one of the principal supports, and fear lest the growing interests of Christianity should prove fatal to it; their hatred of the Jews, envy at their prosperity, and the hope of enriching themselves by their spoils, are all motives that must have great weight with them to make them join with the Turk on this occasion. Thus all things conspire to augment the probability of the events predicted in this prophecy. And as the future conversion and restoration of the Jews is the principal and leading event on which all the other events here mentioned depend, and of which they seem to be the natural consequence, so the probability of these other events adds to that of their future conversion and restoration.

Another of those passages where the restoration of the Jews is expressly foretold, is Hosea iii. 4. " For
 " the children of Israel shall abide many days with-
 " out a king, and without a prince, and without a
 " sacrifice. Afterward shall the children of Israel
 " return and seek the Lord their God, and David
 " their king, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness
 " in

“ in the latter days.” To which the words of Ezekiel exactly agree, “ And I will set up one Shepherd, and he shall feed them; even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them.” These passages cannot be understood of David himself, who was dead long before they were written, nor yet of the ordinary posterity of David; for, excepting Zerubbabel, none of that family ever reigned over the Jews after the captivity, much less over the whole house of Israel. It must therefore be understood of Messiah, the son of David. And what confirms this interpretation is, that it is said this should be in the latter days. Read also the ixth chap. of Amos, from the 9th ver. to the end, and the prophecy of Obadiah, from the 17th verse to the end. To which we may add the words of our Saviour, Luke xxi. 24. “ And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;” which evidently implies, that when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, Jerusalem shall no longer be trodden down, but be rebuilt and inhabited again by her own people. By the times of the Gentiles we are most probably to understand the time, times and a half, or the 1260 years of the reign of the Beast, so often spoken of in Daniel and the Revelation. If this conjecture is well founded, the restoration of the Jews will fall in with the destruction of spiritual Babylon, as seems to be elsewhere intimated.

X Another proof of the future restoration of the Jews, is their present wandering and unsettled state. That
in

in all the countries where they are, they should, generally speaking, have no property, either in houses or lands, no heretable possession, or share in the government, or any thing to detain them from returning to their native country, in case an opportunity should happen, looks as if Providence intended one day to turn back their captivity, and to put them in possession of their ancient inheritance. The many disappointments which that people have met with in attempting to obtain a settlement, or the privileges of citizens in different countries, may indeed be looked upon as a punishment, and part of the curse that lies upon them for their sin in crucifying the Saviour, and continuing so long to reject his Gospel, and no doubt so it is: but when we consider the kindness of Providence to them in other respects, his preserving, supporting, and even multiplying them, notwithstanding the numberless massacres and persecutions they have sustained, ~~and especially his granting them a temporal blessing, making them to flow in riches, and worldly wealth;~~ I say, when we consider these things, we cannot help thinking that Providence, in disappointing them of a settlement, has some other end in view, besides punishing them for their infidelity; for if this were his only end, why not punish them in their worldly circumstances, why not disappoint them in the pursuit of riches, as well as in their attempts to obtain a settlement? This would render his displeasure against them for their infidelity still more evident; but the designs of Providence must not thwart one another; and if it is decreed that the Jews shall one day return to their

native country and be settled there, they must have
 † the means of doing this. If we deny the restoration
 of the Jews, we will find it hard to account for their
 — worldly prosperity. It cannot be owing to their vir-
 tue or goodness, for they are a wicked people and
 visibly under a curse; every where exiles, hated and
 persecuted, having a desire to return to their native
 country, or to obtain a settlement some where else,
 but unable to accomplish either the one or the other.
 † But if we admit of their future restoration, then the
 reason not only of their worldly prosperity, but of all
 the other dispensations of Providence towards them
 is most apparent. He denies them a settlement in
 the countries where they are, to prevent their hav-
 ing any attachment to them, and that they may be
 under no temptation to stay still, or look back when-
 soever they are called, in the course of Providence, to
 remove; and for this reason, also, he suffers them to
 be hated and persecuted, namely, that they may be
 the more willing to quit the places where they are so
 used; and lastly, he endues them with riches, that
 they may have wherewith to support themselves on
 their journey to their native country, and to esta-
 blish themselves therein: for as many of them live
 at a great distance from Palestine, to travel so far, and
 to erect a settlement to themselves, in a country al-
 most desolate, is a thing not to be done without con-
 siderable wealth, and their being endued with such
 wealth, as it renders their return possible, so it adds
 to the probability of it. Thus both the kindness and
 severity of Providence towards this people, serve to
 confirm.

confirm the doctrine I have been endeavouring to prove, viz. their future conversion and restoration.

And as the Jews are in a state that fits them for returning to their native country, so their native country is in a state that fits it for receiving them ; in other words, as they are prepared for it, so it is prepared for them, being in a great measure desolate, or so thinly peopled, that there is no ground to fear any opposition the inhabitants are able to give them, suppose they were inclined to give them any ; but there is no reason to believe the inhabitants of Palestine will be disposed to make any opposition to the return of the Jews. They are many of them Christians, and who for that reason, one would think, would rather rejoice to see the fulfilment of Scripture prophecy in the conversion and restoration of God's ancient people ; and though there are a great many Mahometans among them also, yet, if we may credit the accounts of modern travellers, they are all weary of the Turkish yoke. Besides, there is ground, from Scripture, to believe that some, at least, of the present inhabitants of Palestine will be assisting to the Jews in their endeavours to recover the possession of it. It is said, Isaiah xi. 14. " They shall fly on the " shoulders of the Philistines." And it is remarkable that the Druises, who inhabit the sea coast and Mount Lebanon, are thought by some historians to be the descendants of the ancient Philistines ; but supposing they are not, yet inhabiting the same country, and having no doubt a remnant of the old inhabitants among them, they may very properly be called by the same name. They are also the most civilized and independent

dependent tribe ; and therefore it is probable, they may be among the first to throw off the Turkish yoke and to assist the Jews.

What has been said of the conversion of the Jews, is true also of their restoration, or return to their native country, viz. that the possibility of the thing infers the probability of it. This, I confess, is not always a good argument ; there are many things possible which are by no means probable ; but in this instance the argument is good. That in a course of so many ages, as have elapsed since the dispersion of the Jews, nothing should have happened to render their restoration utterly impossible, or to frustrate the promises of Scripture concerning it, adds much to the probability of it. That notwithstanding the many dreadful persecutions they have sustained, their various emigrations from one country to another, they have neither been totally destroyed or extirpated from the face of the earth, nor lost and confounded with the rest of mankind, as has happened to other conquered nations, nor yet been able to obtain a settlement in any of the countries where they have sojourned ; all of which would have prevented the accomplishment of the prophecies concerning their restoration, looks as if Providence intended one day to turn back their captivity, and to put them once more in possession of their native country. The great obstacle to the restoration of the Jews, or their return to the land of Canaan, is, that it is at present in the hands of the Turks, a great and powerful nation, and who, supposing the Jews were converted, and attempting to get possession of it, would no doubt oppose them with all their

their might. Thus, as the idolatry of the western Antichrist is the grand obstacle to the conversion of the Jews, so the power and policy of the eastern Antichrist is the main hinderance to their restoration. But the Turk is now no more that formidable enemy he was some centuries ago. He has been several times humbled of late, and had it not been for the assistance of some people, would in all probability have been humbled much more. His power, like that of the Pope, is daily falling, (see Volney's Travels); and it is to be hoped that this obstacle to the restoration of the Jews will soon be removed. The Turks are a vile indolent people. They occupy the finest countries in the known world without bestowing due culture on them, Egypt, Chaldea, Palestine, and in a word all the countries so much famed in Scripture and ancient history are in their possession: but in what state are they? In many places little better than a wilderness, and do not maintain the tenth part of the people they did in ancient times, and all this through the corruption and oppression of the Turkish government. The poor Christians are in a particular manner oppressed and persecuted under it; and therefore it is to be hoped that the Divine Being, as he cannot be indifferent to the interests of his creatures, will, ere long, interpose for their deliverance, and destroy them who destroy the earth, Rev. ii. 18. Not that I look upon the total downfall of the Ottoman empire as an event that is soon to happen, or as a thing necessary to the restoration of the Jews, for Scripture in several places seems plainly to intimate the contrary, viz. that there will be a remnant of the Antichristian powers till

till the Millennium, Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix, chapters, and Daniel xi. chapter towards the end, compared with the beginning of the xii. chapter and 2d Thessalonians 2d chapter and 8th verse. It is enough if the Ottomans are so far humbled and weakened as not to be able to hinder the return of the Jews, whensoever the time appointed for it shall come, and they may very soon be so far humbled, and afterwards get up again, so as to be able to make that invasion upon the Jews, which we read of Ezekiel xxxviii, and xxxix. chapters. Many things may happen to open up a door for the return of the Jews besides the total overthrow of the Ottoman empire. Any great revolution, such as the revolt of any of the principal provinces, under some able leader like Ali Bey, who, to encourage the Jews to join with him, should make them an offer of the Holy Land; or should the Jews themselves rebel, and get some ally to assist them, or should their conversion happen at a time when the Turk was deeply engaged, either with some dangerous insurrection at home, or at war with some powerful neighbour; in any of these cases the prophecies concerning the restoration of the Jews might very soon be fulfilled. But suppose we could not see how it was possible for the Jews to get possession of the land of Canaan, it would not follow that the thing is in itself either impossible or improbable; God sees many things which we cannot see, and can accomplish his designs by a thousand means which we can neither foresee nor imagine. So long as the land of Judea remains, and the Jews continue to be a people, it is certainly in the power of God to give them

them possession of it; and as he has promised to do it, were it impossible that it could be effected by ordinary means, rather than that his word should fail, we need not doubt but he would accomplish it by a miracle.

HAVING shewn what ground there is, in Scripture and reason, to believe in the future conversion and restoration of the Jews, we shall now enquire what reason there is to hope that this blessed event is near. And, in the first place, one reason we have to hope so, is, the great discoveries that have of late been made with respect to the meaning of the prophecies which relate to this event, and the light that has been thrown on the Scriptures in general, whereby many difficulties and objections, that were not a little stumbling, have been cleared up, and the truth of the Christian religion more fully demonstrated than ever it was since the days of the apostles: And as the evidences of Christianity seem daily to be gathering strength, through the labours of pious and learned men, and new discoveries daily making in the meaning of Scripture; it is to be hoped that, ere long, the light of Divine truth will attain such a splendour, as may, through the blessing of God, serve to dispel the prejudices of that obstinate people. I know some people deny these discoveries, and take them all for fancies and conjectures: but it is no disparagement to science, that the discoveries it makes are disbelieved or despised by the ignorant. Those who have read with care any of the learned authors that have lately treated on the prophecies, will not, I am confident, look on their interpretations as fancies; and as
for

for those who have neither studied nor read upon this subject, they are incompetent judges.* It is said, Daniel, chapter xii. and 9. the words are sealed till the time of the end. From which, and from other reasons that may be seen in Bicheno, on The signs of the times, many have inferred, that as the time when the prophecies are to be fulfilled draws near, the veil that covers them will be gradually taken off, or they will become clearer and clearer; and that so many learned men have, of late been stirred up to study the prophecies, and enabled to throw so much light upon them, to explain them with so much clearness and precision, is, in my opinion, a proof, it affords at least a probability, that the time of their accomplishment is fast approaching.

Another reason for thinking that the conversion of the Jews is at hand, is the terrible height to which vice and infidelity is of late arrived. This as it requires an extraordinary remedy, so it seems to indicate the approach of some great revolution that may help to awaken and convince men of the truth of religion, such as the conversion of the Jews, or the fall of Antichrist would do. Probably both these events are near, and coming as an aid to religion in her present time of need. And though God has many remedies, both ordinary and extraordinary, for the evils which he suffers to take place in the world; yet, that the times stand in need of such a remedy, renders it at least

* The authors here referred to, are chiefly Bishop Newton on the Prophecies, the works of Mr Joseph Mede, and Lowth on Isaiah; M^r Knight too has wrote well on this subject, particularly on the prophetic psalms. See his truth of the Gospel.

least probable that some such event is at hand. The Apostle tells us, that the conversion of the Jews will be like life from the dead ; which seems to imply, that at the time when this event shall take place, the church of Christ will be in a dead state ; and that it is so at present, hardly needs to be proved. Besides the general corruption of manners, and the prevalence of vice among all ranks, a spirit of atheism and infidelity is gone abroad into the world. In France, Voltaire and Buffon, and in Britain, David Hume, Lord Kames, and Gibbon, have done their utmost to raze the foundation of Christianity : And though their arguments signify nothing at bottom, yet they are so subtile and specious, that it requires more patience and a greater measure of learning to confute them, than the most part of people are possessed of ; hence it is, that multitudes have been misled and perverted by them. Our great prosperity, and the increase of our worldly wealth, owing chiefly to the extension of our commerce, and our conquests in the East and West Indies, has also helped very much to corrupt us ; for the natural tendency of prosperity is to corrupt men's morals, and bad morals, or a bad practice, naturally leads to bad principles : but whatever be the cause, that we are of late, namely, within these thirty or forty years, much fallen off from the zeal and spirit of our forefathers, in religious matters, is a fact too evident to admit of any dispute, and will be denied by none, but such as love to question the most palpable truths. I will not venture to affirm, that we are quite as bad as in the times of Popery and Paganism ; but certain it is, that since the establish-

ment of the reformed religion, this kingdom never abounded with so many open and avowed enemies to Christianity. Never was infidelity, contempt of religious ordinances, libertinism, luxury, and oppression so prevalent. Never was there so many divisions in the church, greater heat about circumstantialia, and less regard paid to real and vital religion. Never was the Sabbath so openly profaned, nor religious conversation so much out of fashion; nay, such is the degeneracy of the times, that the most opposite and contrary vices have combined to make up our character: we are at the same time covetous and voluptuous, selfish and profuse, full of compliment and civility, and void of real friendship; and, so far as I can understand, things are much in the same state on the continent, or rather in a worse; at least this is the case in France, where the rulers and representatives of the nation have openly avowed their disbelief of the Gospel of Christ, changed the laws and broken the everlasting covenant; so that there is a general off-falling in all parts of Christendom, and among all sects and denominations. Iniquity abounds, and because of this, the love of many is waxen cold. This general decay of piety, and increase of vice and irreligion, as it seems to require the interposition and special aid of Providence to remedy it, so we need not doubt but he will, in his own good time and way, interpose or grant that aid. He has promised, that the name of Christ shall endure for ever, and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church; and therefore, however general or deep the apostacy may be, we need not fear, lest the

the religion or people of Christ should be rooted out : when the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.

As the times of the church's greatest prosperity on earth have always been preceded by a time of darkness and trouble ; so it is to be hoped, that the present night of war, vice, and irreligion, that overspreads Europe, is only the forerunner of a bright and glorious day, wherein righteousness, peace, and truth shall prevail. When it shall please God, by some signal manifestation of his power and Providence, to stop the present growth and progress of vice and infidelity, we know not, because we cannot know how long God will bear with the wickedness of men, nor when the disease is come to a proper crisis ; but as infidelity and contempt of religion are already come to a prodigious height, and every day increasing, there is the greatest reason to think that the time is not very distant. It is time for thee to work, for they have made void thy law. As to the nature of the remedy that God designs to apply, what or of what kind it shall be, becomes us to enquire with the greatest modesty, and cannot be known with certainty till time discover it ; but so far as we can judge, there is no remedy so likely to produce the desired effect, no revolution or event so well calculated to stop the mouths of infidels, and to strengthen the faith of God's people, as that which we have already mentioned, viz. the conversion of the Jews. For as this event, with many of its circumstances and concomitant events, is most clearly and distinctly foretold in Scripture, and in a
great

great variety of places ; and as it is an event which no human wit or sagacity could foresee, especially at a time so distant as that wherein the prophets who have foretold it lived, it must, whensoever it shall please God that it happen, afford men the most ample and satisfactory proof of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures, and of the truth of the Gospel. But this is not all : the conversion of the Jews would demonstrate the truth of Christianity, not only as it would be a most remarkable fulfilment of Scripture prophecy, but also, were it to happen at such a time as this, it might well be considered as a declaration of Providence in its favour. The ingathering of so great and mighty a people into the church of Christ, at a time when his religion is attacked by so many great and powerful enemies, and when there is such an off-falling among all ranks, especially when a whole nation has apostatized from the faith, might well be looked on as a proof of God's special regard for this religion, and that, in spite of all opposition, he will support it ; and whether the Jews be converted at this time or not, it will in all probability be at such a time as this.

Another reason for thinking that the conversion of the Jews is at hand, is, that most of the obstacles that have hitherto hindered it are now removed. The chief hinderances to the conversion of that people, are, 1st, Their carnal hopes of temporal greatness, by means of the Messiah ; 2dly, Their prejudices against Christianity on account of the cross of Christ ; 3dly, The prevalence of Popery or idolatry in the Christian world. The first hinderance is, their carnal

nal hopes of temporal greatness, by means of the Messiah. The Jews are too sensible not to see, that something like a temporal kingdom is promised them in Scripture. All the prophets speak of their restoration in the latter days, of their being again put in possession of their ancient inheritance, and constituting under Christ a glorious and happy church. Ezek. xxxvi. and xxxvii. chapters, and Hosea ii. and iii. chapters, Isaiah xlix. lx. and lxi. chapters; and when this shall happen, it is not to be doubted but they will make the first people on earth, as is evident from the passages just now quoted: Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your ploughmen and vine dressers; but ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the ministers of our God. So Micah iv. and 8. "And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion, the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem."

Hence it is probable, that the Jews after their conversion and restoration will enjoy some kind of superiority over the rest of mankind. The nations perhaps will do them homage, as lately they did to Britain, or perhaps employ them as pastors and ministers of the Gospel; as seems to be implied in that text, ye shall be named the priests of the Lord, men shall call you the ministers of our God. At any rate, all good men will reverence and honour them, on account of their antiquity, their near relation to Christ, and the many spiritual blessings and advantages the world has enjoyed by their means. They will

will be a free, flourishing, and happy people, and in all probability make the greatest figure of any on the face of the globe.* All which seems necessary to compensate the state of humiliation and contempt which they have so long endured. The weakness of Christians in denying these things, has hitherto very much prejudiced the Jews against the religion of Christ; but now that our divines do generally admit of the restoration of the Jews, and have got into a way of explaining the prophecies that is more favourable to the hopes of that people, and at the same time perfectly consistent with the truth of the Gospel, this obstacle

* Certain it is, there is no country in the world that enjoys so many advantages as Judea or the land of Palestine. It is in Scripture styled "The glory of all lands, a land flowing with milk and honey, a land of wheat and barley, of vines, figs, pomegranates, and oil olive; whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass." It is situate in the best of climates, and if it were stocked with inhabitants, and properly cultivated, there is no doubt but it would soon become as Ezekiel prophesies of it, "Like the garden of Eden." There is one advantage peculiar to it, namely, it is the most central or proper place for navigation and commerce of any in the world. Being situate near the centre of the eastern continent, and bordering upon the Mediterranean and Red seas, its inhabitants have an easier access than those of any other country to all different parts of the globe. By sailing down the Arabian gulf, they can go to any part of the East Indies, or of the eastern coast of Africa, in the third part of the time that they must take who sail from any of the ports of Europe. And by being situate at the bottom of the Mediterranean, they have an easy access to all its numerous coasts and harbours, as well as to those of the Euxine or Black sea. It is true, Egypt enjoys these advantages also; but then it is farther from the centre of the continent, and consequently not so fit for an inland trade.

stacle to their conversion seems now to be in a great measure removed.

Another hinderance to the conversion of the Jews, is their prejudices against the Christian religion on account of the cross of Christ. This the Apostle tells us was a stumbling block to the Jews in his days, and I believe it is so still. The Gospel, as they imagine, reflects the greatest dishonour upon their nation. It charges them with the greatest of all crimes, viz. murdering the Son of God; and therefore it is no wonder than they are unwilling to confess it, or own its truth. But this need be no obstacle to their conversion, did they but rightly consider the matter, since they have just about as much honour by the Gospel as dishonour. It is true they crucified the Lord of glory, which is a reproach to them; but they have the honour of being his kinsmen according to the flesh, of being the people from whom our Saviour and his apostles descended, and by whom the whole world has been enlightened, converted, and brought to the knowledge of salvation, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the giving of the law, whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. We do ill to upbraid the Jews with our Saviour's crucifixion; we are all in some sense guilty of it as well as they. It was our sins that crucified the Lord of glory, the Jews were but the instruments; our sin was the procuring cause of his crucifixion; and if they are more nearly related to his murderers, so are they also to Christ himself. The modern Jews
are

are indeed the offspring of them that crucified the Saviour, but they themselves had no actual hand in it, nor are they in any sense more guilty of it than we, save only this, that by their unbelief and enmity to Christ, they shew that they allow the deeds of their fathers; and therefore would they but repent and acknowledge Christ, their reproach would soon be all wiped away.

Another hinderance to the conversion of the Jews, is the prevalence of Popery in the Christian world. How this has operated to hinder the entrance of the Jews into the Christian church, we have shown at great length in a former discourse, and shall not repeat what was there said, but only observe, that as Antichrist has lately received a terrible blow by the revolution of France, and is every day falling, it is to be hoped this obstacle to the conversion of the Jews will very soon be totally removed. Thus it appears, that most of the obstacles that have hitherto hindered the conversion of the Jews are now in a great measure removed, which surely gives ground to think that the time to favour them is near.

That the conversion of the Jews is an event at no great distance, will appear farther probable from the following enquiry into the ends of Providence in excluding them so long from his church. These ends I have been at great pains to investigate, and so far as I have been able to discover them, it appears that most, if not all of them, are now in a great measure attained.

Enquiry.

An Enquiry into the ends of Providence in excluding the Jews so long from the Church of Christ.

ONE of the ends of the Divine Being in enduing us with a principle of reason, was that we might be able thereby to search into, and understand, although but in part, the nature of his manifold works, and to trace his glorious perfections as displayed in them. As reason is the noblest faculty in man, so this is the noblest use he can make of his reason. Such enquiries, besides exercising and improving our faculties, afford much innocent pleasure to the contemplative mind. They tend moreover to strengthen our faith in the being and perfections of God, and to inspire us with sentiments of love and gratitude to him; for the more we search into his works, the greater reason we shall see to admire his infinite wisdom and goodness. This is true of all the works of creation, and it is no less so of all the works or dispensations of Providence, particularly that dispensation which has so long been, and is still to be, the subject of our discourse.

The obstinacy of the Jews, in continuing so long to reject the offers of the Gospel, and to resist the clear evidence both of Scripture and reason, has been matter of grief to the godly in all ages, and even caused some to doubt whether they will ever be converted or not. But if the thing is in itself possible, and if wise and good reasons can be given why it has been so long deferred, then all objections against it on account of the long continuance of their infidelity must signify nothing. That the thing is in itself possible, none who believe the almighty power of God can

doubt. However strong the prejudices of that people are, certainly the Divine Being can overcome them, and either give them such evidence as will be sufficient to satisfy their doubts, or dispose their minds to acquiesce in that degree of evidence which he has already given them, and which has been found sufficient to satisfy other people. As for the reasons why Providence has been pleased so long to exclude the Jews from the church of Christ, they are pretty obvious, and some of them have been already noticed in the two preceding discourses upon this subject. As, first, That they might be a standing evidence of the truth of the Scriptures. Had the Jews been converted at a much earlier period, for example, 1000 years ago, one of the strongest arguments in favour of Christianity, must by this time have lost much of its force. I mean, that which is drawn from the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning our Saviour. The Scriptures in that case had been of a long time only in the hands of Christians, and it might have been alledged by Infidels, that they had been in some former period corrupted to favour the cause of Christianity; and we, who live at this distance of time, would not have been so able to demonstrate the contrary: but since these Scriptures have been all along in the hands of the bitterest enemies of the Christian name, and the Old Testament that we have at present is the same, word for word, with that which is used by the Jews at this day, we have the strongest proof that can be desired, that it has not been corrupted with a view to favour the Christian cause. For it is not to be supposed that the Jews would do
this,

this, or, if the Christians had done it, that the Jews would have submitted to it, or admitted such corruptions into their Bibles. If, therefore, the prophecies of the Old Testament that favour the cause of Christianity were ever interpolated or foisted into the text, it must have been before the coming of our Saviour; but neither can this supposition be admitted, for since these prophecies have all been exactly fulfilled in HIM, then we must acknowledge, that those who thus corrupted the sacred text were divinely inspired, which is absurd. The Scriptures of the Old Testament were in the hands of the Jews long before they came into those of the Christians; and therefore might have been corrupted by the former, but could never be by the latter; and consequently every argument taken from the prophecies concerning the Messiah has a double force; because they might once have been clearer or more favourable to the cause of Christianity, but could never be less so. From all which it is evident, that the unbelief of the Jews was absolutely necessary to assure us of the authenticity of the Scriptures, and is the very thing that confirms the Christian's faith, and it is for this reason that they have been so long excluded from the church of Christ. But now that the Scriptures are dispersed through most countries of the world, and translated into almost all the different languages thereof,—now that learning is become so general, and the art of printing has been invented, by which means different editions of the Scriptures are in every body's hands, it must be utterly impossible that ever a general corruption, or even any material alteration should hap-
pen

pen to the sacred text ; and therefore, though the Jews should now be converted, posterity will have no reason to doubt of the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures. This end of Providence in rejecting the Jews, seems therefore now to be answered,

Another reason why the Jews have been so long excluded from the church of Christ, is for a terror to the rest of mankind, that it might serve to convince the world of the great sin and danger of unbelief. For this end they were at first rejected, and for this end they have been so long excluded from the church. And considering the greatness of their offence, the infinite dignity and spotless innocence of that Divine person whom they betrayed and murdered, it was highly proper that Providence should testify his displeasure against them, not only by the greatness, but also by the length or continuance of their sufferings : and though we cannot take upon us to say what precise time is most proper for answering that end, or how long the sufferings of the Jews should last, so as best to answer the end of Providence in punishing them, yet we cannot help thinking, that it is now in a great measure attained. They have now suffered for such a length of time, as, taking the degree of their sufferings into the account, leaves no room to doubt of the cause of them. Indeed, were their punishment to be in exact proportion to the greatness of their crime, we might for ever despair of their conversion. But as Providence does not punish but for wise ends, nor any longer than is necessary to attain these, so, when once all his ends in punishing the Jews are attained, we need not doubt but he will turn to them, and have mercy on them.

Another

Another of the ends that the Divine Being seems to have had in view in excluding the Jews so long from the church of Christ, is to evidence the reality of his Providence. or to shew that there is a Divine hand in the things that have befallen and that are yet to befall them, namely, their unbelief, their dispersion, long captivity and sufferings, and especially their future conversion. That the Jews should continue so long to reject the Gospel, contrary to the clearest evidence both of Scripture and reason, contrary to their interest and worldly advantage, and in spite of every means that has been used or can be devised by Christians to convince them, is truly wonderful, and not to be accounted for in a natural way; and the longer they persevere in this their unbelief, the more wonderful it must appear. The same may be said of their future conversion. The longer they have continued to reject the Gospel, and to hold out against the means that have been used to convince them, the more surprising must their conversion be, and the more evidently it must appear to be the work of God. Had their conversion happened at a very early period it would have been less wonderful. It might have been looked on as an accidental or common thing, as the natural effect of reason, or of the means used by Christians for their conversion. But should it happen now, after so long a continuance in unbelief, and after so many fruitless attempts to convert them, it could be ascribed to nothing but to the special Providence or to the power and spirit of God. The longer the disease has lasted, generally speaking, the more deadly and desperate it is, and the more it requires the aid

aid of the Almighty physician to remove it. And, for this reason, God sometimes defers his help, till other remedies have been tried in vain, or suffers the disease to go on and gather strength, on purpose that the cure may more evidently appear to be his own.

Our modern infidels deny that there is any thing wonderful in the unbelief of the Jews. It is plainly say they owing to the want of evidence. The proofs of Christianity are not sufficiently clear to convince a rational enquirer. But is it not somewhat strange, that the evidence which satisfies men of all other classes and denominations, cannot satisfy them; for certain it is, that men of all nations, tempers, characters, and descriptions, have believed the Gospel, and been brought over from infidelity, or the profession of a different religion, to that of Christianity. The rich, as well as the poor, men of learning and of the brightest parts, as well as the simple and illiterate; nay, many great and powerful nations have been converted, and do at this day make profession of the Christian religion; but of the Jews, scarce above two or three real converts are made in a century. But it will be said, there are many nations who do not believe the Gospel as well as the Jews; why then should we wonder at the unbelief of the one more than of the other? The answer is plain. The nations referred to, live without the pale of the church, and have never had the Gospel fairly offered or represented to them. They know little or nothing of the Christian religion, or of the evidences thereof: whereas, the Jews live in great numbers among Christians, and thereby have daily access to know the Gospel,

Gospel, and much pains also has been taken to convert them; and this is that which makes their unbelief wonderful: Besides, it is a known fact, that one will convert a heathen, a savage, a Mahometan, and even a modern freethinker, sooner than a Jew. Is it not strange that any person, much more that a whole nation, who acknowledge the divine authority of the Old Testament, should deny that of the New, which not only agrees with it in every article, but is the chief thing that verifies and proves it, and without which, the Old Testament were, as to a great part of it, nothing but a heap of ceremonies that have no meaning or intrinsic worth, or of prophecies that have never been, nor can be fulfilled. We may instance in the following passages, 1st, Haggai ii. and 6. " Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come." Now, if this prophecy was not fulfilled in the coming of our Saviour, and if the desire of all nations be yet to come, it cannot be said to be a little while to his coming, for it is already upwards of 2000 years since this prophecy was uttered. Again, it is said, Malachy iii. and 1. " And the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple." But if this prophecy was not fulfilled in the coming of our Saviour, it has never been fulfilled yet, nor can be fulfilled now; the second temple which is here spoken of, as is evident from the context, being long since destroyed. The same may be said of that prophecy of Jacob, Genesis xlix. and 10. " The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till
" Shiloh

"Shiloh come." The sceptre has long since departed from Judah; and therefore if Shiloh be not already come, he never will. So, in the lxxxix Psal. 36 ver. "it said of David, his seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me." And again, Jer. xxxiii. and 17. "David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel." Now, unless we suppose that there is one of the posterity of David still living and reigning over the church, viz. in the person of Christ, our Saviour, it is evident these promises have failed, and cannot now be fulfilled; for the posterity of David, except Christ, have all long since been cut off, or blended with the other Jews. The same may be said of what follows in the 18th verse of the same chapter. "Neither shall the Priests, the Levites, want a man before me, to offer burnt-offerings, viz. that unless we understand these words figuratively of the Ministers of the church under the New Testament. as well as of the Levites, properly so called, it is evident they have failed also; and that they are so to be understood, is farther evident from Isaiah lxvi. and 21. where, speaking of the Gentiles, he tells us, that God would also take of them for Priests and for Levites; and from that of Malachy i. and 11. "For from the rising of the sun, till the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense and a pure offering shall be offered unto my name." These passages, and many more of the same kind must, be false, if the Gospel is not true. To this the deist has a ready answer, viz. that he does not believe the Old Testament more than the New.

New. But the Jews can give no answer at all, at least no reasonable one. Therefore, I say, his unbelief is wonderful, that is, there is something strange, or supernatural in it. Is it not strange, that neither the judgments which God has inflicted on them for their infidelity, such as the destruction of their city and temple, their dispersion and long captivity, the persecutions they have almost in every age endured, their having been so often deluded and cheated, by imposters and false Messiahs, and the repeated disappointments they have met with in attempting to obtain a settlement, either in their own country or elsewhere: Is it not strange, I say, that neither these judgments, these signs of God's displeasure against them for their unbelief, nor the arguments used by learned men to convince them, nor any other motive whatever can prevail with them to become Christians; not even a regard to their own interest, to which, in other cases, they seem as sensible as any people in the world. But granting there is nothing strange in all this, what will the deist say, when he sees the Jews actually converted? Will he say of that too, that there is nothing wonderful in it? He cannot say so consistently with his principles: For if there be not sufficient evidence for the truth of Christianity, as he alleges, it is not to be thought that ever a whole nation, much less, that a nation so tenacious of their religious opinions, and that has shewn so much enmity to the Christian religion, will ever embrace it; and therefore, their conversion, if it should happen, must be a wonder indeed. The Jews have given sufficient proof, that they are not to be turned by the prospect

of gain, or of any worldly advantage ; and therefore, their conversion, if ever it happens, must be owing either to the force of reason, which supposes that there is sufficient evidence for the truth of the Gospel, or to the removal of their prejudices, which supposes, that their present unbelief is owing not to the want of evidence, but to the power of prejudice, or something supernatural, or miraculous. To those who believe the Gospel, and who see its evidences in their proper light, the conversion of the Jews, abstractly considered, would not be so wonderful as their present unbelief is, yet that, when it happens, will be wonderful.

If it is to be brought about by human endeavours, or by any means of man's devising, it may be deemed wonderful, that these means were never thought of, or tried before, (especially when so many ways have been tried, and so many great men have laboured in this field ;) or, if tried, how that which formerly had no effect should then have so great a one, as to turn a whole nation. If it is to be affected by any great revolution in human affairs, such as a general naturalization, or admission of that people to the rights of citizens over all the different states and kingdoms of Europe, an event by no means improbable at present, and which may perhaps have the effect to take off their prejudices against Christianity, and induce them to examine its evidences with more impartiality than hitherto they have done, and so be a means of bringing them to an acknowledgement of the truth ; still it would be wonderful, that such a revolution did not take place sooner. and that in every age and country, there

there has always been hitherto some bar to the naturalization of the Jews. If the fall of the Papacy is to be the means of bringing in the Jews, as very likely it is in this case too, their conversion will be wonderful, as that is an event that might have happened long ago, and, all things considered, truly surprising that it did not. For Popery is a most absurd religion, equally contrary to Scripture and common sense, and it is truly surprising that people should have so long suffered themselves to be cheated out of their senses, and their money too, by a parcel of rascals. Besides, Antichrist has been often on the point of falling; Rome has been several times taken and plundered; Popes have been set up against Popes, and sometimes two or three have reigned together; and, in a word, such strange revolutions has happened in the kingdom of the Beast, as makes it wonderful that his fall has not happened long ere now. Perhaps both these events, viz. the naturalization of the Jews, and the fall of Antichrist, may happen at a time, and contribute to produce the above-mentioned effect. But whatever be the means of the conversion of the Jews, whether a miracle, properly so called, or some extraordinary revolution, such as these just now mentioned; the thing itself will appear to be the work of God, excite the admiration of mankind, be a great means of convincing infidels, and strengthening the faith of God's people; which suggests another probable reason why the conversion of the Jews has been so long deferred; namely, that when it happens, it may prove a more powerful aid to the cause of Christianity, and afford a stronger proof of the truth thereof. The longer the Jews have resist-

ed

ed the evidences of the Gospel, the stronger must their prejudices be, and the stronger these are, the more it will shew the truth and reasonableness of that religion, the evidences of which have prevailed, and forced their assent to it. Besides, the longer they have resisted the evidences of Christianity, and the greater enmity they have shewn against it, the less ground there will be to suspect the sincerity of their conversion. To change our religion, to confess that we and our fathers have been in an error, and that too of the grossest kind; to give up opinions, which both they and we have held in the highest veneration, and to embrace those of an opposite faction, with which we have long and fiercely contended, is a thing very mortifying, and to which men are naturally averse. Hath a nation changed its Gods.—It seems a reflection on our judgment, and even on our honour; and therefore, it is not to be supposed that any reasonable man, much less that a whole nation will do it, unless constrained to it by a sense of duty or the force of truth. For these reasons, the conversion of the Jews, whensoever it shall please God that it happen, must be a great proof of the truth of the Gospel, a means of stopping the mouths of infidels and of confirming the faith of all good Christians, and more so, as it will be the accomplishment of a great many prophecies, both of the Old and New Testament, wherein this event, with several of its circumstances and concomitant events are clearly foretold. How will it redound to the honour of Christianity, to see its bitterest enemies constrained at last to acknowledge its truths; and how will it silence and confound our modern infidels

and

and deists, to see a prophecy so plain, so often repeated in Scripture, and that is well known to have been published over a great part of the world above 1700 years ago, fulfilled literally, and in every article before their eyes.

Another reason why the conversion of the Jews has been so long deferred, is to increase the joy of God's people, on account of it whensoever it shall please God that it happen. Providence often defers his blessings on purpose to enhance their worth, to make us sensible of our need of them before he bestows them, and to excite us to thankfulness when he does bestow them. Men are apt to think lightly of favours that are too easily obtained. They judge of things not according to their real worth, but according to the pains it costs them to obtain them. Therefore, God sometimes keeps back his favours, in order to whet our appetite, to excite us to fervency in praying for them, and make us more sensible of their worth, and of his goodness in bestowing them. Thus, Abraham was long married before Isaac, the promised seed, was born: The Israelites were long oppressed in Egypt, and made to travel forty years in the wilderness, before they got to the promised land: The world was near 4000 years old before Christ, the promised Saviour, came into it; and doubtless his coming was the more acceptable, and caused greater joy to the church, that it had been so long expected; and so doubtless it will be with respect to the conversion of the Jews. It cannot be but matter of great joy to all good people, to all that have any love to Christ, or concern for his interest, to see an event that is so much for his glory
and

and the good, both spiritual and temporal, of mankind; an event that has been so long looked for, so long the subject of the church's earnest prayers and wishes, and that will be such a wonderful fulfilment of Scripture-prophecy, and demonstration of the truth of the Christian religion. To see a nation once so highly favoured of God, so ancient, so honourable, so nearly related to Christ, and to which, under God, we owe our religion, and all that light and knowledge in things spiritual, which we at present enjoy, freed from that state of exile, and suffering contempt and reproach, under which they have so long groaned, and again restored to the Divine favour. This, I say, cannot but be matter of great joy to all good people, to all that have any thing of Christianity, or even of humanity in them. It must, above all, be matter of joy to the poor Jews themselves to be freed from such a state, and the longer their sufferings have lasted, the greater joy it must give them to see them brought to an end at last. This is evident; the long continuance of an affliction is an aggravation of it, and the greater any affliction is, the greater is our joy when delivered from it. It is said in the 126th Psalm, when the Lord turned back the captivity of Zion, "we were like them that dreamed," that is, their joy was so great, they could hardly believe it was real, but were almost tempted to think it was a dream; and if this was the case, when they were brought back from their first captivity, it will be still more so when they are brought back from their second. This, therefore, seems to be one of the reasons why God has been pleased to exclude the Jews from his church, to hide his

his face from them, and to afflict them for so long a time, namely, to make them more sensible of the value of his friendship, and to increase their joy, and that of the church in general, whensoever he shall be pleased again to receive them into his favour.

Another reason of this is, that when once they are converted and brought to a sense of their sin in rejecting the Gospel, it may serve as a means to prevent their falling into the same or a like sin for the future. Men are not so likely to fall into any sin after they have severely smarted for it : and surely if any thing can suffice to prevent the Jews from apostatizing, and to insure their future obedience, it must be the remembrance of their present long captivity, and the calamities they have undergone during the time of it. Indeed, the sufferings which their unbelief and disobedience to the call of the Gospel has cost them, have been so severe, and of such a long continuance, that it is not likely they will ever fall into any such heinous sin again. But as the first captivity cured them of their proneness to idolatry ; so the second, that is, their present captivity, will cure them of all those vices, for which they have so long been a by-word, and a curse to the rest of mankind, and produce a reformation upon them that will last to the end of time. Accordingly, it is promised, that when once they are brought back from their present captivity, God will no more hide his face from them nor afflict them, Ezek. xxxix. and 3. last verses, and Isa. liv. and 9. “ This is as the waters of Noah unto me ; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth ; so have I sworn, that I would not be wroth with thee

“ thee nor rebuke thee.” And this leads me to another reason, why God has been pleased so long to hide his face from his ancient people, and to afflict them; and that is, to prepare them for that state of happiness and prosperity which he intends for them when once they are brought to repentance and acknowledgement of the truth. Prosperity is a state dangerous to all men, but especially to the unprincipled and unexperienced part of mankind; therefore, when Providence intends to bestow any large measure of worldly prosperity on his own people, he always takes care to prepare them for it, by a previous course of afflictions and trials. Thus, the Patriarch Joseph went through a long series of temptations and afflictions, before he was exalted to that place of dignity and power, which he afterwards held in the court of Pharaoh. David was long hunted as a partridge in the wilderness, and persecuted by Saul, before he came to the kingdom. The Israelites were first sore oppressed in Egypt, and afterwards suffered many hardships and trials in the wilderness, before they got possession of the promised land; and, in these instances, the end of Providence no doubt was, to fit and prepare those who were thus tried for that happiness which he afterwards bestowed on them. Affliction has a natural tendency to fit men for the enjoyment of prosperity. It purifies and enlightens the mind, subdues our passions, corrects our vices, and meliorates our tempers; and so qualifies us for acting with propriety in a more exalted station. It lowers our esteem of the world, gives us a practical sense of its vanity, and of the vanity of all its enjoyments, so that

that our prosperity does not affect us as otherwise it would. It humbles our pride, makes us sensible of our weakness and dependence upon God, and so prevents our being lifted up with our prosperity. It makes us seek to God, who is the only help in time of trouble, and thereby strengthens the religious principle, which is the only safeguard to virtue, and preservative against the vices to which prosperity tempts men. Thus, adversity prepares men for the enjoyment of prosperity; and, in like manner, the long captivity and sufferings of the Jews seem well calculated to fit them for that state of prosperity, so often mentioned in Scripture, as destined for them in the latter days. It must have a great effect to convince them of the evil of sin; and consequently to fortify them against any temptations, to which such a state of prosperity may expose them, and surely if any afflictions can produce this effect, it must be those which the Jews as a people have endured; for, if we take in all the circumstances, greater sufferings than theirs never were endured by any people on earth.

2dly, The rejection of the Jews, or their having been so long excluded from the church of Christ, and in a state of exile and affliction, must have a great effect to make them kind and compassionate towards their fellow-creatures in any situation that claims their pity or assistance, especially towards such as shall still be found destitute of the means of salvation, living under the power of Heathenish and Mahometan errors. The natural effect of suffering, is to beget sympathy. Affliction softens the heart, and makes it susceptible of good impressions: *Haud ingara mali*

miseris succurre disco ; but we are most of all apt to sympathize with those whose sufferings are of the same kind with what we ourselves have formerly experienced. Now the case of the Jews at present, is much the same with that of other unbelieving nations. They are equally the children of wrath, and in danger of everlasting misery, equally strangers to the comforts of the Gospel, to the peace and joy that flows from a true and living faith in the doctrines of Christianity ; and therefore, whensoever it shall please God to rescue them from this miserable state, they cannot but be disposed to pity and succour their fellow-creatures that are still in it. I say this on the supposition, that when the Jews are converted to Christianity, there will still be occasion for the exercise of this kind of charity, still some nations, as well as individuals, without the knowledge and comforts of the Gospel ; and that they themselves, though late, will not be the last of the nations that are converted, as some have asserted, but I think without sufficient grounds. It is said indeed, Romans xi. and 25. “ That blindness in
 “ part has happened to Israel, till the fulness of the
 “ Gentiles be come ;” which seems to imply, that the Jews will not be converted till all the Gentiles are brought in. But though the words admit of this sense, they admit also of others, and no single text must be interpreted, so as to contradict the general current and tenor of Scripture, or the plain sense of a great many other texts ; for it appears from several passages of the prophets, that the Jews are first to be converted themselves, and afterwards to be the means or instruments of bringing in other nations to the
 knowledge

knowledge and faith of the Gospel. So Isaiah lx. and 3. "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." This, as the reader may see by consulting the passage, follows immediately after their restoration spoken of in the 1st and 2d verses. To the same purpose also is that of Isaiah lxvi. and 18. "It shall come to pass, that I will gather all nations, and they shall come and see my glory, and I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them, that is of the Jews, unto the nations—to the isles afar, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory, and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles." Here, I think, it is also plainly asserted that the Jews shall be the means of enlightening and converting the Gentiles. If it be said, that this prophecy has been already fulfilled, viz. when the Apostles, who were Jews by birth, were sent to distant nations to convert them; I answer, it was so in part, but that it is yet to be fulfilled in a more eminent degree, is evident from what follows in the 20th verse. "And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering to the Lord out of all the nations upon horses and in chariots, &c.:" none of which things have ever yet happened. See also the 10th, 11th, and 12th verses of the same chapter, and chapter ii. and 2. also Jeremiah iv. and 17. and chapter xii. and 16. in all which places, the happiness and restoration of Israel, is spoken of as previous to the general ingathering of the Heathen. It appears also from several passages of the prophets, that after the conversion and restoration of the Jews, there is some
great

great enemy to invade them, which it is not likely any nation professing Christianity will do: Besides, I have already shewn, that the enemy who is to do this, is no other than the great Turk: see the xxxviii. and xxxix. chapters of Ezek. and what I have said upon them, page 59 and downwards.

Another place where this enemy is spoken of, and which, like the other, proves, that for some time after the Jews are converted, there will still be some nations living in unbelief and enmity to Christ, is the 9th of Zech. and five last verses, which, as it is somewhat obscure, we shall endeavour to explain. "When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man; and the Lord shall be seen over them, &c." That this prophecy is yet to be fulfilled, appears from the following reasons: 1st, It comes in after another notable one, concerning the coming of our Saviour, and is connected with it; all the verses from the 9th, to the end of the chapter hanging upon one another, and making one continued prophecy or thread of discourse, which makes it probable, that the events here predicted viz. in the five last verses, are posterior to his appearance mentioned in the 9th and 10th verses; but since our Saviour's days, nothing like to these events has yet happened. nor have the Jews performed any exploits like to these here ascribed to them by the prophet; therefore, the accomplishment of this part of the prophecy is still future. 2dly, The events here predicted are placed by the prophet, not only after the coming of
our

our Saviour, but even after the conversion of the Jews; for of this event the 11th verse is certainly to be understood. "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water." It appears from what Mr Hutchison has said upon this passage, that the pronoun thee, in the beginning of the verse, refers not to the Messiah spoken of in the words immediately preceding, but to the daughter of Zion, in the beginning of the 9th verse, and that the whole of the 10th verse is to be considered as a parenthesis. His reasons for this opinion are pretty obvious: 1st, All that is said in the preceding context, is spoken to the daughter of Zion in the second person, or she is the person to whom the prophet addresses himself, whereas all that is said of the Messiah is spoken of him in the third person: "He is just and having salvation, &c.:" and as in the 11th verse, the prophet speaks also in the second person, it is natural to think that it is the same person that is spoken to in both places. 3dly, The connection of the words with those immediately preceding, proves this, viz. that Zion is the person spoken to. The prophet first foretels the conversion of the Gentiles, viz. in the end of the 10th verse, "He shall speak peace unto the Heathen, &c." and then adds immediately in this, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners, &c.:" Here you see the person spoken to, is distinguished from the Gentiles; and who can this be but Zion or the Jews? It is probable also, from this connection of the words, that the blessing here promised to the Jews, is of the same kind with that promised to the Gentiles,

Gentiles, namely, their conversion and restoration to the Divine favour. But let us see if the words will bear this sense: "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, &c." as if he had said, I have just now told you the designs of Providence with respect to the Heathen, that the Messiah, when he comes, will speak peace to them; i. e. by the preaching of his Apostles among them, many of them shall then be converted and brought into the church, and in process of time, the whole Gentile world shall be so: His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. As for you, O ye Jews, I have thoughts of mercy and kindness for you too; though for the punishment of your sins, your abuse of my mercies, and other holy ends, I have resolved to cast you off from being my people, and you shall accordingly be long in a state of captivity and suffering, without the light of my countenance, or any of the tokens of my favour you formerly enjoyed; yet out of this miserable state I will, for sake of the covenant or promises I made to your fathers, at last deliver you, and compensate your long sufferings by a state of the greatest prosperity and happiness that ever any people on earth enjoyed. As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water. By the blood of thy covenant, that is, by virtue of the covenant that I made with your fathers at Sinai, wherein I promised to be their God and the God of their posterity for ever, which covenant I have often since renewed with additional promises, that I would never wholly cast them off; but if for their sins they should

should be led into captivity by their enemies, I would have mercy on them, and gather them, and bring them again to their own land, and though their sins should be ever so great, I would not only forgive them on condition of their repentance, but would moreover grant them the grace of repentance, give them a new heart, put my Spirit into them, and cause them to walk in my ways. By the blood of this covenant, that is, by virtue thereof, or to fulfill the promises therein contained, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water, I have delivered thy children, O Zion, from that state of guilt and suffering, of captivity and exile, under which they have so long groaned. As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant. As Zion is the person to whom the prophet addresses himself, it is evident that the covenant here spoken of can be no other than the Sinai covenant. The Gospel or New-Testament covenant was made, not with the Israelites or Jews only, but also with the Gentiles, even with the whole elect world; and therefore the prophet, speaking to the Jews, could not with propriety call it their covenant as he does the covenant here spoken of, which must therefore be the Sinai covenant. This covenant was ratified by the shedding and sprinkling of blood, as appears from Exodus xxiv. and 8. And therefore the obligation it laid on the parties concerned to fulfil their several engagements, is here called the blood thereof. As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water. Great affliction or distress of any kind, is sometimes in Scripture represented by being cast
 into

into a pit : fo Pfalm xl. and 2. " He brought me up alfo out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, &c." See alfo Pfalm lxxxviii. and 6. It appears alfo from this of Zechariah and other places, that it was ufual in thofe days to confine prifoners and captives in pits or dungeons : fee Ifaiah xxiv. and 22. and chap. li. and 14. and Jeremiah xxxviii. and 6. And therefore it is with peculiar propriety that the phrafe is here ufed to fignify a ftate of captivity and fuffering ; fuch as that in which the Jews have now of a long time been. Wherein there is no water : this perhaps is intended to fignify the greatnefs of the mifery which the Jews, fince the commencement of their prefent captivity, have for the moft part endured, and out of which God here promifes to deliver them. As water is one of the neceffaries, and greateft bleffings of life ; fo, to be wholly deftitute of it, is a very diftreffing fituation ; and the Jews being here faid to be in this fituation, is perhaps a metaphor, to fignify the greatnefs of their diftreff during the captivity here fpoken of ; and in this fenfe it is ufed, Ifaiah xli. and 17. and Jeremiah xlviii. and 18. and divers other places : or rather by the want of water, I think we are here to underftand the want of comfort, efpecially fpiritual comfort. As thirft is a very painful fenfation and hard to be endured, it is often ufed metaphorically for affliction in general ; and as water is the principal thing that quenches thirft, or the ufual remedy for it, it is frequently put for comfort, or whatever alleviates or gives relief from pain : fee the paffages juft now quoted, alfo Ifaiah xlv. and 3. In both fenfes this part of the prophecy is literally and exactly fulfilled

filled in the present state of the Jews. They are not only in a state of exile and suffering, but they have no solid ground of comfort under it, not only hated, persecuted, and despised by the world, as many a good Christian has been; but they have not that to support them which the other commonly has. Having little knowledge of the Gospel, and no faith at all in its doctrines, they can derive no consolation from it; nay, the doubts which one would think they must at times have of its truth, cannot but fill them with terror, for having continued so long and with such enmity to oppose it. Neither can their own religion afford them any solid comfort. The Law of Moses, which is the foundation of their religion, contains but few things that can give any relief to the mind, when oppressed with a sense either of its guilt or misery, or from which a person in affliction can derive any consolation. There is in it no express mention of another life, nor of a future reward, nor promise of Divine aid; it admits of no atonement for wilful or heinous sins; nay, it makes no allowance for human frailty, but pronounces a curse upon every one, that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the Law to do them. Though the Old Testament, when spiritually, that is, when rightly understood, is the same with the Gospel; teaches the same doctrines concerning the Being and perfections of God, the fall of man and his recovery by means of a Saviour; yet what is clearly revealed in the latter, concerning many of these important truths, is in the former wholly under a veil, wrapt up in types, visions, symbolical representations, and dark prophecies, which, without a fur-

ther revelation, that is, without the Gospel, could never have been understood; and therefore, to those who have no faith in the Gospel, the Law, or Old Testament, can afford very little comfort. Though the Jews acknowledge the Being of God, and also profess to believe in a future state; yet to guilty creatures, such as we are, the knowledge of these truths, without some farther discovery concerning the mercy of God, and his willingness to be reconciled to sinners, is more apt to inspire men with fear than with hope and joy. From all which it appears, that the Jews, ever since the commencement of their present captivity, have been in a most deplorable state, not only in a state of outward affliction and trouble, but likewise destitute of all inward joy and comfort; and this is what seems to be intended by their being in a pit, in which there is no water. They want the light of God's countenance, the joy of his holy Spirit, and all the consolations which the Gospel affords; all which are in Scripture often signified by water. See, Isa. lv. and 1. Rev. xxii. and 17. John iv. and 14. and chapter vi. and 35. Out of this miserable state God here promises to deliver them, as he does in many other places: as for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein there is no water. He speaks of the future as if it were already past, by a figure of speech very common with the prophetic writers. I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit; I have delivered thee from thy long and dismal captivity: or rather, I have opened a door of mercy to thee, broken the yoke of thy oppressor, and made a way for thee to escape:

scape : so it follows, Turn ye to your strong hold, ye prisoners of hope. Flee from the land of your enemies to Zion or Jerusalem, which was once your inheritance, your glory and defence, and where you shall again find a place of refuge and safety. Turn ye to your strong hold ; so mount Zion, or the earthly Jerusalem, is expressly called, Micah iv. and 8. And thou, O Tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion. The one place seems parallel unto, and is illustrated by the other ; or, by their strong hold, we may understand Christ the rock of ages, who has been the refuge and dwelling place of his people in all generations. Taking the word in this sense, the meaning of the passage is, the time of your conversion is now come ; therefore, flee to Christ by a true and sincere repentance, return to him from whom you have revolted, and he will have mercy on you, and turn back your captivity ; even to day do I declare, that I will render double unto thee, that is, I will render thee a double recompence for thy sufferings and sorrows, make thy prosperity and happiness double of what thy affliction and misery hath been, or give thee double satisfaction on thine enemies ; that is, take double vengeance on them for the suffering which they have made thee endure : so it follows, when I have bent Judah for me, and filled the bow with Ephraim, that is, when I have made Judah my bow and Ephraim my arrow, made them the instruments in bringing down and punishing the enemies of my church and people, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, that is, against the Turks,
 who

who have their chief residence and the seat of their empire in Greece, and whose forces consist chiefly of Greek soldiers, and may therefore, with the greatest propriety, be called the sons of Greece. Against this great and formidable enemy of the church, God here promises to raise up his ancient people, and to make them as the sword of a mighty man, to hew him and cut him down. And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning; that is, he will display his power and Providence by some signal or miraculous interposition in their behalf, by granting them an extraordinary assistance, and their enemies a complete and total overthrow: all of which circumstances agree so exactly to the description that is given of the battle and overthrow of Gog, in the xxxviii. and xxxix. of Ezek. that there is no room to doubt that both places refer to the same event. And as the battle of Gog in Ezekiel is said to be after the restoration of the Jews, so must this of Zechariah. It is evident also, that at the time when this prophecy is fulfilled, the Jews are a people in favour with God, under his special protection and conduct, (see from the 13th verse to the end), which cannot be while they are in a state of infidelity and enmity to Christ, and therefore it must be some time after their conversion that this prophecy is to be fulfilled; but they are here represented as waging war with the inhabitants of Greece. When I have bent Judah for me, and filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece; consequently there must be infidels in the world at that time; because, as I said before, it is not likely that
any

any nation professing Christianity will meddle with the Jews after their conversion: Sure I am, no power that is truly Christian will do so. From what has been said, therefore, it appears, that after the conversion and restoration of the Jews, there will still be infidels in the world, not individuals only, but nations, powers and governments; namely, the Turk, and those whom we have already mentioned, as joining with him in his expedition against the Jews: consequently that of Romans xi. and 25. blindness in part has happened to Israel, &c. cannot mean, that the conversion of the Jews is not to happen till all the Gentiles are come in, but must be interpreted so as to agree with the passages above quoted.

First, Then, by the fulness of the Gentiles, we may here understand a great number or multitude of them, greater by far than was in the Apostle's days; there being many instances, both in Scripture and other good authors, of such ways of speaking, where the whole is put for a part. See John xii. and 19. Luke ii. and 1. 2dly, The word till does not always denote the precise or exact time when the thing spoken of is to happen; so till Shiloh come, does not perhaps signify till Shiloh is come, but till about the time of his coming. Accordingly, the sceptre was in a good measure departed from Judah before the time of our Saviour's public appearance. In like manner, till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, may signify till about the time when the fullness of the Gentiles is brought in; consequently, notwithstanding of this text, the conversion of the Jews may happen some little time before the general ingathering of the Heathen,

then, agreeably to what seems elsewhere to be expressly asserted. But, I confess, I am not quite satisfied with either of these ways of explaining this passage, as the words of the sacred writers are generally more precise and determinate : Therefore,

3dly, Another way of removing the difficulty, is, by altering the translation a little, which the original well admits of. The word *eiselthe*, which we render be come in, is the 2d aorist of the subjunctive, and the aorists have often the signification of the future, especially in the subjunctive and optative moods ; so the words may be rendered, till the fulness of the Gentiles is to come in, or till the time when the fulness of the Gentiles is to come in.

4thly, By the Gentiles we may understand the Roman empire, or nations belonging to it. These were the Gentiles with whom the Apostle was best acquainted, and had the greatest connexion ; the people whose Apostle he was, and for whose conversion he was raised up ; the people which then made the greatest figure of any in the world, and that do so still. They are moreover the people that was called when the Jews were cast off, and that God speaks of, Deut. xxxii. and 21. when he tells the Israelites, that because they had moved him to jealousy with that which was not God, he would move them to jealousy with those which were not a people, and provoke them to anger with a foolish nation ; that is, he would divorce them and put that nation in their place ; for though the nations that now make profession of Christianity are many, yet as they have all of them been under one government, subject either to Rome, Pagan or Papal,

Papal, they are both here and elsewhere considered by the Holy Spirit as one people. It is probable, therefore, that by the Gentiles we are here to understand, not the Heathen world at large, but the nations subject to the Roman power and monarchy, particularly those that have been subject to modern or Papal Rome. These are expressly called the Gentiles by our Saviour, Luke, xxi. and 24. Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, for by the times of the Gentiles we are here to understand, as I have already shewn the time, times and a half of the reign of Antichrist. The word seems also to be used in this sense, as Mr Poole thinks, Acts iv. and 27. and chap. xxi. and 11. Taking the Gentiles then in this place to signify the Roman monarchy, or nations subject to it, by the coming in of their fulness, we may understand their being all converted to true genuine Christianity, or brought to a right understanding of the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, which has never yet been the case; for, not to speak of individuals, of which there are vast numbers in every country grossly ignorant in matters of religion, several great nations still continue in their subjection to the church of Rome, and are in a state little if any thing at all better than Paganism. It is true, these nations were once good Christians, I mean before the rise of Popery; but when this was the case, there were other parts of Europe without any knowledge of the Gospel at all. Most of the northern nations, such as the English, Saxons, Danes, and a great part of Germany, being at that time in a state of perfect Heathenism, and by the time these were converted,

converted, the other had degenerated; so that, as I said, the whole of the Roman empire or Europe has never yet been properly converted or brought in. If it be objected, that the northern nations above mentioned were never within the pale of the Roman empire, I answer, not indeed while Rome was Pagan or under the Caesarean head, but they certainly were so afterward, when she came under the last head or during the reign of Antichrist: and it is chiefly the nations that are, and have been under his jurisdiction, that are here meant by the Gentiles. The meaning of this passage therefore is, that the blindness of the Jews will continue till all these or the greater part are properly converted, and brought to a right understanding of the doctrines and institutions of the Gospel; or, in other words, till a general reformation takes place in the church, that is, till the fall of Popery. So this passage agrees exactly with those other places mentioned before, where the conversion of the Jews is made to coincide with the fall of Antichrist, and to happen prior to the general ingathering of the Heathen. Till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, may also signify till these Gentiles are fully, that is, thoroughly converted, which, as we said before of the other sense, has never yet happened, Papists being but a sort of half Christians. But now that the reformed religion has been established, and that Popery is falling every day more and more, there is reason to hope, that the time when this prophecy will receive its accomplishment is not very distant. Mr Poole's interpretation of this passage, which the reader will find in his Notes, is, though somewhat different from the above,

above, yet agrees with it as to the main thing, namely, that the conversion of the Jews will coincide with the fall of Antichrist, and precede the general ingathering of the Heathen. But taking the words of the Apostle, Rom. xi. and 25. as they stand, or in the strictest sense, all that we can infer from them is, that the whole of the Jewish nation will not be converted till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; that is, there will always be a considerable part of them remaining in unbelief, to be witnesses to the rest of mankind of the truth of the Gospel, till the fulness of the Gentiles or greater part of them be converted; but that does not hinder why there may not be a general conversion and ingathering of them before that time. There may be a general or national conversion of that people at any given time; though many individuals, or even a considerable part of them, continue afterwards to hold out.

Thus, we say, the Scots embraced the Protestant religion in the the time of John Knox, though there were many Papists in the country after that time, and not a few continue to this day. We cannot therefore, from this passage, infer that the conversion of the Jews will not happen till all the Gentiles are brought in. The contrary is probable, nay, I think certain from Scripture, namely, that the conversion of the Jews is to precede that of the Heathen, and to be a means of it. To the passages above quoted, I shall only add another, Rom. xi. and 12. "Now, if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?" By the riches of the world and

of the Gentiles; it is evident we must here understand their conversion, and being made partakers of all the blessings and benefits of the Gospel. Now, says the Apostle, if the rejection of the Jews was the means of enlightening, converting, and saving such a number of the Gentiles, the fulness of the Jews, or the general conversion and ingathering of that people, will be the means of saving many more; which could not be, unless there were still many of the Gentiles to be converted that is in a state of unbelief. It is true, the conversion of the Jews may, and no doubt will be the riches of the Gentiles, or a blessing to them many ways, besides bringing such of them as continue in unbelief to the profession of Christianity; but this seems to be the thing chiefly intended by the Apostle; for both the fall of the Jews, and their future conversion, are here said to be the riches of the Gentiles; and as we cannot suppose, that in one and the same sentence, the Apostle would use the phrase in different senses, the rise or conversion of the Jews must be the riches of the Gentiles, in the same sense in which their fall was; but this was the riches of the Gentiles chiefly, as it was the means of their conversion; and therefore, the other, that is, the future conversion of the Jews, must be the riches of the Gentiles in that sense too; that is, a means of convincing them, and bringing them to the acknowledgement of the truth. From what has been said, therefore, it is evident, that the conversion of the Jews will precede the general ingathering of the Heathen, and be a means of it. To this end it will probably contribute several ways.

First, As it will be a great proof of the truth of
Christianity.

Christianity. The addition of so great a body of men, as that of the whole Jewish nation to the church of Christ, together with the fulfilment of so many Scripture prophecies, as those which relate to that event, will be not only a new song put into the mouths of believers, but likewise a new argument, which may be of great service to them in their disputes with infidels, or in their attempts to convince and convert them. That it will be so has been already shewn; and as the Heathen nations are many of them highly civilized, capable of examining and comprehending the force of an argument, it is to be hoped, that one so powerful and convincing, so new and striking, when properly managed, will have great weight with many of them to turn them. But,

2dly, As the Jews are a great and powerful nation, and well known in most countries, it is to be hoped, that their example in renouncing their errors, and coming over to the standard of Christ, will help to draw others after them. But besides this, there is every reason to believe, that the Jews themselves will contribute much to the conversion of the Heathen, by their labours and exertions among them for that purpose. This we think they will be inclined to do, not only from the motive before mentioned, viz. sympathy, flowing from the remembrance of their having themselves been in the same deplorable state, but also from gratitude to the Divine Being for having rescued them from it, and from a laudable ambition to retrieve the honour of their nation, and to wipe away the reproach of their former disobedience and infidelity, by some signal service done to the church

church and cause of Christ. And that the Jews, when they are converted, will exert themselves this way, viz. by endeavouring to bring over other unbelieving nations to the Christian faith, is farther probable from this, that they are of all people the best qualified for such an office. As they have long been scattered among the nations, and are to be found in most countries of the world, they must know the language, genius, and customs of most nations, and consequently how to address them and suit themselves to them. They must likewise know the several countries where they have resided, the roads and way of travelling through them, and have many acquaintances among the inhabitants; and consequently, in an attempt to convert them, they must have greatly the advantage over all other missionaries, or of any person who knows these things only by reading or report. The Jews, taken collectively, may be said to speak all languages, and to know all the countries of the world, with the genius and manners of their inhabitants; and of what use this is to qualify them for the office of spreading among the nations the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour needs not be told. Indeed, they possess in a natural way most of the endowments and qualifications, which the Apostles and first teachers of Christianity had in a supernatural. To which we may add, that there seems to be something in the genius and temper of that people peculiarly adapted to such an office. They are an active, enterprising sort of people, accustomed to travel, and seem to be fond of it. They have a good deal of patience and perseverance in their composition, are not easily turned or dissuaded from their
 their

their purpose, as their long continued adherence to their religion, notwithstanding the persecutions they have suffered on account of it sufficiently proves. They are moreover well acquainted with the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and though God has not yet given them eyes to see their meaning, their true end and scope, yet they understand the literal sense, have the words upon their memories, and can quote them. They excel also in the knowledge of the original language, and of the manners and customs of their ancestors; all of which have a direct tendency to fit them for the office above mentioned.

That the conversion of the Heathen that are still without the pale of the church, is to be effected chiefly by means of the Jews, is farther probable, from the many honours which God has already conferred on that people. They were the first church and people of God; and they long enjoyed that privilege before any other nation was admitted to it; and though several other nations have been received into the church and enjoyed the light of Divine revelation since the Jews were cast off, yet to none of them has God ever manifested his kindness in that extraordinary manner that he did to them. They were honoured to be the penmen and keepers of the sacred oracles, the instruments by which the Gospel was at first propagated, and it never spread so fast as while it was in their hands. The Prophets and Apostles were all of that nation; nay, Christ, the blessed author of our religion, was of the seed of Judah according to the flesh. These extraordinary favours and honours which God has conferred on that people, shew

shew that he has a peculiar regard for them, or that, for some wise end, it has been his will to honour them above the rest of mankind; and this makes it probable that he will yet farther honour them, by making them the instruments in his hands of converting and saving the nations. Though he has been pleased of a long time to hide his face from them and to afflict them, yet that he still regards them as a nation, is evident from his goodness in preserving and supporting them so long in the world, and the many gracious promises he has given them concerning a happiness and glory that awaits them in the latter days; as, concerning the Gospel, they are enemies for our sake, but as touching the election, they are beloved for the Fathers' sake. There is ground, therefore, to think, that if ever they are reconciled to God, as Scripture assures they will be, he will again own them as formerly, and, among other honours, employ them as his instruments in converting the nations. To which we may add, that the little progress which the Gospel has made for some centuries bygone, and the obstinacy of some Heathen and Mahometan nations in persisting in their infidelity, notwithstanding the attempts that have been made to convert them, makes it farther probable, that some extraordinary means is necessary to that end: and though I will not venture to affirm, that the conversion of the Jews to the Christian religion, and their subsequent endeavours to propagate it, is the means that God designs to employ for the conversion of these nations; yet, of all the events we can think of as likely ever to happen, or that we

have

have any reason from Scripture to expect, there is none that appears to us so well calculated to produce that effect, unless it be the fall of the great Turk, who may be considered as the present head and high priest of the Mahometan religion, its principal defender and support. And in Scripture this last event is spoken of as hard following upon the other.

For these reasons I am of opinion, that the conversion of the unbelieving nations is to be effected chiefly by means of the Jews, viz, 1st, By their own conversion, which will be a great proof of the truth of the Gospel, and a means of convincing the world at large; and 2dly, By their active services and endeavours to propagate the Christian faith; not that I imagine all attempts to spread the light of the Gospel among the Heathen will be fruitless till the conversion of the Jews takes place, or that the labours of our missionaries will prove abortive; I both sincerely wish and hope the contrary. Though the Christian religion never spread so fast as in the days of the Apostles, yet several great nations have been converted since that time. The English, or Anglo-Saxons, first received the Gospel about the middle of the sixth century, the Danes in the eighth, the Swedes in the ninth, and the Prussians not till the beginning of the thirteenth century; nay, even in these last ages, the Gospel is still making progress, though slowly, by means of the settlements and colonies which we and other Christian nations have obtained in foreign parts, which gives ground to hope, that the societies which have lately been formed for the purpose of extending the

the blessings of the Gospel to the Heathen, may be the means of enlarging the bounds of the Mediator's kingdom still farther, especially as the Scripture seems to be fast fulfilling; and who knows but their success herein may, along with the other great events of the day, prove effectual, through the blessing of God, to open the eyes of the Jews, and to bring them to the acknowledgement of the truth: still I am of opinion, that the main body of the Heathen will not be brought in till after the conversion of the Jews; that the Jews, when they are converted, are to be the chief instruments in converting the other unbelieving nations; and that one of the ends of Providence in dispersing them over the world, was to qualify them for this very office, to make them acquainted with the different countries of the world, and with the languages, manners and customs of the several nations thereof.

Another of the ends of Providence in excluding the Jews so long from the Church of Christ, is to manifest the Divine inspiration of the prophecies relating to their conversion. Had this event happened at a much earlier period, within 1000 years or so after the publication of the prophecies concerning it, it might have been ascribed to human foresight. Men of learning and parts, may, by the help of study, and a careful examination of the nature and situation of affairs, sometimes foresee events long before they happen, and instances of this have been in the world; but no instance can be given of any man's foreseeing an event near 2000 years before it happened, without the assistance of Divine inspiration. But it will perhaps be objected, that though the length of time that intervenes

Intervenes betwixt the publication of these prophecies and the event to which they refer, would render the accomplishment of them somewhat wonderful; yet in this case there would be no need for supposing them divinely inspired, or that there is any thing miraculous in them; that the sacred writers knowing the superiority of the Christian religion above all others, it was natural for them to think, that both Jews and Gentiles would at length come over to it. This objection I confess is plausible, and, if I am not mistaken, a similar one has been made to the inspiration of those prophecies of the Old Testament, wherein the conversion of the Gentiles is foretold, and which have been in a great measure already fulfilled. But such objections come with a bad grace from the mouth of an infidel; for if the Christian religion is so reasonable, so much superior to all other religions, that it was natural for the sacred writers to think that it would one day be universal, Why does he oppose it or argue against it? I would ask him too, Whence it is that the religious opinions of a few poor fishermen and mechanics, or of the old Jews, who were but a small nation, and not very famous for their knowledge of human literature, should so far surpass those of all other nations, even of the learned Greeks and Romans? But perhaps he does not mean that the Christian religion is in itself reasonable or even superior to other religions, but only that the sacred writers themselves thought so. But how could they think so if they knew their religion to be false; and if they believed it to be true, then they were no impostors. Besides, if they knew their religion to be false, it was not natural for them

to think that it would prevail, but rather the contrary; so that Christianity gains as much one way as it loses another. But let us take a nearer view of this objection: It was natural for the sacred writers, as they were persuaded of the truth and excellence of their religion, to think that it would prevail, and that all the world would come over to it at last. But upon what was this conjecture founded; for, without a Divine warrant, I can call it no better; was it because they had seen the like revolutions before? no, the Old-Testament writers had not. One of them, who prophesies of the conversion both of the Jews and Gentiles, complains thus, Jeremiah ii. and 10. "For pass over the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing. Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory, for that which doth not profit." And indeed history gives no account of any nation changing its religion till the coming of our Saviour; and though the Apostles lived to see great changes of this kind, if not whole nations, at least great multitudes of several nations, renounce their Heathenish errors, and embrace the Gospel; yet, without the spirit of prophecy, they could not be certain that this was to continue, or that all nations were to come over to their religion. Their being persuaded of the truth and excellency of Christianity was indeed a sufficient reason for them to wish that all men would embrace it; but, without some other reason it certainly did not afford ground to hope or think that all the world would in time become Christian, much less did it warrant them to say so.

The

The goodness of a cause does not always ensure its success; but as virtue is sometimes unfortunate, so the true religion is often borne down by superstition and error. Of this the long continuance of Paganism in ancient times, and in these last ages the prevalence of Mahometanism in the east, and of Popery in the west, are notorious instances. The ways of Providence seem often contrary to our notions of equity and goodness. The sacred writers were sensible of this, and sometimes complain of it; and therefore, without a Divine promise, or the spirit of prophecy, they could never know that their religion was in process of time to overspread the whole world. And as they could not infer this from any observations on the course of Providence, so neither could they infer it from the Divine perfections abstractly considered; for though it is natural to think, that under the government of a Being infinitely wise, powerful, and good, the cause of truth and virtue should finally triumph; yet, as in the course of Providence, we often see the contrary, vice prevail over virtue, and the truth borne down by superstition and error; and as the sacred writers knew there was a life hereafter, wherein truth and virtue should triumph, without a divine revelation they could never know, nay, it could hardly ever enter their thoughts, that they should also one day triumph in this world, or that there was a time coming, when piety and virtue should every where prevail, and the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth as the waters cover the seas. And as the sacred writers could not infer this opinion from the ways of Providence, nor from the Divine perfections abstractly considered, so neither could they

do

do it from their knowledge of human nature, or any observations it was possible for them to make on the same. Indeed, were man as capable as in his state of innocence of discerning betwixt good and evil, truth and falsehood, or did we see him always acting according to the dictates of reason, preferring what is for his real interest to what is contrary thereto, nothing could be more natural for those who know the Gospel, than to hope that all men would in time come over to it; for Christianity is a most amiable religion, calculated to alleviate the miseries, and to correct the vices of mankind: It inspires us with love, gratitude and resignation to our Maker, charity and benevolence to our fellow-creatures, and, in a word, gives the greatest possible encouragement to the practice of every virtue. It is also a most rational religion, its doctrines are all agreeable to the principles of sound reason, and moreover attested by the finger of God; and therefore, I say, did we see men always acting as rational creatures, nothing could be more natural than to hope, that all mankind would in process of time become Christian. But experience teaches us that the bulk of people are governed more by passion, prejudice, and a regard to their worldly interest, than they are either by reason or a sense of duty. Vicious habits too have a mighty influence on the human mind to corrupt it, and often hinder men from acting the part that they ought, and that otherwise they would do. The sacred writers knew the truth of these observations, and frequently experienced it in their commerce with mankind. The Apostles, or writers of the New Testament, did so in a particular

lar

lar manner in the propagation of Christianity. In this work they met with much opposition from the prejudices and vices of mankind. The Gospel, tho' the wisdom and power of God, was to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. Prejudice in favours of the several religions in which each of them had been educated, prejudices against Christianity on account of its purity, spirituality, and contrariety to their own vicious habits and inclinations, on account of the mysterious nature and difficulty of comprehending some of its doctrines; but above all, on account of the seemingly ignominious death of its divine author, hindered the greater part of both Jews and Greeks from embracing it. From the same causes proceeded the barbarous treatment that the Apostles and first teachers of Christianity often met with. They were persecuted from city to city, brought before kings and rulers, beat, scourged, and imprisoned, and most of them finally put to a cruel death, and all through the prejudices and vices of other men: And though at last Christianity triumphed over all opposition, yet this was not till long after the sacred writers were all gone to another world. The knowledge, therefore, or experience which they had of the world, and of human nature, could never lead them to conjecture, that the Christian religion would succeed or prevail as it has already done, much less as they assure us it will one day do.

But admitting it was natural for them to think, or conjecture, that their religion would one day be universal and prevail over all the world, and also that they were wicked enough to palm such conjectures
on

on the world as prophecies or divine revelations, although there is no apparent motive, no motive or temptation that we can think of that could induce them so to do, How came they to know the circumstances of this revolution and its concomitant events? Several of these are mentioned in Scripture, and they are all of such a nature, that it was impossible for any human being, by the mere strength of natural parts, to foresee them; and if, along with the principal event, viz. the conversion of the Jews, these circumstances should also take place, it must be an additional proof, that what the sacred writers have said upon this subject is a divine revelation. The circumstances I mean are as follows:

First, The time when this happy event is to take place. This is expressly said to be in the latter days, or last ages of the world; so Isaiah ii. and 2. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it," &c. This prophecy was fulfilled in part soon after the coming of our Saviour, when so many great nations were converted to Christianity; but that it looks forward to a more distant event, in which it is to receive its full accomplishment, is evident from what is said in the 4th verse: "And they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." This prophecy, therefore, is chiefly to be understood of the general ingathering of the Heathen in the latter days;

days; but this event, and the conversion of the Jews, go hand in hand, as we shall see by and by. To the same purpose is that of Hosea, iii. chap. 4th and 5th verses: "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice," &c. "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord, and his goodness in the latter days." So Jeremiah xxxi. and 17. "And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border." This shews that the restoration of the Jews is not to be till a very late period; for, as it is elsewhere promised, that the Jews shall never perish as a nation, nor be confounded with the rest of mankind, their end must be the same with that of the world. For the better understanding of this passage, it is necessary to observe, that as the phrase, in thine end, certainly means a very late period, so it is not to be understood strictly, as if the restoration of the Jews was not to be till the very last, or the end of all things; for to what purpose should they be restored then, when neither they, nor the rest of mankind could enjoy any benefit, at least no lasting benefit from their restoration. To the same purpose, also, is that of Isaiah lxi. and 4. where speaking of the restoration of the Jews, he says, "They shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations." This I think implies, that before the return of the Jews here spoken of, their country was to be desolate for many generations, as all the accounts given of it by travellers assure us it has been, during

during the greater part of the time that their present captivity has lasted. Agreeable to these prophecies, the Millennium, which, according to all interpreters, is soon to follow the conversion of the Jews, is described by Daniel, and the author of the revelation, in the end of their books, as the last concluding scene, after a long series of wars and persecutions, that the church was to suffer from the hand of her enemies. See Dan. xii. and 12. and Rev. from the xxth chapter to the end.

Farther, that the Jews, before their conversion, were to be long in a state of unbelief, under a divine infatuation or judicial blindness as it is called; so that seeing they should not see, and hearing they should not understand, is foretold Isaiah with chapter, from the 9th verse to the end. That they would be among the last of the nations that would embrace the Gospel, is foretold by our Saviour, Mat. xx. and 16. "So the last shall be first, and the first last." The meaning of which, as is plain from the context, is, that the Gentiles, who, of the two classes in which mankind are so often divided in Scripture, were the last that were admitted into the church, would, after the change that was shortly to be made in the state of religion, be the first that would be admitted into it, whereas the Jews, who were the first church and people of God, the first nation with which he entered into covenant, and to which he was pleased to reveal himself, would be the last, or among the last that would be admitted to the benefits and privileges of the new covenant. This is also implied in the words of the Apostle, Rom. xi. and 25. "Blindness in
" part

“ part has happened to Israel, till the fulness of the
 “ Gentiles be come in;” that is, the blindness and
 unbelief of the Jews will continue till the whole or
 greater part of the Gentiles be converted, or rather
 till the time when the main body of the Gentiles, the
 greater part of whom are still without the pale of the
 church, is to be converted and brought into it; in o-
 ther words, the conversion of the Jews will not take
 place till the time of the general ingathering of the
 Heathen; but whether it will immediately precede,
 go along with it, or follow it, I shall not now enquire.
 But besides these passages in which the sacred writers
 assert only in general terms, that the conversion of
 the Jews was to be at a very late or distant period,
 there are others in which they speak with more pre-
 cision, and from which it may be clearly inferred, that
 this event was not to happen till more than 1500
 years after the time of the Apostles. It is placed
 by Daniel after the time, times and a half of An-
 tichrist, which, as all interpreters agree, signify a
 thousand two hundred and threescore years: And
 that this is the meaning of them, has been proved
 by many of these interpreters, by comparing this
 with other parallel texts, and similar phrases used in
 Scripture: See Bishop Newton on the Prophecies,
 and More’s Mystery of Godliness. Now the earliest
 period from which we can reckon these years, is the
 year 328 after Christ, when Constantine, by translat-
 ing the seat of the empire from Rome to Constanti-
 nople, gave rise to the Pope’s authority. Indeed most
 writers, for good reasons, place the rise of Antichrist
 at a much latter period; but, for argument’s sake, let

us place it there, and the end of the 1260 years of his reign will bring us down to the year 1588. So that according to Daniel, the conversion of the Jews could not happen till 15 centuries after Christ at the least.

Another way of making out these 15 centuries is this : First, The church was to continue pretty pure for some time, and history informs us it did so for more than three centuries ; then there was to be a falling away among Christians, and the Man of Sin was to make his appearance, according to that of the Apostle, 2d Thes. ii. chapter from the 3d to the 13th verse. And this Man of Sin was to continue 1260 years according to Daniel, chapter vii. and 25. and Rev. chapter xiii. and 5. for that the time, times and a half of the one place, and the forty-two months of the other, signify just so many years, is the opinion of all that have wrote upon this subject, and is proved to a demonstration by Mr Mede and Bishop Newton ; and after the 1260 years are finished, comes on the conversion of the Jews : See Daniel chap. xii. and 7. So that according to the sacred writers, there is at least 1500 years betwixt this event and the time when the prophecies were written ; -and though the time when the Jews are to be converted is not revealed so clearly as to enable any one to tell precisely when it will happen, yet it is clear enough to answer all the ends for which the prophecies relative to this event were given ; clear enough when joined with other circumstances, mentioned by the sacred writers, to prove, when the event attended with these circumstances takes place, that their predictions concerning it

it were divinely inspired; nay, what is said in Scripture concerning this one circumstance, the time of this event, will of itself go a great way to prove the divine inspiration of the prophecies; for it is expressly foretold, as we have seen, that the conversion and restoration of the Jews is to be at a very late or distant period, and so it must be now, though it should happen ever so soon. Now, how came the sacred writers to know this? not only to foresee an event so distant, but also to determine the time when it is to happen so nearly, is certainly beyond the power of any human being. But this is not all: How came the sacred writers to think that the time would be so very long? It certainly was not natural for them to think so, if they sincerely wished the success of the Gospel, as who can doubt that they did; for when men ardently wish for any event, they are for the most part prone to think that it will happen sooner than it actually does. Of this there are many instances among the writers on Daniel and the Revelation, the greater part of whom, through an anxious desire to see the prophecies fulfilled, have in their calculations anticipated the time of their accomplishment by a great many years. It was not therefore natural for the sacred writers to put off the conversion of the Jews, or any of the desirable events which are the subject of their prophecies, to so great a distance, nor would they have done it, had they not been impelled to it by the holy Spirit.

Another circumstance relative to the conversion of the Jews mentioned by the sacred writers, is, that it will be sudden or rapid. They will not be brought in gradually,

dually, or by little and little, but in a body or a great number of them all at a time; agreeably to that of the prophet, *Isaiah lxvi. and 8.* " Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day, or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travelled, she brought forth her children." That this will be the case, is probable also from the reason of things, as the end of Providence in converting and receiving them again into the church, is not only their good, but also his own glory and the good of others, the conviction of infidels and strengthening the faith of all true Christians; so these ends, we imagine, will be more effectually attained by a quick and speedy conversion of that people than by a slow gradual one. Their being converted in the former way, will make the wonder the greater, and be more apt to attract the notice and admiration of mankind. Besides, were the manner of their conversion to be very slow and gradual, it would be more difficult or rather impossible to ascertain the precise time when this event might be said to take place, and consequently to shew how it agreed with the prophecies concerning it. Thus it is almost impossible to fix on the precise minute when the day may be said to dawn, or the day of the year when the summer commences. The same may be said of the rise and fall of Antichrist; had he grown up insensibly, or by a slow continued progress, or had his fall been in this manner by slow imperceptible degrees, it would have been impossible to ascertain the precise time of either, and consequently to tell how long there was betwixt them. But his growth was by starts, only at certain periods, and
after

after intervals of some length ; in other words, he rose by steps, which were made at different times, not but that his power continued to grow betwixt these periods, but it was then only that its growth was visible. Which of these steps is to be reckoned his rise, or from which of them the 1260 years of his reign is to be counted, I shall not now enquire ; but it is probable that the principal step of his fall will correspond to that of his rise, that is to say, there will be just so many years betwixt them. The time that the present captivity of the Jews was to last, is perhaps not to be found in Scripture ; but what is equivalent thereto, the time of their conversion is expressly said to coincide with the fall of Antichrist, and his reign is in many places said to be for the space of 1260 days or years. But by the fall of Antichrist we cannot understand all the steps of his fall, (for several of these are already past, and no conversion has taken place among the Jews as yet), but some one remarkable step ; but whatever space of time there may be betwixt the steps of Antichrist's fall, the steps themselves, or the blows by which he is brought down, are for the most part soon over ; as, for example, the late revolution in Rome, which is one of the severest blows he has yet got, was accomplished in less than half a year, consequently the conversion of the Jews must happen all at once.

Another circumstance relative to their conversion, is, that it will be preceded or accompanied with some sharp trial or affliction, which God will use as the means of it. Indeed the spiritual birth of this people will in all probability be accompanied with pangs, both to the church and to the Jews themselves,

most

most certainly to the latter. We may infer this from analogy: Affliction is commonly the first thing that makes men serious, the means that God uses to bring his people home to himself. "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction;" and when we consider the wickedness of the modern Jews, it is hardly to be thought that ever they will truly repent and be converted, till they are made to pass through some sharp affliction and trial. Besides, afflictions themselves have a natural tendency to produce this effect; they make men better, and the better that any one is, the more he will be disposed to receive the doctrine of Christ; they humble our pride, and it is not to be doubted, that pride and haughtiness of heart is one of the principal causes of the unbelief of the Jews.

But besides this, God has expressly told us, that their conversion will be brought about in this way: See Ezekiel xx. and 33. to the 38th verse: "As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you. And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you saith the Lord God. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." It is very possible, that the Jews before their conversion may
be

be gathered together in a body, somewhere here called the wilderness of the people, and there meet with such troubles and disappointments as may serve to open their eyes, and to convince them of God's displeasure against them for persisting in their infidelity. It is possible that some great conqueror, such as Bonaparte, may offer them his assistance, as he was said to have done, and that trusting to this, they may assemble together somewhere, and attempt the recovery of their native country ; but failing in this attempt, the disappointment, and the hardships to which they may happen to be exposed in consequence of it, may perhaps force them to flee to Christ for help, agreeably to that of the prophet, " I will go and return " to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and " seek my face : in their affliction they will seek me " early," Hosea v. and 15. It may serve to convince them that it is in vain for them to attempt the recovery of Judea, till they acknowledge their offence, agreeably to the words just now quoted, and also to these of our Saviour, Matt. xxiii. 38. 39. " Behold, " your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto " you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall " say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the " Lord."

Farther, that some great affliction, trial, or fright, will precede, and be a means of the conversion of the Jews, seems also to be intimated by a circumstance mentioned in the history of Joseph. His brethren were never truly sensible of the injury they had done him, till they were reduced to the same distress which they had occasioned to him ; then they cry out of the
evil

evil of their doings, " We are verily guilty concerning our brother," &c. Gen. xlii. and 21. So it is probable the Jews will never acknowledge their offence, or repent sincerely of their wickedness in crucifying the Saviour, till they are, like Joseph's brethren, put to a fright, or reduced to some very distressing situation, that may force them to flee to Christ for help, or that may be attended with such circumstances, as will effectually convince them of God's displeasure against them for continuing to reject the offers of the Gospel; for Joseph was an eminent type of our Saviour, as divers learned men have proved; and as every other part of the Patriarch's history was typical of some part of our Saviour's, so it is not to be doubted that his revealing himself to his brethren was typical of Christ's revealing himself to the Jews, or of their conversion in the latter days; and therefore it is probable that the manner of the one will resemble that of the other; that is to say, that the Jews will be made to pass through some great trial or affliction immediately before their conversion. Besides, this part of the Patriarch's conduct towards his brethren, resembles that of our Saviour's towards the Jews as much as any other.

Joseph's brethren had treated him in the most barbarous manner, and sold him for a slave. To punish them for this, when they came into Egypt to buy corn, Joseph made himself strange to them, and spake roughly to them, and put them in prison three days; so Christ, to punish the Jews for their wickedness in crucifying him, and continuing to reject his Gospel, has long hid his face from that people, and treated them

them as enemies. Joseph's brethren continued long under the guilt of their sin, before they repented of it, and so have the Jews. Joseph did not reveal himself to his brethren till Benjamin, the last of the family, was come down; so Christ will not reveal himself to the Jews, his brethren according to the flesh, till the last ages of the world are come. Benjamin was more nearly related to Joseph than any of his other brethren, being his full brother, or his brother both by father and mother, whereas the rest were only his half-brethren; so the present Jews, or the Jews since our Saviour's time are only his half-brethren, his brethren according to the flesh, but not according to the Spirit; but the Jews in the latter days will be his full brethren. Being converted and renewed by the holy Ghost, they will be his brethren according to the Spirit as well as the flesh, his brethren in resemblance, in affection, by adoption and regeneration. So that Joseph's revealing himself to his brethren, resembles our Saviour's revealing himself to the Jews in several respects; and when once the event takes place, will probably be seen to resemble it in several more. The supposition, that the Jews will on some account or other be gathered together into one place before their conversion, accounts also for the circumstance treated of in the preceding section, viz. the suddenness of it: For being all in a body, a conversion once begun will spread faster among them than it could do in their present dispersed state. Mr Mede is of opinion, that their conversion, like that of the Apostle Paul's, will be effected by a vision of Christ himself, or some miraculous appearance in the
T heavens;

heavens ; and if this is to be the means, it seems necessary, in order to give the miracle its proper effect, that the Jews should also first be collected in a body, that all may see it and be convinced by it.

Another circumstance relative to the conversion of the Jews, is, that their restoration will fall out much about the same time with it. 'This appears from Levit. xxvi. and 40. with the following verses, and still more clearly from the 30th of Deut. at the beginning :
 “ And it shall come to pass when all these things are
 “ come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which
 “ I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to
 “ mind among all the nations whither the Lord thy
 “ God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the
 “ Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice,” &c. “ that
 “ the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity,” verse
 5. “ And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the
 “ land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt
 “ possess it,” &c. Here you see their repentance and
 restoration are joined together : See also Jeremiah iii.
 and 14. And in general wherever their captivity
 and repentance is spoken of, there also their restora-
 tion is promised ; so that, according to the tenor of
 God’s covenant with that people, these two must go
 hand in hand ; and yet, exclusive of the divine pro-
 mise, there is no natural or necessary connexion be-
 twixt them. The Jews might be converted without
 being restored as some people ignorantly imagine they
 will be ; or they might get possession of the land of
 Canaan without repenting or acknowledging the truth
 of the Gospel ; or rather they might have got it long
 ere this time, had it not been for the Providence of
 God

God hindering it, in order to fulfil the threatenings of his word. " Verily, I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth," that is, ye shall not have my countenance or favour, " till ye say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord ;" or both of these events might happen, but not at the same time, or they might never happen at all, neither the one nor the other, as I doubt not but many of our infidels think ; and therefore, if the conversion of the Jews should be attended with this circumstance also, it must be a farther proof of the divine inspiration of the prophecies. That their conversion will go before their restoration, is also, I think, clearly asserted in Scripture, particularly in the passages just now quoted. If then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity, that is, acknowledge the sin by which they have provoked God to send them into captivity, and also his justice in so punishing them, " then will I remember my covenant with Jacob," &c. " and I will remember the land," or, as it is in the parallel place, Deut. xxx. and 3. " Then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and gather thee from all the nations whither he hath scattered thee." Here you see their restoration is promised only on condition of their repentance, which in their present state must imply their confessing the truth of the Gospel, or their conversion, and consequently this must go before that. But this point is put out of all doubt by the words of our Saviour, quoted before, " Verily, I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name
of

“ of the Lord.” And therefore, I cannot but wonder how Mr Bicheno came to deny it.

Another circumstance, or rather event, mentioned by the sacred writers as happening at the same time with the conversion of the Jews, is the fall of Antichrist, by which I do not mean the total abolition of Popery, (for that seems to be reserved to the last concluding scene, or battle of Armagiddon, as we shall immediately show,) but some great calamity that is to befall the Antichristian party, previous to that event, and signified in Scripture by the pouring out of the fifth vial on the seat of the Beast. The word in the original, is the throne of the Beast, and may signify either the place of his residence, which is Rome, with the territory belonging to it, or his power and authority. Mr Mede understands it in the first sense, and thinks that the destruction of the city of Rome, is the thing meant by this vial. Mr Lowman, who understands it in the second sense, thinks that this vial means some great diminution of the Pope’s power, and in this perhaps he is right; but in his application of it to the reformation begun in Germany by Luther, I apprehend he is mistaken; for the seven vials are called the seven last plagues, in which the wrath of God is filled up, that is. as we shall shew afterwards, the seven last steps of Antichrist’s fall, or the seven last judgments of God upon him, by which he is humbled and brought down. But the power of the Pope never began to decline till the reformation; this therefore cannot be the fifth step of his fall, or the thing signified by the fifth vial. Though God had sent many heavy judgments on the Pope and his followers

followers for their wickedness, as the ravages of Turks and Saracenes, divisions, and bloody quarrels among themselves; yet as none of these produced any reformation in religion, so neither did they cause any diminution of the Pope's power; but, though often humbled, and sometimes on the very point of being annihilated, he always rose again in a little time, and was in the very height and fulness of his power when the Reformation began. This, therefore, cannot be the fifth step of his fall, or the thing signified by the fifth vial. Besides, the vials are called the seven last plagues, which seems to imply, that Antichrist had been plagued several times before any of the vials were poured out upon him; and therefore, in reckoning them, we ought not, as Mr Lowman does, to begin with the first of the judgments that befell him after he rose: Were we to do so, and to reckon all the remarkable judgments that have befallen him since his power was established, among the number of the vials, instead of seven, I am afraid we should reckon more than twice the number. The vials therefore are to be understood only of the seven last steps of Antichrist's fall, or the seven last remarkable judgments of God upon him, by which he is weakened and brought down. The Reformation, as we have just now seen, was the first step of Antichrist's fall; and therefore, all who place the commencement of the vials before this are certainly in the wrong; but whether this is to be reckoned the first of them, or they commence at a latter period, is hard to say; for I find a great difference of opinion amongst expositors on this part of the Revelation. It is indeed one of the darkest

darkest passages in all that book, probably because, either as to the whole or greater part of it, it still remains to be fulfilled; yet, of all the explications I have seen of it, I think Mr Fleming's is the best, both because it is fully as rational as any of them, and more than this, his prediction concerning the fall of the French monarchy, partly founded on his explication of this passage, has been wonderfully fulfilled. He was of opinion, that the fourth vial would run out about the year 1794, and the revolutions that have happened in Italy since that period, have all the appearance of being an accomplishment of the fifth vial. This, it is said, was poured out on the seat, or, as it is in the original, on the throne of the Beast; and whether by his throne, we understand his place of residence, or his power and authority, the judgments which have at this time befallen him, have literally fallen on his seat, both his dominions and his power have been greatly abridged. What Bonaparte has done to him, certainly touches him more nearly, and is a greater weakening of his power than any thing that has happened to him since the Reformation; and therefore, whether Mr Fleming's method of reckoning the vials be right or not, I am strongly of opinion, that the blow which Bonaparte lately gave to the Pope's interest, is indeed an accomplishment of the fifth vial, or at least a beginning of it. But whatever is of this, that the conversion of the Jews will happen about the time either of the fifth or sixth vial, is more than probable, and that for the following reasons:

First, That it will coincide with some remarkable step of Antichrist's fall, is evident from several passages

passages of Scripture, as Daniel, chap. xii. 6: and
 7. " And one said to the man clothed in linen,
 " which was upon the waters of the river, How long
 " shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I
 " heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon
 " the waters of the river, when he held up his right
 " hand, and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by
 " him that liveth for ever, that it shall be for a time,
 " times, and an half: and when he shall have accom-
 " plished to scatter the power of the holy people, all
 " these things shall be finished." The word accom-
 plish or finish, signifies either to perfect and complete
 a thing, or to make an end of it. Here it cannot be
 taken in the first sense, because the scattering or dis-
 persion of the Jews was complete long ago, and there-
 fore it must be taken in the second, and should have
 been so rendered: And when he shall have finished, or
 put an end to the dispersion of the holy people, or Jews,
 that is, when they are restored, then all these things
 shall be finished. Here you see the present captivity
 and dispersion of the Jews, is said expressly to end
 with the time, times, and a half of the Beast; at least,
 these two are joined together in such a way, as would
 lead one to think, that this is the prophet's meaning.
 Another passage to this purpose is in the words of our
 Saviour, Luke xxi. and 24. " And Jerusalem shall
 " be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times
 " of the Gentiles be fulfilled." That by the times of
 the Gentiles, we are here to understand the same
 period as that above mentioned, viz. the time, times,
 and a half of Antichrist, is evident, else why does
 our Saviour use the word in the plural number, call-
 ing

ing it the times of the Gentiles. This way of speaking is altogether unusual, and unless we suppose that he had an eye to the times of Antichrist mentioned by Daniel, we will find it impossible to account for his expressing himself in this manner. But what puts it out of all doubt, that by the times of the Gentiles we are to understand the times of Antichrist, is that this place is exactly similar to that of Revelation xi. and 2. "But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." But this last place has always been understood of the duration of Antichrist, and it must be so. For forty and two months come exactly to three years and a half, which is elsewhere expressly said to be the time of Antichrist's reign. The times of the Gentiles, therefore, are without doubt the same with those of Antichrist; and our Saviour's saying, that Jerusalem should be trodden down till these times are fulfilled, evidently implies, that when once they are fulfilled, Jerusalem shall no longer be trodden down, but rebuilt: consequently, the restoration of the Jews, and their conversion, which is inseparable from it, must coincide with the downfall of Antichrist, or with the end of the 1260 years of his reign.

This is farther probable from analogy, or the nature and reason of things: As the fall of ancient Babylon, or the taking of that city by Cyrus, made way for the return of the Jews from their first captivity; so it is probable, that the fall of spiritual Babylon or Rome, will make way for their return from the second,

or their present captivity. The Romans have evermore been the great enemies and oppressors of the Jews; they were the cause of the present dispersion of that people, and of the desolation of their country; and it is they that have all along persecuted them, and by their cruelty to them have prejudiced them against Christianity; and therefore the downfall of this tyrannical power must be a deliverance to them, and in all likelihood make way for their conversion and restoration; and as when the Jews were cast off, the Romans were taken in, so when these are cast off, the Jews will be taken in. The Apostle seems to hint as much in the xith of his Epistle to the Romans, where, speaking of the Jews, he says, "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear." From all which, especially the passages above mentioned, it is evident, that the conversion of the Jews will coincide with the downfall of Antichrist, that is, with some remarkable step of his fall; for as Popery rose by steps, so it is probable that it will fall in like manner by steps; and when we say, that the conversion of the Jews will coincide with the fall of Antichrist, our meaning is, that it will coincide with some of these steps, or some extraordinary calamity that is to befall him; and a very extraordinary one it must be, seeing it is considered by the Holy Spirit absolutely as his fall, and the 1260 years of his duration are made to terminate with it. But it is not the last step of his fall, or final overthrow; for that the conversion of the Jews will happen before this, or before the pouring out of

the seventh vial, appears from the following argument :

First, It is agreed by all, that at the pouring out of this vial, all the enemies of the church are to be destroyed, and the Millennium immediately to take place ; but from the xxxviii. and xxxix. chapters of Ezekiel, it is evident that the Jews are not only converted, but restored and settled again in their own land, when Gog goes forth against them with a great and powerful army, and is overthrown by the immediate hand of God : consequently this destruction of Gog must either happen at the pouring out of the seventh vial or before it ; because at the pouring out of this vial, all the remaining enemies of the church are destroyed, and the 1000 years of peace and happiness begin, during which the church has no enemies. Therefore, some place this expedition of Gog at the end of the Millennium, supposing that it is the same with that mentioned in the xxth of the Revelation, or that the Gog of Ezekiel is the same with that of John ; but in this they certainly are mistaken, for in Ezekiel's prophecy, the Jews, when Gog sets out against them, are represented as newly returned from captivity : " In the latter years thou shalt come into the land " that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people," &c. Ezek. xxxviii. 8. and 12. But it is absurd to suppose, that the Jews will not be converted and restored till the end of the Millennium or near it, as must be the case, if they are but newly restored when after the Millennium Gog invades them ; for to what purpose should they be restored

flored then, when the consummation of all things is just approaching. In that case there would be no Millennium for them, or, at best, but a very short one; whereas it is said in Scripture, that when the Jews are converted, they shall enjoy a long time of happiness and prosperity: So Isa. lx. and 15. "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations." See also Ezek. xxxvii. 25.

Besides, if the Jews are not converted till near the end of the Millennium, then they must have lived during the greater part of that time in a state of infidelity and enmity to the Gospel, which is wholly inconsistent with the notion Scripture gives us of the Millennium; for then it is said, "There shall be one Lord, and his name one," Zech. xiv. and 9. That all nations shall serve him, and be blessed in him, Dan. vii. and 14. and Psal. lxxii. 11. and 17.; which could not be true, if so great a nation as the Jews were, during all that time, of a different religion, and without the saving knowledge of Christ. But this notion is so inconsistent with the promises of Scripture, concerning the glory of the latter days, and the happiness which the Jews are then to enjoy, that it is needless to insist upon it. Besides, I have already shewn, that the Gog of Ezekiel is no other than the great Turk, and also that most, if not all of the powers that are mentioned by Ezekiel as joining with him in his expedition against the Jews, are at present of the Mahometan religion, as he himself also is; which makes it probable, that both he and they are
also

also of this religion at the time of that expedition; and indeed it is not to be supposed, that any but Mahometans, Papists, or Pagans, would join with him in it; but it is not likely that there should be either Mahometans or Papists in the time of the Millennium, much less after it, or that either the Turkish empire, or any of these religions should last so long: consequently the Gog of Ezekiel cannot be the same with the Gog in the xxth of the Revelation, and his expedition against the Jews must be either at the beginning of the Millennium, that is, at the pouring out of the seventh vial or before it. What confirms this, is, that it is said, Ezek. xxxviii. 16. that the end of Providence in bringing Gog and his vast army against the Jews, is for the conviction of the Heathen, or that it may be a means of bringing them over to the true religion: "And I will bring thee against my land, that the Heathen may know me when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes;" consequently the world is not as yet all converted to the Christian faith, viz. when Gog's expedition against the Jews takes place. This expedition therefore must be, as I said, either at the beginning of the Millennium or before it: but it is evident from the account that Ezekiel gives of it, that the restoration of the Jews is to happen some considerable time before it; for they are there represented not only as returned to their own land, but as settled in it, dwelling safely in unwall'd villages, having neither gates nor bars, which shews that they had been settled for some little time, but not long.

From

From all which it is evident, that the conversion of the Jews is to happen before the commencement of the Millennium, or the pouring out of the seventh vial. Another proof of this is, that in the last chapter of Daniel towards the end, there are three different periods of time mentioned, at the end of which, something great, and for the good of the church is to happen, viz. 1260 days; 2dly, 1290; and 3dly, 1335 days. The end of the first is to be the fall of Antichrist, as is clear from many other places of Scripture. The end of the last is the commencement of the Millennium; and what the end of the second should be, but the conversion or restoration of the Jews, I cannot see. And that this is indeed the great event that is to happen at the end of the second period, is farther probable from another passage in the viiith chapter, which has such a resemblance to this in the xiith that it cannot be doubted that they both refer to the same event, and that the numbers mentioned in both places, end precisely at the same time. The words in the xiith chapter and 11th verse are: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." And in chapter viii. verse 13. one angel puts this question to another, "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" The answer to this is given in the next verse: "And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." In both these passages,

sages, you see the same events are prophesied of, and almost in the same words. In both, mention is made of the daily sacrifice; in the one, viz. Daniel xii. 11. it is said to be taken away; in the other, viz. chapter viii. 13. this is evidently to be understood, as appears by comparing it with the 11th verse of the same chapter: the transgression of desolation in the one place, answers exactly to the abomination that maketh desolate in the other; and therefore there can be no doubt that the periods mentioned in both terminate in the same point of time, although being of very different lengths, they must, for this reason, have different beginnings. But in chapter. viii. verse 14. it is said, that when the 2300 days are ended, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed: consequently, if by cleansing the sanctuary we are to understand the restoration of the Jews, this must be the great event that is to happen at the end of the 1290 days, as well as of 2300. And that this is the meaning of the phrase, I shall now endeavour to shew. The word sanctuary may be taken either literally or metaphorically.

First, Literally, either for the temple at Jerusalem, the place which God in ancient times chose for his public worship, or, what is much the same, for the city of Jerusalem itself, which in Scripture is often called the holy city; or for the whole land of Judea, which was in ancient times the residence of God's peculiar people, who were several times in this very book called the holy people, as the land is still called the holy land. It may also be styled the sanctuary, because in every part of it, God was worshipped by prayer, and other acts of private devotion, as he was
in

in the temple by sacrifice, and other acts of public worship. If we take the word in this last sense, or indeed in any of these senses, by cleansing the sanctuary we must understand God's casting out, by some special act of his Providence, the Mahometans and other enemies of the true religion out of Judea, and restoring it to his ancient people, when converted and reformed.

2dly, By the sanctuary we may understand the Christian church, or the Christian world at large; for the sanctuary is any place where God is worshipped according to the institutions of his word, and by cleansing the sanctuary, we may understand the casting of idols, idolatrous Papists, and all Pagan rites and practices out of the church. This will be literally a casting the buyers and sellers out of the temple; for Popery is nothing else but a traffic or merchandizing, and that too of the most iniquitous kind; a selling of benefices and church-offices, or of trinkets and trifles, receiving good hard money for pardons, indulgences, masses, hallowed beads, and things literally worse than nothing. If we take the words in the first sense, the end of the 2300 days, and also of the 1290, will be when the Jews are converted and restored, that is, before the seventh vial is poured out, as has been already proved. If we take them in the latter sense, then the end of these times or periods will not be till the pouring out of the seventh vial, when all the enemies of the church are to be destroyed; for till then the Christian sanctuary can never be said to be thoroughly cleansed. But at the pouring out of this vial, it is generally thought that the

the Millennium will take place: And indeed the words of our Saviour seem to imply as much; for immediately after that, there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven from the throne, saying, It is done. But if we make the end of the 1290 days coincide with the seventh trumpet, or the beginning of the Millennium, What great or good event shall we place at the end of the 1335 days? Therefore, I rather incline to take the words literally, to signify the clearing of the holy land of Turks, Mahometans, &c. and giving it to his chosen Israel, now become indeed a holy people. And yet there seems to be no necessity for supposing that the Millennium will begin immediately after the seventh vial. Our Saviour's saying, It is done, may signify no more but that the church's troubles are now at an end, and her deliverances compleated; but it does not follow, that her measure of positive happiness is then full, or that there are no new blessings to be added afterwards. The contrary seems very probable; for as the domineering of Antichrist, I mean of both the Pope and Turk over the church, has been a great hinderance to the success of the Gospel; a means of hardening both Mahometans and Pagans in their infidelity; so, till the final overthrow of these two oppressors take place at the pouring out of the seventh vial, it is probable there will still be a great many, both Mahometans and Pagans, in the world. After that, indeed, the Gospel will have free course, and be glorified. Men being convinced by God's judgments on his enemies, will come in crowds into the church, or, as Isaiah beautifully expresses it, "will flee as clouds and as doves to their windows;" but
 still

Till it must take a time to instruct, convert, and civilize all the nations, which till that time will probably remain in an unconverted state. The destruction of the two Antichrists, I mean the Turk of Rome and him of Constantinople, is only a clearing of the ground. After that is done, some time must be allowed for raising the building, and less I think cannot be granted than that which I suppose is here allotted for it by the Holy Spirit, viz. 45 years; for this is precisely the difference between the second and third period mentioned by Daniel. When these 45 years are elapsed, then, and not till then, we may suppose that the Millennium will begin; for though war will probably cease before this, that is, immediately after the final overthrow of Antichrist, yet till all the world is converted to the Christian faith, the Millennium cannot properly be said to begin; neither till then is the world fit or worthy to receive those other great blessings, which are mentioned in Scripture as essential to the Millennial state.

But to return to our subject whence we have digressed, viz. the time of the conversion of the Jews: That the vials mentioned in the xvth of the Rev. denote the steps of Antichrist's fall, or rather the judgments of God, by which he is brought down, is generally agreed on by interpreters, and is evident from what is there said of them, and the effects ascribed to them. They are called the seven last plagues; and in them the wrath of God is said to be filled up or completed: The first causes a noisome and grievous sore to the men that have the mark of the Beast, and that worship his image: The fifth is

poured out on the seat of the Beast; and upon the effusion of the seventh, it is said, the great city was divided into three parts, and great Babylon came into remembrance before God. And though Antichrist is not mentioned by any of his ordinary titles in the other vials, yet it cannot be doubted that all of them belong to the same subject, viz. the fall of Antichrist, either in the east or west.

I have already shewn, that the conversion of the Jews will coincide with some of these vials, or some remarkable step of Antichrist's fall. But the three last vials are the most remarkable, and bring the sorest, heaviest judgments on the enemies of the church. It must therefore be one of these that is meant by the Holy Spirit. It cannot be the seventh or last, because it has been already proved, that the conversion of the Jews is previous to the pouring out of this vial. It must therefore be either the fifth or sixth. The first of these brings on the destruction of Rome, or some great calamity that is to befall the Antichristian party in the west, as the other does the humbling of the Turk, who is the great oppressor of the eastern church, and one of the chief supporters of the Mahometan religion. Which of these two events the conversion of the Jews will coincide with, is perhaps a question that cannot be solved, till the farther accomplishment of the prophecies throw more light upon them. Daniel indeed tells us, chapter xii. 7. that the restoration of the Jews will take place at the end of the time, times, and a half; which are said, chapter vii. 25. to be the time that Antichrist or the little horn is to domineer over the western church :

church: but perhaps the same period is allotted by Providence for the duration both of the eastern and western Antichrist; for it would seem that the time, times, and a half, mentioned in the xiith chapter, are to be understood of the duration of Mahometanism, and of the fall of the Turkish empire, as those in the viith chapter are to be understood of the duration and fall of Popery, because the six last verses of the preceding chapter are wholly taken up in treating of the affairs of the Turk, and the chapter concludes with his fall; and therefore, when in the sixth verse of this chapter we find one angel asking another, How long it should be to the end of these wonders? it is natural to think, that the time mentioned in the answer ends where the preceding chapter ends, that is, with the fall of the Turk; and if so, then the restoration of the Jews will coincide with this event.

It is probable, however, that their conversion will coincide with the fifth vial, and their restoration with the sixth: That as the idolatry, and persecuting spirit of the church of Rome, has been the great hinderance to the conversion of the Jews, so this event will coincide with the fall of the Papacy; and as the Turk's being in possession of the Holy land is the hinderance to their restoration, so this will coincide with his fall. It is probable also, that as the fifth vial does not cause the total overthrow of the Popish party, for the destruction of the Beast is mentioned afterwards, so neither does the sixth vial cause that of the Turk, and that the final destruction of both these powers is reserved till the seventh vial. Most interpreters are of opinion, that as Popery and Mahometanism

hometanism rose much about the same time, so they will fall together; and I do think it probable, that the final overthrow of both will be precisely at the same time, viz. at the pouring out of the seventh vial; but it appears to me, that before this, each of them will have a separate fall, the one signified by the fifth vial, and the other by the sixth. With respect to the Roman Antichrist, this is clear from Scripture, Rev. xvi. 10. "And the fifth angel poured out his vial on "the seat of the Beast," &c. which certainly means some great calamity that is to befall him. Indeed so great is the calamity signified by this vial, that, as we said before, it is considered by the Holy Spirit absolutely as his fall: Although it appears from what follows, that he is never wholly destroyed, and that there is a remnant of Popery ay until the seventh vial or battle of Armageddon. It is also clear from what Mr Mede and others have said upon it, that the sixth vial is to bring down the Turks; but whether their empire will then be totally overthrown, or only humbled and brought low, is not so easy to determine. The last appears to me the most probable of the two, and that for the following reasons:

First, As Mahometanism resembles Popery in many respects, in the opposition of its doctrines to those of the Gospel, in its bloody tyrannical spirit, oppressing the church and keeping her in ignorance and slavery, in its rise, which was much about the same time with that of Popery, and in the wideness of its dominion and long duration, so it will probably also resemble it in its fall; that is, it will fall by steps, at least there will be more than one step in the fall thereof.

2dly,

2dly, It has been already shewn, that the Jews are to be restored before the final overthrow of the Turks; but how this can be, how the Jews can get possession of the Holy land, until the Turks, who have it at present in their hands, are humbled, I cannot see. It is probable, therefore, that in order to make way for the restoration of the Jews, some great revolution will take place in the Turkish empire at the pouring out of the sixth vial, similar to that which happens in the kingdom of the Beast at the pouring out of the fifth. Some time after this, as I suppose, when the Jews are settled, and living in peace in their own land, the Turk, having recovered the blow given him by the sixth vial, will invade them with a great and powerful army, as appears from Daniel, xith chap. 44. 45. verses, and Ezek. xxxviii. xxxix. chapters. At which time, the Pope, or the Antichristian powers in Europe, with a great many nations more, are to join with him. Then comes on that battle mentioned, Rev. xvi. 14. commonly called the battle of Armageddon, and the battle of that great day of God Almighty, wherein all the enemies of the church are to be destroyed. For I suppose, that the battle of Gog and of Armageddon, as also that described, Rev. xix. from the 11th verse to the end, are all one. My reasons for thinking so are, first, That the battle described in each of these places is described in such terms, represented to be so exceeding great, that as there has never yet been, so it is not probable there will ever be again any equal or like to it, a circumstance that agrees only to one battle. In all the three places, the sacred writers speak

as if the whole world, or all the kings of the earth, were to be engaged in the battle which they describe; which, though it is not perhaps to be understood literally, yet certainly means such a number, as makes it very improbable that two or more such battles should happen within a few years of one another, as must be the case if those described in the above passages are distinct battles; for that the distance of time betwixt them, if there is any, cannot be great, we shall show by and by. But,

First, Something farther must be said, to shew that the battle described by the sacred writers in these three places, is represented by them to be so exceeding great as we have said, and that they agree in this circumstance. With respect to two of the places this is clear, viz. Rev. xvi. from the 13th to the 17th verse, and Rev. xix. from the 17th verse to the end. In the first of these places, "I saw," says the inspired writer, "three unclean spirits like frogs," &c. "They are the spirits of devils which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Here you see the greatness of this battle is asserted in the strongest possible terms, and so it is also in that of the sixth of Rev. 17th and 18th verses, where it is called the supper of the great God, and all the fowls of the air invited to come and eat thereof. With respect to that war or battle described in the 38th and 39th of Ezek. although its greatness is not asserted in such strong terms, yet there are other circumstances in that prophecy which sufficiently prove it. For,

First,

First, This is one of the longest prophecies, and absolutely the longest description of a battle that is to be found in any part of Scripture, whether historical or prophetic; consequently there must be something very important in this battle, that the Holy Spirit dwells so long upon it.

2dly, We have a list of the nations or parties concerned in it, from which it appears to be an exceeding great battle, as great at least, as any recorded in history, and great enough, along with other circumstances, to make it probable that it is the same with that described in the other two places above mentioned; for as to the expression of St John, the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, I take it to be an hyperbole, as it is not easy to conceive how all the kings of the earth could literally be engaged in any battle, or even war; yet it certainly means, that the number of these kings was to be exceeding great: And in this battle of Gog's, there are also so many great and powerful nations engaged, as may well justify the hyperbole used by the Apostle, supposing him to treat of the same subject; for besides Gog himself, or the great Turk, who is one of the most powerful monarchs in the known world, there is the great kingdom of Persia, Cush, or the Arabians, who are a vast nation, Lybia, or the states of Barbary, Gomer, and all his bands, in which phrase there are, without all doubt, a great many nations comprehended. Gomer was the eldest son of Japhet, and as is generally thought, the father of most of the nations that peopled Europe; so that by Gomer, and all his bands, we are to understand at least
all

all the powers of Europe that are subject to the Pope, or that may from wickedness or want of principle, think fit to join with the Turk on this occasion; and from what has lately happened in Europe, and elsewhere, there is reason to fear, that more of the Princes of Europe will do so than most people will perhaps at present believe.

Lastly, To complete this formidable combination of the kings of the earth, comes the house of Togaruma, of the north quarters, and all his bands. Who these may be, I do not pretend to know; but taking all together, here is such a multitude of nations and kingdoms, as never in all probability met together before in one army, or even battle; which, as we said before, makes it probable, that this is the same with that mentioned Rev. xvi. 14. Another proof of this, is the agreement of these battles in respect of time. That in the xvth of the Revelations, is immediately after the pouring out of the seventh vial, that of Gog in the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel, is some little time after the restoration of the Jews, which must happen either at the fifth or sixth vial, most probably at the latter, as I have already shewn.

3dly, The identity of the battles mentioned, Rev. xvi. and xix. chapters is generally admitted: See Fleming's discourse on the rise and fall of the Papacy, page 51. And that the battle described in the last of these two places, is the same with that of the 38th and 39th of Ezekiel, is farther probable from the sameness of the expressions used in both places. The words of Ezekiel, chapter xxxix. 17. are, "And thou son of man, Thus saith the Lord God, Speak
" unto

unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves and come, gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth: Thus shall ye be satisfied at my table." To which the words of John exactly agree: " And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains," &c. Hence, I say, it is probable, that the battle described in these two places is the same; and consequently the same also with that of Rev. xvi. 14. But,

4thly, What puts this matter out of all doubt, is, that all these three battles are spoken of as final and decisive of the contest betwixt the church and her enemies. In the xvth of Rev. after the powers leagued against her are gathered together at Armageddon, the seventh angel pours out his vial into the air, upon which a voice from the temple proclaims, " It is done." In like manner, that the battle in the sixth of Rev. is final, appears clearly from what is said in the two last verses, viz. " That the beast and the false prophet were both of them taken, and cast alive into the lake burning with fire and brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword that proceeded out of the mouth of Christ," consequently here is an utter end of all the enemies of the church. Accordingly the next chapter begins with

the Millennium. And that the battle in the 38th and 39th of Ezek. is also final, appears from what is said in the 39th chap. 21. verse to the end. "And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgments that I have executed." verse 28. "And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity," &c. All which I think evidently implies, that by God's judgments upon Gog, and the nations that are leagued with him, all the world shall be convinced and turn to the Lord: And if so, then there will be no more opposition to the interest of Christ in the world; no more war, nor mischief, at least, till the thousand years are finished; consequently this battle of Gog's must be considered as final and decisive. What confirms this is the following words, verse 29. "Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God." If this opinion holds, that is, if the battle in the 38th and 39th of Ezek. is the same with that of Armageddon, then the place or scene of this battle is not in the territory of the See of Rome, where Mr Mede and others place it, but somewhere in the land of Palestine, for there it is where Gog is to be destroyed, according to that of the prophet Ezek. xxxix. 4. "Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou and all thy bands." As to the particular spot where this battle is to be fought, though it cannot perhaps be known with certainty, yet there are probable reasons for thinking that it will be somewhere in, or near to the valley of Megiddon, which lies to the east of the sea of Tiberias.

First,

First, Because the name seems to countenance this opinion, Armageddon being evidently compounded of the Hebrew, Har, a mountain, and Megiddon Megiddo. This derivation is at least as good as any other; and though we do not read of any mountain of this name, yet we find the valley of Megiddon spoken of in several places of Scripture, and wherever there is a valley, there must also be some mountain or rising ground.

2dly, It addeth not a little to the probability of this opinion, that the name of the place is expressed by an Hebrew word, as if it were to come to pass in the land of the Hebrews.

3dly, The prophet himself seems to place it there, viz. at Megiddon, Ezek. xxxix. 11. "And I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea," &c. which by the Chaldee paraphrase is rendered the sea of Ginosar, that is, Genesareth or Tiberias, and there the valley of Megiddon is.

4thly, There is the great plain of Esdraelon, anciently called Jezreel, the largest of any in that country, and consequently the fittest for such a battle, and the encampment of such a vast army as that of Gog. For these reasons, it seems more than probable, that the scene of this battle will be where we have placed it. And here we cannot help observing how wonderful the agreement betwixt the sacred writers is. In treating of the same subjects, they not only say the same things, but in words so different, as plainly shews that they did not copy from one another, nor had any intention of confirming each others authority. Ezekiel places the scene of this battle to the east of the

the

the sea of Tiberias, and John places it at Armageddon, or near Megiddo, which lies a little to the east of that sea. The reader will also observe, that the agreement betwixt Ezekiel and John, with respect to the place of the battles which they have described, is another proof that they are both the same. It appears also, that the slaughter of the enemies of the church, represented in the three last verses of the xivth of Rev. by the emblem of treading the great wine-press of the wrath of God, is the same with that great slaughter mentioned in the xixth chapter; for the same emblem is used in this last chapter as in the former: verse 15. "And he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God:" Consequently it will be the same also with that of Gog and of Armageddon. Now, in that passage of the xivth of Rev. it is said, "And blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs;" which agrees exactly to the dimensions of the holy land, it being just so many furlongs in the length thereof, i. e. 200 Italian miles: See Mede in locum. Hence it appears, that though the principal scene in this battle will probably be where we have said, yet the carnage will not be confined to that spot, but will, either, in the battle itself, or in pursuing the victory extend over the whole country. To this interpretation Mr Mede has suggested two or three small objections.

First, It is not likely, says he, that the beast, his affairs at home in the west being in such state and danger, should lead an army into Palestine, leaving so
many

many enemies at his back, and there at length be utterly abolished. But why in such state and danger? This is a mere supposition. But admitting it to be a just one, the Pope's affairs being in a dangerous or desperate state in the west, seems rather a good reason for his removing eastward and joining with Gog, as in the above interpretation we have supposed him to do.

2dly, He objects that the fore-mentioned space of a thousand six hundred furlongs agrees with the dimensions of the Papal dominions; but as he confesses that it agrees also to those of the holy land, this fact gives no help to the solving of the question, whether the final overthrow of Antichrist shall be in Italy or Palestine.

3dly, Whereas the wine-press is said to be trodden without the city, Mr Mede thinks this implies that it shall be in the region or dominion of the city; and as Rome was at that time the chief city in the known world, and is the principal subject of this prophecy, it is natural to think that it is the city here meant; and if so, then this slaughter must be not in Palestine, but in the Pope's dominions. In answer to this, it may be said, that the word city does not always mean a city properly so called, or the houses and walls of a town, but both in this prophecy, and other good authors, is often used to signify the community at large, the state, power, and whole jurisdiction thereof; so it seems to be used, Rev. xi. 8. where, speaking of the witnesses, the sacred writer says, "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city." Mr Mede takes great pains to shew, that the word here rendered street, cannot mean what is commonly

commonly signified by that name, but the whole region or territory subject to the dominion of the city. Certain it is, that either by the city or street thereof, the whole region or territory subject to the city, that is, the whole Popish empire, is here intended; for if we take the words in any lower sense, how could they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, see the dead bodies of the witnesses, as is said in the following verse.

2dly, It is to be thought, as Mr Mede observes, that the bodies of the witnesses lie in the place where they are overcome in battle; but it is not the custom for armies to encounter within the walls of a city; therefore, by the city, we must understand the whole Popish empire. Another place where the city signifies the whole Popish dominions or empire, is that of Rev. xi. 13, where it is said, "And the tenth part of the city fell," which most of our modern writers on that book, understand of the late Revolution in France, and in my opinion not without reason, for this kingdom was not only one of the ten horns of the Beast, or a tenth part of his dominions, but literally the tenth, that is, the last of the ten kingdoms into which the old Roman empire was divided, reckoning them according to the order of time, or as they sprung up. In this sense also the word city is understood by Mr Mede himself in Rev. xvi. 19. "And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell." And in this sense it must there be understood, if his opinion, which I think very probable, be true, viz. that before the event there signified, Rome will be destroyed. He thinks that

that the fifth vial, which is poured out on the seat of the Beast, means the destruction of Rome ; but what is said of the city's being divided into three parts, happens long afterwards, namely, at the seventh vial ; and consequently the great city cannot mean Rome properly so called, but must signify the dominion or government thereof, not the seat of the Papacy, but the Papacy itself*. Here then we have three places in this very book, where the word city does not signify the city properly so called, but the whole dominion or empire of the Pope ; and consequently nothing hindereth why it may not be so understood in that of Rev. xiv. 20. the sense of which we are now endeavouring to investigate. Taking the word therefore in this sense, without the city, will signify without the limits of the Popish empire or jurisdiction, and so the holy land or mountain of Megiddo actually is.

That this therefore is the place where the wine-press is to be trodden, is at least exceeding probable ; for besides the foregoing arguments, which do in a great measure prove it, if the fifth vial means the destruction of Rome, as it probably does, then the treading of the wine-press, which does not happen till some time after, namely, at the seventh vial, cannot with propriety be said to be without the city, when the city, properly so called, by this time is no more. Besides, it is doubtful whether the city of Rome can with propriety be said to be the principal subject of this prophecy, I should rather think that

* He that would see more proofs of this, may consult Juricu, page 262.

that Christ and the church are the principal subjects, both of this and of all the other books of Scripture. The church too is often represented to us in Scripture under the notion of a city, as Isaiah xxvi. 1. " We have a strong city, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks;" and Heb. xii. 22. It is called Mount Zion, the city of the living God, it is called the Holy city, Rev. xi. 2.; and in the two last chapters of that book we have a glorious description of a city, which, as all agree, must either signify the church on earth or in heaven. Without the city, therefore, may signify without the pale of the church. Mr Fleming, who understands the phrase in this sense, places the battle of Armageddon, or the treading of the wine-press, in the territory of the See of Rome, whereby it is evident, that he looked on that territory as without the pale of the church; but this I think is straining hard to make out a point; for why should the territory of the See of Rome be reckoned without the church more than other Popish countries; besides, the church of Rome has for the most part been considered by Protestants as a church, though a degenerate one. But let us examine Mr Fleming's own words, and see if they will lead us to any thing; for though he has missed the sense of the passage, yet I imagine he has suggested it: His words are, page 51. Without the city, viz. of Jerusalem, or the church, seeing this is called the city in Scripture-style, as Rome is called the great city. He would have done much better had he taken Jerusalem in the literal sense; for the mountains of Israel, and the valley of Megiddo, where Scripture places the battle

of Gog or of Armageddon, are literally without Jerusalem; and as Jerusalem will be rebuilt, and Rome probably destroyed before that battle takes place, (for as we have shewn before it does not happen till after the restoration of the Jews), Jerusalem will then be the chief city on earth. To this we may add, that without the city seems to imply, that this battle will be in the neighbourhood thereof; for how absurd would it be to say, that such a battle was fought without the city of Edinburgh, when perhaps it was fought at the distance of 100 miles from it. It is probable, therefore, that the treading of the wine-press will be somewhere not far from the city of Jerusalem. This seems to be confirmed by the following passages, Zech. xii. 2.—10. and chapter xiv. 2.—15.

Another proof that the treading of the wine-press is to be in the land of Judea is this. It appears by comparing that passage in the lxiii. of Isaiah, "Who is that cometh from Edom," &c. with that in the sixth of Rev. that they both relate to the same event, viz. the last great victory of the church over her enemies.

First, The battle or victory described in both, is expressed by the same metaphor, viz. that of treading the wine-press; and not only so, but several other phrases are exactly similar. In the sixth of Rev. 15. it is called the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, and in the other passage it is said, "I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury." Anger and fury are precisely the same with fierceness and wrath, and might have been so translated.

2dly, The person who treads the wine-press is the same in both places, viz. Christ. With respect to the sixth of the Rev. this is clear from verse 13. In the other passage, viz. the lxiii. of Isaiah, though the name of Christ is not expressly mentioned, yet from innumerable passages of the Old Testament it is evident, as I have elsewhere shewn, that besides God the Father, there is another Divine person to whom God has committed the government of this lower world, and who has been in all ages the Head, patron and defender of the church, called in the 9th verse of this very chapter the angel of God's presence. To whom then should we ascribe the glory of this victory but to him that is, to Christ.

3dly, In both places he is represented as arrayed in the most gorgeous manner, and yet his garments all stained with blood. St John saith, "And on his head were many crowns, and he was clothed with a vesture dipt in blood:" and Isaiah, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel," and verse 3. "Their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment."

4thly, The battle described in both places is spoken of as uncommonly bloody, great and important as the deliverance of the church, and decisive of the controversy betwixt her and her enemies. In the one place the time of it is called the day of vengeance, and the year of God's redeemed; and in the conclusion of the other we are told, that the Beast, and the false prophet were taken, and both cast alive into the lake of fire and brimstone.

From

From all which it is evident, that the battle and victory described in both places is the same; but the victory described by *Isaiah* is evidently gained by *Christ* on behalf of the *Jews*, or it is for their sake that he interposes in this battle; for it is of them that he speaks, when, in the 4th verse of this chapter, he says, "the year of my redeemed is come," as appears by comparing this verse with the last of the preceding chapter. It is therefore for the *Jews*, and on their behalf, that the great battle in the sixth of the *Rev.* is to be fought, since we have shewn that this battle and that of *Isaiah* are both one. But if it is on behalf of the *Jews* that the battle in the sixth of the *Rev.* is fought, the time of it must be after their restoration, as we cannot conceive how any battle can be fought, or victory obtained, either by them or for them, while they are in their present dispersed state. And if it is after their restoration that that battle is fought, then it synchronises or falls in with the time of that in the 38th and 39th of *Ezekiel*, which, as we have already shewn, happens also some little time after their restoration, but the scene of this battle we have proved to be in the land of *Judea* consequently that described by *Isaiah*, and that in the sixth of the *Rev.* must be there too.

Another proof that the battle described by *Isaiah* in the passage just now mentioned is the same with that in *Ezekiel*, is that as the latter is expressly said to be in the last days, after the *Jews* are restored, *Ezek.* xxxviii. 8. 11. so the former is introduced immediately after a remarkable prophecy concerning the redemption of that people, which, though it may perhaps

perhaps have an eye to their deliverance from the Babylonish captivity, yet from the magnificent things that are said of it, it is ultimately and chiefly to be understood of their redemption from the captivity which they are now under.

Thus it appears, that after the Jews are converted and settled again in their own land, there is to be a combination of the Mahometan and Antichristian powers against them, on purpose to dispossess them, or to conquer and plunder them, which will bring on a battle somewhere in the land of Judea, the issue of which will be the complete deliverance of the church and destruction of her enemies; and though in the eyes of some people, it may seem needless to have dwelt so long upon an event which it must be confessed is still at a considerable distance, yet I think myself justifiable in so doing, first, by the example of the holy Spirit, who has been pleased to reveal so much concerning it to us, for there is not in all the prophetic writings an event more frequently and largely treated of than this, except it be the first and second coming of our Saviour, and the rise and fall of Antichrist, of which last this event is one of the principal steps. Ezekiel, as we have seen, has two long chapters upon it. It is spoken of at least in three different places of the Revelation, viz. chap. xiv. 20. chap. xvi. 16. chap. xix. 11. verse to the end. By Isaiah in the passage just now quoted, also chap. xiv. 24. 25. By Daniel in the xi. chap. and two last verses. Micah iv. and three last verses. Haggai ii, 22. Zech. ix. 12. verse to the end, and chap. xii. 9.

2dly, I think myself justifiable for saying so much on this event by the great importance of it. It is indeed the most important event that the church has to expect till the second and glorious appearance of the Son of God unto Salvation, and therefore it is that the Holy Spirit has treated so largely of it. It is the last decisive struggle that the church is to have with her enemies, that is to put an end to her troubles, and to introduce that happy state, when there is to be no more war, nor mischief for the space of a thousand years. Besides, what I have said upon this event is not without its use; for, in the first place, in treating of it I have explained a good many passages of Scripture, which to the bulk of readers must formerly have appeared very dark and mysterious; and surely the time is not unprofitably spent that is spent in explaining and studying the holy Scriptures. Indeed, a right understanding of this event, with that of the Millennium, which is consequent upon it, is the key to innumerable places of Scripture, for almost all the prophets treat of it particularly towards the end of their books.

3dly, What I have said concerning this event may help to prevent or correct some dangerous mistakes with respect to it; for as the Scriptures make the battle of Armageddon to coincide with the final overthrow of Antichrist, and as Antichrist is falling daily, I make no doubt, but there are many people who look upon these events as just at the door; and should it fall out otherwise, or should Antichrist yet get up again, it might be apt to stumble them. But from what has been said, it appears that the battle of Armageddon,

mageddon, in which Antichrist is finally to perish, is not to happen till some time after the conversion and restoration of the Jews; and therefore we must not look on the late revolutions in Rome and Italy, as the fatal blow that is to put an end to the existence of the Pope, or as the last show of the Beast, but only as one of the strokes by which he is humbled and brought down. It is indeed in my opinion a fulfilment of the fifth vial, and the principal step of the Pope's fall; but there are two vials still to come, and as the fifth brings down the Pope, so the sixth, which is poured out on the Euphrates, according to most interpreters humbles the Turk, and the seventh completes the destruction of both. Mr Fleming agrees with me in thinking that the sixth vial means the fall of the Ottoman empire; but we differ in this, that whereas he thinks, that it causes the total destruction of that empire, I am of opinion, that it means only a weakening of it, not its annihilation, but some great calamity that is to happen to it. I have already given my reasons for this opinion, and shall not repeat them, but only add, that if I am mistaken, i. e. if the sixth vial means the final overthrow of the Turk, then it must coincide with the battle of Gog, mentioned in the 38th and 39th of Ezek. for that battle, as we have seen, finishes the empire of the Ottomans. But if the battle of Gog coincides with the sixth vial, it cannot be the same with that of Armageddon, as I have endeavoured to prove, but must go before it, for the battle of Armageddon coincides with the seventh vial, as all agree. But the restoration of the Jews goes before the battle of Gog; and therefore if this is not

the

the same with the battle of Armageddon, there must be two vials to run, and two great battles betwixt the church and her enemies after the restoration of the Jews: but, as I observed before, it is not likely that two such extraordinary battles, as these are, in Scripture, represented to be, should happen within so short a time of one another. However it may be so. There is one thing that favours Mr Fleming's opinion, and that is, at the pouring out of the sixth vial it is said, "and the waters of the Euphrates were dried up," which seems to imply, that the thing signified by these waters would be totally destroyed. Still the reasons before mentioned incline me to the other opinion, namely, that the sixth vial means only some great calamity that is to befall the Ottomans, and makes way for the restoration of the Jews; and that the battle of Gog, which comes after their restoration, is the same with that of Armageddon, and completes the destruction of all the Antichristian powers. Whether Mr Fleming or I is in the right as to this point, time will probably very soon discover.

But if the restoration of the Jews coincide with the sixth vial, and the sixth vial cause the total overthrow of the Turks, as the words, Rev. xvi. 12. and Isa. xi. 15. (which is parallel thereto, as Mr Mede has shewn,) seem to imply, then the Gog who afterward invades them must be some other power than the Ottoman. Mr Bicheno, who is of this opinion, thinks that it is the Russians and Muscovites; that these having conquered the Turks, which they are indeed very likely to do, they will, with the assistance of their newly-acquired subjects, together with the
 Persians

Persians and other nations enumerated by Ezekiel, invade the land of Judea. His reasons for this opinion are :

First, He thinks that the Turkish empire must be overthrown before the Jews can be restored, consequently the Gog that invades them after their restoration cannot be the Turk. In support of this opinion, he quotes also the words of Daniel, chap. xii. 1, where, immediately after describing the fall of the Turk, he adds, " And at that time shall Michael
 " stand up, the great prince which standeth for the
 " children of thy people, and there shall be a time
 " of trouble, such as never was since there was a na-
 " tion, even to that same time ; and at that time
 " thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall
 " be found written in the book. And many of them
 " that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake," &c. This he interprets (as he and others have done), Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones, of the restoration of the Jews, of their being delivered from the hands of their enemies, raised to political life, and becoming a free and happy people in the enjoyment of their ancient inheritance.

But I have already shewn, that the total overthrow of the Turkish empire is not necessary to the restoration of the Jews, and as to that passage in the 11th of Daniel, which he interprets in favour of his opinion, it is more natural I think to understand it of the resurrection, either first or second, and so the most part of commentators have interpreted it. Another reason that Mr Bicheno adduces to prove that Gog is the power of Russia, is taken from the titles which
 are

ave given him by the prophet. He is styled Chief Prince of Mefech and Tubal; or, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, Prince of the Chief of Mefech and Tubal; but the word in the original for Chief is Roffi, which is very probably a proper name, fo it may be rendered Prince of Roffi, Mefech and Tubal, and is fo rendered by the feventy. He fhews alfo, that the Mufcovites are defcended from Mefech, and makes it probable that the Ruffians are defcended from Tubal; fo the prince of Roffi, Mefech, and Tubal, may fignify the prince of Ruffia and Mufcovy. All this is fo far good, Roffi is the Ruffians, and Mefech is the Mufcovites; but what becomes of Gog himfelf? Why is the Emperor of the Ruffians called by this name, and the land of Magog? what connexion has it with Ruffia? Mr Bicheno is filent as to thefe points. Befides fome of the facts that he makes ufe of to fupport his opinion, are, I think, rather againft it. He fhews, and that clearly, that Mefech and Tubal fettled originally in Cappadocia and Armenia, and that in this laft country there was alfo in ancient times a people called Roffi or Roffi. Now is it not natural to think, that Ezekiel, in uſing thefe names, meant the nations that were called by them in his time, rather than thoſe that are fo called now, and which are but the offspring of the other, or that he meant the parent countries rather than the colonies; but the parent countries are at preſent all ſubject to the Turk, therefore he is Gog.

Another proof of this is, that Gog or Magog, as Mr Bicheno acknowledges, is generally eſteemed the father of the Scythians, and the Turk is of Scythian

extract, as all agree. But what puts it out of all doubt that the Turk is Gog, is the resemblance there is betwixt the character and the final overthrow of the Turk, as described by Daniel, chap. xi. 44, 45. and that of Gog, as described by Ezekiel. The situation of both is the same: In Daniel, the Turk is styled the king of the north, chap. xi. 40. and in Ezekiel Gog is said to come out of the north parts, chap. xxxviii. 15. Both are described as having the same people for their subjects or allies. In Daniel xi. 43. it is said of the Turk, "And the Lybians and Ethiopians shall be at his steps:" and Ezekiel xxxviii. 5. "Lybia and Ethiopia are reckoned among the nations that fight under Gog's banner." Both are represented as going out of their place with great fury to invade the land of Judea, and there meeting with their final doom. The place referred to in Ezekiel we have already considered, that in Daniel is as follows: "But tidings out of the east, and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace," or, as it may be rendered, the tents of his camp, "between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." Tidings out of the east probably means tidings that the Jews have taken possession of the land of Canaan, which is one of the principal provinces of the Turkish empire; and therefore the fear of losing it must needs trouble the court at Constantinople. This supposition accounts also for the Turks going forth with such fury to invade that

that country. " And he shall plant the tents of his " camp between the seas in the glorious holy mountain." By this, Mr Bicheno understands the Turks making Constantinople, which is situate between the Black sea and the Mediterranean, the capital of his empire: See page 86th of his book. But this interpretation does not agree with the context. For,

First, The Turk, or the person here spoken of, is said to go forth, that is, from his place of residence, as is natural to think, to pitch his camp elsewhere; but Constantinople is his place of residence, and therefore cannot be the glorious holy mountain, where he is said to pitch his camp.

2dly, It is the custom of the sacred writers, particularly of Daniel, to call their own country and people by such honourable titles: See chap. ix. 24. and viii. 24. vii. 27. and xii. 7. and twice in this very chapter, viz. verses 16. 44. Judea is called the glorious land, and chapter ix. 16. Jerusalem is called God's holy mountain, which are the very titles here used; so that there can be no doubt, that by the glorious holy mountain we are to understand the land of Judea. Here the Turk is to make his exit, and here also, as we have already seen, Gog is to be overthrown.

Lastly, The time of the destruction of both these powers is the same; that of Gog in Ezekiel is spoken of as happening after the restoration of the Jews, and that of the Turk in Daniel, as immediately preceding the first resurrection; for after speaking of the fall of the Turk in the end of the xith chapter, he immediately adds in the beginning of the xiith, " And at
" that

" that time shall Michael stand up," &c. to the end of the 3d verse. That these words are to be understood of the first, and not of the second resurrection, is at least very probable, because they are introduced immediately after the fall of the Turk; and the Millennium is spoken of afterwards in the 12th verse; but the second resurrection does not happen till after the Millennium. The overthrow of the Turk therefore coincides with that of Gog, both as to time and place, and consequently these two are the same.

I have already said, that I consider the late revolution in Rome as a fulfilment of the fifth vial, as I am fully persuaded that it is; but whether it is to be considered as the beginning or end of that vial, I am not quite so certain. It is the opinion of Mr Mede, that the burning of Rome is to happen during the time of the fifth vial; and if so, then the late revolution in Italy was probably only the beginning of that vial, and the destruction of Rome will be the end of it. And as the first of these events happened in the year 1797, so it is not unlikely that the last of them may be in the year 1812, which answers to the year 552, which Mr Fleming considers as a notable step in the rise of the Beast.

That Rome will one day be utterly destroyed by fire, is indeed clear from the xviiiith of the Revelation; but whether this event belongs to the fifth or sixth vial is somewhat doubtful; because after the description that is given of it in the xviiiith chapter, and the rejoicings of the saints on account of it in the beginning of the sixth, the sacred writer immediately introduces the marriage of the Lamb; and then,
from

from the 11th verse to the end, we have an account of the last great battle betwixt Christ and his enemies, which, as appears from Rev. xvi. 14. is to happen at the seventh vial; so that betwixt the burning of Rome and this vial there is no remarkable event here spoken of, but the marriage of the Lamb; no mention of the destruction of Gog, or of the waters of the Euphrates, or seemingly of any thing relative to the sixth vial, which makes it probable, that the burning of Rome, and the marriage of the Lamb are both after the sixth vial, or during the time of it. Besides these three events, the burning of Rome, the marriage of the Lamb, and the last great battle, are here so closely connected, and succeed one another so rapidly, that as there is no intervening event mentioned, so there seems to be no room for admitting any; and therefore it would seem, that the sixth vial is poured out or begun before any of these events happen. Thus, in the beginning of the ninth chapter, the church's rejoicings on account of the destruction of Babylon, and her rejoicings on account of the approaching marriage of the Lamb, are blended together; which seems to imply, that these two events are cotemporary, or rather that the one follows immediately on the other; and as the marriage of the Lamb is closely connected with the fall of Babylon, so the last great battle, or battle of Armageddon, seems closely connected with the marriage of the Lamb. In the 9th verse it is said, "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb;" and in the 17th verse, the battle of Armageddon is called the supper of the great God. Now, the Lamb is our Saviour, and our Saviour is the great God; and therefore

fore the marriage-supper of the Lamb, and the supper of the great God must signify the same thing. There is therefore so close a connexion betwixt these three events, the destruction of Babylon, the marriage of the Lamb, and the battle of Armageddon, that there seems to be no room for admitting the fall of the Turk, which is the chief thing signified by the sixth vial in amongst them; neither, as we said before, is there any mention here made of such a thing. It would seem, therefore, that this event is past before any of the other three takes place. But this argument, if it proves any thing it proves too much, for in the whole passage where these events are treated of, viz. the xvii. xviii. xix. chapters of the Rev. the sacred writers makes no express mention of the sixth vial, or of the fall of the Turk, neither before his description of Babylon's destruction nor after it; and if his silence in the one place proves that the fall of the Turk is not to happen after Babylon's destruction, then his silence in the other must also prove that it is not to happen before it, and so it will not happen at all; and yet it is certain from Rev. xvi. 12. not to mention other places, that the fall of the Turk is an event that will happen some time or other; and therefore the sacred writers making no mention of the sixth vial, or of this event, betwixt the description which he gives us of the destruction of Babylon, and of the last great battle, does not prove that this event is not to happen then; and yet perhaps the fall of the Turk is not wholly omitted here more than it is elsewhere, but is couched under the marriage of the Lamb. Indeed this is more than probable; but before
we

we can shew that it is so, we must first inquire what is meant by the marriage of the Lamb.

By this metaphor most interpreters think, we are here to understand the conversion and restoration of the Jews, and that this is the meaning of it must be admitted, if we consider first, that it is not likely that so great, so desirable an event, and one which is so often spoken of by all the other prophets, and inspired writers, both of the Old and New Testament, would be omitted by John in a prophecy, that contains all the remarkable or principal events that were to happen to the church, from the Apostles time, down to the end of the world: But there is no part in all the Revelation that can be applied to this event but the passage just now mentioned, and that other in the xvith chapter, where it is said, "And the waters of the Euphrates were dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared," which Mr Mede and some others think, is to be understood of the return of the Jews; and though perhaps in this they are right, yet that passage is so short, dark, and uncertain as to its application, that I cannot think it is the only place in the Revelation where so great, important, and desirable an event is taken notice of; especially when it is considered, that all the other great events prophesied of in this book are mentioned again and again, and many that are of less importance than this. It is probable, therefore, that this is the thing meant by the marriage of the Lamb. Besides, Mr Fleming, with great appearance of reason, understands that of the xvith chapter, concerning the kings of the east, literally of the kings

or

of nations that lie to the east of the Euphrates, who, being mostly Mahometans, a way for their conversion will be prepared by the fall of the Turk; and if this is the meaning, then that other passage concerning the marriage of the Lamb, is the only one in all the Revelation that can be understood of the conversion of the Jews; and therefore it must be so understood. However, Mr Mede supports his opinion by very strong arguments; and therefore I am inclined to understand that of Rev. xvi. 12. both ways, of the conversion of the Jews, as well as of the other eastern nations, and the more so, that I find most of the great events contained in the Revelation are twice treated of, and some of them oftener.

2dly, That by the marriage of the Lamb, we are to understand the conversion and restoration of the Jews, is farther probable from this, that the style of the prophecies, particularly of this book, is highly metaphorical, and there is no metaphor by which that event could be expressed more properly, than that which the sacred writers here use, the marriage of the Lamb; for what is marriage but a solemn contract and agreement betwixt a man and a woman, wherein the former binds and obliges himself to love, support, and provide for the latter, and the latter to love, reverence, and obey the former? and does not Christ enter into a like covenant with all true believers at their conversion? does he not promise and engage to protect, support, and provide for them, to love, and cherish them, and to bestow on them all things necessary to their present comfort and future happiness? and do not they, on their part, engage to be faithful and

and constant to him, to love him above all creatures and created enjoyments, and to yield a sincere and universal obedience to his laws; and as the marriage-covenant is a lasting and indissoluble one, which nothing but death can break, so is the covenant betwixt Christ and believers, it is an indissoluble tie, an everlasting covenant, which cannot be broken even by death itself.

The conversion of any one, therefore, whether an individual or a nation, from a state of infidelity to that of a true and sincere faith, may very properly be called their marriage with Christ. Accordingly the Apostle Paul uses the metaphor in this sense, 2 Cor. xi. 2. "For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ:" and in the Old Testament, God's covenant with his antient people, is often represented under this notion; so Jer. iii. 14. "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you;" and Isa. liv. 5. "For thy maker is thine husband, (the Lord of hosts is his name:)" see also Hos. ii. 19. and many other places. The marriage of the Lamb, therefore, in all probability, means the conversion of some great and powerful nation to the Christian faith, for we cannot think that there has ever been since the Apostles days, or ever will be to the end of the world, any individual of such consequence as to merit a place in this prophecy, which treats only of the most important events, and such as are of general concern to the church. It must, therefore, as I said, be understood of some great nation, a nation remarkable on some account or other, either of their

character, history, antiquity, the great things done by them or for them by Providence, or on some account or other; and what nation is there so remarkable in all respects as the Jews? a nation so ancient, so honourable, so nearly related to Christ, that there is not any on earth comparable to them; a nation once high in the Divine favour, and though now of a long time they have been cast off, and held as enemies for the sake of the Gentiles; yet, as touching the election, they are beloved for the sake of their fathers, a nation that is the subject of innumerable other prophecies, both in the Old and New Testament; and therefore probably also of this.

It cannot be understood of any of the Gentile nations that have been long since converted to Christianity, for the event here treated of is evidently still future, being placed immediately before the last great battle betwixt the church and her enemies; and as Mr Mede observes, unless the Jews are converted before that battle, they must then be destroyed along with the other enemies of Christ, in that day of universal revenge and judgment. From all which, it is more than probable, that by the marriage of the Lamb, we are here to understand the conversion of the Jews; and what farther confirms this is, that this marriage is described as causing great joy to the church on earth: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." And doubtless the conversion of God's ancient people will do so, as much as any event ever did since the Apostles days: St Paul tells us, "it will be as life from the dead," and Isaiah speaking of it, chap.

lxvi. 10. says, "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her:" &c.

Having now proved, that by the marriage of the Lamb, we are to understand the conversion, and restoration of the Jews, we proceed to shew, that the sixth vial, or fall of the Turk, is cotemporary therewith, and is couched under this promise concerning it. This will not need much proof, for, as the Turk is at present in possession of the land of Palestine, it is evident the Jews cannot be restored till he is humbled, either totally overthrown, or so much weakened as not to be able to hinder their return. These two must go hand in hand, and therefore it is probable, that his fall, or the sixth vial, is comprehended under the marriage of the Lamb, as being inseparably connected with it. Now, the marriage of the Lamb comes in exactly betwixt the burning of Babylon and the last great battle, which is to be at the seventh vial; and therefore, if the burning of Babylon be to happen at the end of the fifth vial, the marriage of the Lamb must be betwixt the fifth and seventh vials, which is just where the same Apostle, chap. xvi. places the sixth vial, or fall of the Turk; consequently these two, the fall of the Turk, and the marriage of the Lamb or restoration of the Jews, must be cotemporary, and both happen during the sixth vial. On the other hand, if the restoration of the Jews be during the sixth vial, then the burning of Rome must be at the end of the fifth; for as the sixth vial begins just where the former ends, so the marriage of the Lamb, or restoration of the Jews, follows immediately after the burning of Rome. This last e-

vent

vent goes first, and is described at great length in the xviiiith chapter; then follows the marriage of the Lamb, chapter xix. 7. which is expressed in these words: "The marriage of the Lamb is come;" that is, the event signified by this metaphor, the long-looked for restoration of the Jews is now about to take place; after which, at some little distance, comes the marriage-supper. By the marriage, I understand the home bringing of the bride, or the return of the Jews to Canaan, for their conversion, I imagine, goes before this, and is expressed in these words: "and his wife hath made herself ready;" that is, by her repentance and acknowledgement of the truth, by fleeing to Christ, and believing on him, the great obstacle to her restoration, namely, God's displeasure with her on account of her infidelity is now removed; or she is now prepared, and endued with the qualifications requisite to her restoration. Her uncircumcised heart is humbled she has acknowledged her offence, and accepted the punishment of her iniquity, therefore God's wrath towards her is appeased, her sin is pardoned, and consequently the effects of it, her present exile and wandering state are now shortly to come to an end; or to speak in the metaphorical style of the Apostle, "She has now consented to the match, and given her hand to Christ; therefore, she shall be brought home with joy and gladness to the palace of the king, to Judea, which was once the peculiar residence of the Almighty, and where he will yet dwell among his ancient people; and be their God." The homebringing of the bride was in ancient times the principal part of the marriage-ceremony; and therefore

fore I take it, the return of the Jews to their native country is the chief thing signified by the marriage of the Lamb; and if so, then by the bride's having made herself ready, we must understand something previous to their return; and what should that be, but their conversion to Christianity; and as this is said immediately after the description of Babylon's fall, and is spoken of as a thing then past, or in the preterite, "his wife hath made herself ready;" it would seem, that the conversion of the Jews goes before that event, or is at least cotemporary with it. Their marriage, or restoration, succeeds immediately to their conversion, and the destruction of Babylon; and after that, at some little distance, comes the battle of Armageddon, or marriage-supper, which is so called, because it follows soon after the marriage as the supper does, and will be a feast to the church, particularly to the Jews, as being a great manifestation of God's special care of them and love to them, and deliverance from the hand of a great and powerful enemy, that was come for their destruction.

It will also be matter of joy to the churches of the Gentiles, as being a clear demonstration of the truth of Scripture, and a sure pledge of the happy times that are there spoken of as succeeding to this event. It will be in a special manner matter of joy to such of the Gentiles as shall have joined themselves to the Jews, or been assisting to them at that time. Therefore it is said, "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb;" or it may perhaps mean, Blessed are they who are destined to see that happy day, who shall be then upon the earth,

earth, or outlive the preceding troubles, and so it answers to those words of Daniel, chapter xii. 12. "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."

After this decisive battle the Gospel will flee like lightning over the world; the nations, being convinced by God's judgments on Gog, will come over in crowds to the standard of Christ. Immediately the Jews will begin their operations as missionaries, and will carry the light of the Gospel to the remotest corners of the earth. After all the world is converted, which I suppose will not take up above 45 years after the fall of Gog, then, and not till then, will the happy Millennium commence. Wherein the happiness of that period will consist, we cannot positively say; but the following particulars seem clear from Scripture.

First, The world will all be of one religion, viz. the pure religion of the New Testament, Popery and Mahometanism and idolatry will be utterly extirpated. There will be one Lord, and his name one, over all the earth.

2dly, There will be a great increase of light and knowledge, especially in matters of religion; the prophecies, being all fulfilled, will then be as clear as any other parts of Scripture, for the event is the best interpreter of prophecy; besides, the Spirit being poured out in an extraordinary measure, as is expressly promised, Joel ii. 28. will lead men to the meaning of many places that have never yet been discovered. It is said, Rev. x. 7. that when the seventh angel shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished,

finished; which plainly implies, that the mysteries both of Scripture and of Providence will then be by some means or other explained. The winding up of the great drama of Providence, which will take place at the commencement of the Millennium, will explain all the preceding acts, and shew the beauty and symmetry of the whole scheme.

3dly, It will be a time of great holiness and piety. Virtue and true religion shall every where prevail, and all iniquity and vice as ashamed shall hide its face. How much this will contribute to the happiness of that period may be easily conceived; for let us only suppose, that in the present state of things all were just and reasonable in their dealings, that there were no thieves, quarrelsome or insidious persons, but that all would live in peace and love, and walk by our Saviour's rule, do to others as they would wish others to do to them, what a happy world would it be in comparison of what it is? Yet this will be precisely the case in the time of the Millennium. Thy people shall be all righteous, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified, Isa. lx. 21.

4thly, It will be a time of universal peace. "The nations shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain," Isa. xi. 6.

From this, and from another passage in the 65th chapter of Isaiah, it would appear, that during that happy period, there will be few or none of the human race carried off by accidents or premature death.

"There

" There shall be no more thence an infant of days,
 " nor an old man that hath not filled his days, for
 " the child shall die an hundred years old; they shall
 " not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant,
 " and another eat." In the present state of things, the
 wars, diseases, and calamities that shorten mens lives
 are so many, that those who build, plant, or make
 any improvement, seldom live to enjoy the fruit
 of their labours. But in that happy period it shall
 be otherwise, the same hand that sowed shall reap the
 field. It would appear also from the following words,
 that the length of human life will be considerably en-
 larged: " For as the days of a tree, shall the days of
 " my people be, and mine elect shall long enjoy the
 " work of their hands."

5thly, There will be a blessing on the earth and
 on the seasons, which will render them uncommonly
 fruitful: So Joel iii. 18. " And it shall come to pass
 " in that day, that the mountains shall drop down
 " new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk." And Amos ix. 13. " Behold, the days come, saith the
 " Lord, that the ploughman shall overtake the reap-
 " er, and the treader of grapes, him that soweth
 " seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine,
 " and all the hills shall melt." There will be a parti-
 cular blessing upon the land of Judea, as appears from
 Ezek. xxxiv. 25. " And I will make with them a co-
 " venant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to
 " cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely
 " in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I
 " will make them and the places round about my
 " hill, a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come
 " down

“ down in his season : there shall be showers of blessing.” So also Ezek. xxxvi. 33. “ Thus saith the Lord God, In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities, I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden,” &c.

But the finest description of the happiness of the Jews after their restoration, is contained in the following passages of Isaiah, chap. xlix. 11th to the 24th verse.

“ And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. Behold, these shall come from far : and lo, these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim. Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth, and break forth into singing, O mountains : for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.” And chapter liv. 11. “ O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established : thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear ; and from terror, for it shall not come near thee.” See also the 16th of Isaiah, the whole of which seems to be a prophecy of the happy state of God’s ancient people

C c

during

during the Millennium, although in several places it seems to have an eye to the heavenly state.

In the preceding pages we have endeavoured to shew, that the time of Antichrist's fall and of the conversion of the Jews is near; but as we have not yet said how near, or shewn by any clear demonstrative proof when these events are destined to happen, we shall now try if it is possible to do this, or if we can find any passages in the prophecies, or facts in history, that will enable us to determine the time of Antichrist's fall with more certainty and precision. Two things chiefly encourage me to make this inquiry: First, Several writers of acknowledged piety have done the like, and what is more, have succeeded; of which Mr Fleming's foretelling, by the help of Scripture-prophecy, the precise time of the fall of the French monarchy, near a century before it happened, is a wonderful instance.*

2dly, Could we from the prophecies ascertain the time of Antichrist's fall, or shew clearly when this or any of the other great events that are the subject of prophecy is to happen, it would tend very much to the conviction of infidels, as it would strengthen the evidence arising from the accomplishment of Scripture-prophecy, and prevent an objection commonly made by these people, when you attempt to convince them, by shewing them how the event corresponds with the prediction: Why was not this done before,

* The reader will find several other instances of this, if he will take the trouble to consult the following authors: Bishop Newton, Vol. II. page 229. of the ninth edition. Kett on the prophecies, Vol. II. second edition, pages 56, 57.

before, if such an event, or the time when it was to happen, be foretold in Scripture? Why was it not known till after it happened? To this it may be answered, That most of the events contained in the prophecies were known before they happened, and also that we of the present age know most of the events contained in those which remain to be fulfilled, the only thing hard to be understood is what relates to the circumstances, the time, when, and the means and instruments by which the predicted events are to be brought about, and yet these have also sometimes been discovered by learned men, as may be seen in the authors and places above mentioned; and if we could also shew from the prophecies the time when the fall of Antichrist, or any of the other great events foretold in Scripture, is to happen, it would no doubt very much strengthen the evidence of Scripture-prophecy.

The time of Antichrist's rise is marked or pointed out by several cotemporary events, and as we may learn from history when these events happened, one would think it should be easy to determine the time of his rise: but here is the difficulty, events similar to those mentioned in the prophecies as cotemporary with the rise of Antichrist, have happened oftener than once, or the prophetic description of the events by which the rise of the Beast is marked, is often conceived in such terms, that it will apply to two or more different events, and it is not easy to determine which of these we are to consider as cotemporary with his rise, or as designed to mark the time thereof. The only way to do this is, I imagine, to consider which of these events coincides or agrees with
the

the other events that are mentioned in Scripture, as cotemporary with the rise of the Beast, for that only can be his true aera, in which all the events by which the time of his rise is marked in Scripture, meet or happen; for example, the healing of the Beast's deadly wound is commonly thought by commentators to be one of those events by which the aera of the Beast is marked in Scripture; for immediately after mentioning this, the sacred writer adds, "And all the world wondered after the Beast," Rev. xiii. iii. Now, there are at least two different events to which this prophecy is applicable, or that may be considered as a healing of the Beast's deadly wound; the first was Justinian's conquest of Italy, A. D. 552. by which the imperial name and power was restored, after it had ceased for about 70 or 80 years; the other was A. D. 800, when Charlemagne was proclaimed Emperor of the Romans; the prophecy applies almost equally well to both events, the question then is, to which of them does it refer? Bishop Newton thinks to the last. But does the time of this event agree with that of the other events mentioned in Scripture as cotemporary with the rise of the Beast? by no means; for one of these is the rise of ten new kingdoms within the territories of the Roman empire: Rev. xvii. 12. "The ten horns which thou sawest, are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet, but receive power as kings one hour;" that is, as Bishop Newton explains it, at the same time with the Beast. But the ten kingdoms were all risen near 200 years before the erection of the western empire by Charlemagne. The first of these periods, therefore,

fore, viz. the year 552, seems most likely to be the æra of the Beast.

Another of the marks by which the time of Antichrist's rise is pointed out to us in Scripture, is, that immediately, or a little before it, some great obstacle that hindered it should be taken out of the way, according to that of 2d Theff. ii. chap. 5, 6, 7. where, speaking of the Man of Sin, he says, "Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time. Only he who now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way." From the Apostle's manner of expressing himself, and from the tradition of the church concerning the meaning of this passage, it would seem, that that which hindered the appearance of the Man of Sin, was the Roman empire, or the imperial power in Italy. Besides, it is a matter of fact that the power of the Roman Emperors, while they governed Italy, was the chief thing that checked the ambition and hindered the rise of the Pope. But here, as in the former instances, there are two different events to which this prophecy is applicable; the first was, when the Heruli conquered Italy, and put an end to the western empire, A. D. 476.; the other was when the Lombard's conquered Ravenna, and so extinguished the power of the Greek Emperors in Italy, A. D. 752.; for there were two race of Emperors called Roman, viz. the eastern or Greek Emperors, as they are commonly called, who resided at Constantinople, and the western, whose residence was at Rome. Both of these governed Italy in their turn, and both were
in

in some measure a check to the Roman Pontiff. The question then is, To which of the two events does the prophecy refer, the extinction of the western empire by the Heruli, or that of the Greek Emperor's power in Italy by the Lombards? Probably it refers to both, but chiefly to the first; for the western Emperors, by residing at Rome, were a greater check upon the Popes than the eastern Emperors, who lived at a distance, and governed Italy by a deputy; besides, the eastern Emperors were many of them great friends to the Pope, and by their excessive kindness helped to raise him.

The prophecy therefore applies much better to the destruction of the western empire by the Heruli, than to the conquest of the exarchate by the Lombards. But what puts it out of all doubt that it refers chiefly, if not solely, to the first of these events, is, that the time of this event coincides exactly with that of the rise of the ten kings, which the other does not. The same may be said of that prophecy, chap. xvii. 10. concerning the seventh head, or the other, which in the Apostle's time was not yet come, and was to continue a little space, and to precede the rise of the Pope. There are also two things to which it applies. Mr Fleming and some others understand it of the Goths, who reigned in Italy for some time. Bishop Newton understands it of the dukes of Rome. If it means the Goths, then the rise of the Pope should be about the year 537, when the Goths lost Rome, or the year 552, when they were totally subdued. If it means the dukes of Rome, then his rise should be about the year 727, when the government of the dukes was abolished;

bolished ; but this last event does not agree, in respect of time, with another of the events mentioned in Scripture as cotemporary with the rise of the Pope, namely, that of the ten kings ; but the other event, the fall of the Goths does. And as it is plainly intimated that the fall of the seventh head was to precede or make way for the rise of the Beast, so the fall of the Goths was followed by a remarkable step in the Pope's rise, for the empire of the Goths may be considered as having fallen with Theodoric, who died in the year 527 ; and seven years after that, that is, in the year 534, Justinian passed that famous edict, so often quoted by writers on this subject, wherein the Pope was declared head of the church, and that all were to be subject to his judgment, but he himself to be judged by none. For these reasons, and for others formerly mentioned, I am decidedly of opinion, that this prophecy is chiefly to be understood of the Goths, or that they are the seventh head, which was to continue a short space, and to make way for the Beast, who was to be the eight, though I doubt not but it has a reference to the exarchatè also, for the conquest of this contributed to the rise of the Pope's power, as well as the fall of the Goths. The one preceded and gave birth to his supremacy or spiritual dominion, the other to his temporal ; the one made him the head of the church, that is, the spiritual head of the Roman empire or of the Beast ; the other made him the sovereign or temporal head of Rome, and the territories belonging to it. But his spiritual dominion or supremacy, as we have formerly shewn, is the chief thing that which, properly speaking, constitutes

tutes him Pope, and in respect of which he is both the head and image of the Beast; and therefore his obtaining this, or the establishment of his ecclesiastical authority, must be the principal step in his rise; and this certainly was established long before he obtained the sovereignty of Rome, and the government of the dukes was abolished, though I confess there is some ground to doubt whether his ecclesiastical authority was fully established so early as the year 534.

First, Because the Goths, who, as we have already shewn, were the seventh head, whose fall was to make way for the rise of the Pope, continued to possess Rome till the year 537, when it was taken by Belisarius the Greek general, that is, three years after Justinian's edict; but it was not till they lost Rome that they ceased to be the head thereof, or that the seventh head was cut off, if it was indeed cut off then; for the Goths after that took the city several times, and sadly wasted it, yet as they never kept it for any length of time, and it was from that day forward, viz. the year 537, when Belisarius took it, for the most part in the hands of the Greeks, they, and not the Goths are thenceforth to be considered as the heads of Rome. This event, therefore, the taking of Rome from the Goths, looks very like the fall of the seventh head, it certainly was so in part. It was moreover an event, that favoured the ambitious views of the Pope, for after that the city, which was the place of his residence, being for the most part in the hands of his friends, and those whom he had obliged, or rather who had raised him; he was more at liberty to usurp and domineer in the church than before; had

it more in his power to make good the new title, which Justinian had a little before conferred on him. This event, therefore, may justly be considered as one of the remarkable steps of the Pope's rise; accordingly, when the years of Antichrist's reign are added to the year 537 when it happened, they terminate exactly in the time of the late revolution in Rome. But whether this period 537, when the Goths lost Rome, or the year 552, when they were totally subdued, is to be accounted the time of their fall, and of the seventh head, and which of the two periods coincides with the aera of the Beast, or the principal step of his rise, or whether this be not at a period somewhat later than either of them, I have not yet been able with certainty to discover, nor can it, I imagine, be clearly ascertained from any of the passages that have yet been examined; only, from what has been said, we think it almost certain, that the aera of the Beast, that is, the principal step of his rise, could not be prior to the year 537, nor much later than the year 552.

First, It could not be prior to the year 537, because the rise of the Beast is placed by the sacred writer himself after the fall of the seventh head; and though Bishop Newton, and some few more, have been of opinion, that the dukes of Rome, or the exarchs of Ravenna, were the seventh head, yet no judicious writer that I have seen, ever thought that the time of the seventh head was prior to that of the Goths, except Mr Taylor of Larbert, and the event has clearly proved that he was mistaken. But the year 537, when they lost Rome, is certainly the earliest

period that can, with any appearance of reason, be considered as that of their fall, consequently the rise of the Beast could not be prior to that period.

2dly, Neither could it be much latter than the year 552, otherwise it would not coincide with the rise of the ten kingdoms, as it ought to do, Rev xvii. 12. The two last of them, as we have already shewn, were the kingdom of the Lombards, and the exarchate of Ravenna, and both these rose at the same time, viz. in the year 568, I mean the exarchate, properly so called, and the kingdom of the Lombards in Italy; though it may with a good deal of reason be affirmed, that the rise of these two kingdoms was at an earlier period; for Narses, who conquered the Goths, was properly speaking the first exarch, and is so called by the historian Gibbon. He ruled Italy twelve or fourteen years, and began his government in the year 552, and the Lombards were at that time in Pannonia, so that both these kingdoms were then in being. But these two are generally, and with good reason, thought to be two of the three kingdoms which the little horn plucked up by the root; and as it was not the kingdom of the Lombards in Pannonia but in Italy, nor the exarchate of Narses, who governed all Italy, but of Ravenna that was subdued by the Pope, and these two did not exist till the year 568; it may be doubted whether the number of the ten kingdoms was complete till then, and consequently whether the rise of the Beast can be dated from an earlier period; but admitting that the rise of the Beast was not till the year 568, this, as we said, is not much later than the year 552, *q. e. d.* Besides, we have already

already shewn, that the prophecy concerning the seventh head, or the other, which in the Apostle's time was not yet come, is chiefly to be understood of the Goths: the Beast is expressly said to be the eighth; therefore, one would think, that his rise could not be much later than their fall. It is true, it is not said that the one should immediately succeed to the other, but neither is it said, that there was to be any interval betwixt them, much less such a long interval as there must be, if the rise of the Pope is not to be counted till he obtained the principality of Rome. Besides, it seems plainly from the Apostle's manner, to be the intention of the prophecy, to point out the time of the Beast's rise, namely, by this mark, that it should be soon after the fall of the seventh head, or that he should be the next in succession; and, if so, then the rise of the Pope could not be long after the fall of that head, otherwise the end of the prophecy could not be answered; for how could it serve to point out the time of his rise, if there was to be a long and uncertain interval betwixt it and the fall of the seventh head. Bishop Newton seems to have been sensible of the force of this argument; for as he supposes that the dukes of Rome were the seventh head, whose government ceased in the year 727, so he makes the rise of the Beast to be the same year. The same may be said of most writers, for they all place the rise of the Beast either after the fall of the Goths, or whatever else they take to be the seventh head; however, I do not look upon this argument as quite conclusive, though there is something in it.

First,

First, Because this prophecy may be intended not to point out the time of the Beast's rise, but to point out the Beast himself, or as a mark to let posterity know who he is, namely, that he should be the eighth head, or the eighth kind of ruler that should govern the Roman empire; at least there is nothing in the words from which we can clearly infer, that this is not the only intent of the prophecy.

2dly, Because it is not said that the Beast should make his appearance immediately after the fall of the seventh head, but only that he was to be the eighth in succession; therefore I do not consider the last of the foregoing arguments as having much weight in it: there is much more in this, that the fall of the Goths coincides with the rise of the Pope's supremacy; for Justinian's edict, whereby this was established, was passed in the year 534, which was just seven years after Theodoric died, whose death may be considered as the first step in the fall of the Goths, and four years before they lost Rome, which was the second. By this edict, and by the Franks acknowledging the Pope's authority, which they did in the end of the preceding century, the Pope became the spiritual head, not only of Rome, but of the Roman empire, that is, of the Beast, or he became the chief ecclesiastical ruler therein: thus his supremacy was established, and his supremacy, as we shewed before, is the chief thing.

Another proof that the æra of the Beast, or the principal step of his rise, was about the middle of the sixth century, or the time of the fall of the Goths is this: We shewed formerly that the Pope is the head
of

of the Beast; but it is only in respect of his ecclesiastical authority or his spiritual dominion that he is so; because, properly speaking, he never was the temporal head of the empire, but only of Rome, and the ecclesiastical states as they are called; for though he often meddled with affairs of state, and took upon him to dispose of kingdoms, yet the right by which he pretended to do so, was wholly founded on his spiritual authority, as the vicar of Christ, and successor of St Peter. It is in respect of his spiritual dominion, therefore, that he is the head of the Beast; and this, we have just now shewn, was established about the middle of the sixth century; consequently, the aera of the Beast, one would think, should also be about that time, which is either in the year 537, when the Goths lost Rome, or 552, when they were totally subdued; for these were the two principal steps in their fall; and the Goths, as we have shewn, were the seventh head, whose fall was to make way for the rise of the Pope. And what confirms this, is these two periods, when the years of Antichrist's reign are added to them, terminate exactly in the present times, which have all the appearance of being the time of God's vengeance on Bablyon for the controversy of Zion. The last of these periods, viz. the year 552, coincides also with all the events by which the rise of the Beast is marked in Scripture: it coincides, as we have just now seen, with the fall of the seventh head: it coincides with the healing of the Beast's deadly wound; for upon Justinian's conquest of Italy, the imperial name and power was restored there: and it coincides with the rise of the ten kingdoms; for the exarchate;

which

which was the last of them, rose at the same time with the fall of the Goths; Narfes, who conquered them, being made the first exarch. This, therefore, is a notable period, and seems most likely to be the aera of the Beast, or the principal step in his rise; although the year 537 was also a remarkable step in his rise, and corresponds with as remarkable a step in his fall, viz. the late conquest of the Pope's dominions by the French; yet as the ten kingdoms were not then all risen, nor the Goths, the seventh head, totally fallen, I do not think it so notable a period as the other. To which we may add, that if the year 537 were the principal step of the Beast's rise, then the year 1797 should have been the principal step of his fall. But from what has lately happened in France and Italy, there is reason to believe that this is still future; for these reasons, I look upon the year 552 as the principal of the two periods, and what is most likely to prove the aera of the Beast. The years of Antichrist's reign, when added to this period, terminate in the year 1812; and when we consider the signs of the times, the many strange revolutions that have lately happened in the world, and which seem to portend the approach of some great event, such as that of which we treat the dreadful calamities that have already fallen on many of the worshippers of the Beast, and other arguments which the reader will find in different parts of this discourse, it is by no means improbable, that the principal step of his fall may be at that time. But as it is not said that the Beast or eighth head was immediately to succeed the seventh, and as the two last of the ten kingdoms, viz. that

that of the Lombards and the exarchate, have commonly been thought not to commence till about the year 568, which is only fifteen years later than the former period, perhaps the event may shew, that this was the true aera of the Beast. If this be indeed his aera, then his greatest fall will be A. D. 1828.

Another reason for fixing the aera of the Beast at the year 552, is that the overthrow of the Goths was in all probability owing to the Pope; and, if so, the kingdom of the Goths must be the first of the three that were plucked up by him. Some judicious writers have been of this opinion, and there are several good reasons for it.

First, That the Pope had a hand in the overthrow of that people, is clear from the history of those times; for in the year 537, upon Belisarius's coming with an army to besiege Rome, the Romans opened their gates and received him joyfully; and Evagrius positively affirms, that this was brought to pass through the persuasion of Pope Silverius. The garrison left by Vitiges, king of the Goths, finding that they could not make head at the same time against the Emperor's army and the citizens, retired by the Flaminian gate, while Belisarius entered by the Afinarian. Thus, through the treachery of Pope Silverius, the city of Rome was delivered up to the imperial general, and this paved his way to the conquest of the Goths. Thus the Pope, though he had done no more, might be said to have plucked up the kingdom of the Goths, as a man may be said to do a thing when he helps another to do it, though he himself be not the principal. But in this case there is reason to think, that he was
the

the prime mover and cause of the war, and that it was he that advised and instigated the Greek Emperor to it; for the Greek Emperors were at that time zealous Catholics. On the contrary, the kings of the Goths were Arians and enemies to Popery; they were besides a check upon the Popes, as we observed formerly; it was natural therefore, for the Pope to wish their overthrow, to choose the protection of a Catholic rather than of an Arian prince, and to have one at the distance of Constantinople rather than at Ravenna. And when we consider what lawless and unprincipled creatures the Popes have always been, how little scrupulous about the means they use for the accomplishment of their ends, there is ground to suspect that Pope John, when he was at Constantinople, being sent by Theodoric to stop the persecution that was going on against the Arians, betrayed his trust, and in concert with the Emperor and his nephew Justinian, projected the overthrow of the Goths. What confirms this suspicion is, that though the Pope, by his influence and authority, procured a revocation of the edict against the Arians, and that they should be restored to their former privileges; yet upon his return, he and his attendant, by the king's orders, were cast into prison, where soon after he died. To which we may add, that the chief men in Rome, as historians tell us, were at this very time suspected of carrying on a treasonable correspondence with the court at Constantinople. There is, therefore, good reasons for ascribing the destruction of the Gothic kingdom in Italy to the Papal power; and, if so, then this kingdom must be one of the three that it plucked

ed

ed up by the roots. If any shall object, that it was not the Pope, properly speaking, but Justinian that conquered the Goths, I answer, neither did the Pope by himself conquer the Lombards, but only stirred up the king of the Franks to do it; and yet most writers think, that their kingdom was one of the three that the Pope plucked up. But it may be further objected, that the Pope did not get the kingdom of the Goths to himself. When Charles conquered the Lombards, he gave a great part of their kingdom to the Pope, but so did not Justinian. Answer, His plucking up these kingdoms by the roots, does not imply that he was to get them all to himself; it means only, that he was to be the cause of their overthrow, and yet the Pope gained considerably by the destruction of the Goths; he got rid of a troublesome neighbour that was a check upon him; he got an accession of power and influence, and in process of time he got a great part of the kingdom of the Goths. He first got the duchy of Rome, after that the exarchate, and then a great part of the kingdom of the Lombards, all which had formerly belonged to the Goths. But to this it may be objected, that the little horn is said not only to pluck up three of the first horns, but also to subdue three kingdoms, which seems to imply, that he was to get possession of them; and as Bishop Newton observes, the Pope hath in a manner pointed himself out for the person, by wearing the triple crown. But unless we suppose that the duchy of Rome, the exarchate of Ravenna, and the kingdom of the Lombards, are these three kingdoms, where, and which are they? The three coun-

tries just now mentioned, are at present subject to the Pope, and are well enough known to the learned. But we cannot say so of the kingdom of the Goths; for all Italy belonged to them, and there is no part of it that can be called their kingdom more than another: Besides, the three kingdoms which the little horn got must be distinct, else how shall it be known that the prophecy has been fulfilled; but if we suppose that the kingdom of the Goths was one of them, we confound this one with the other two. For these reasons, I incline rather to the opinion of Sir Isaac, that the three kingdoms which were subdued by the little horn, were the duchy of Rome, the exarchate of Ravenna, and the kingdom of the Lombards. But to Sir Isaac's plan Bishop Newton objects, Vol. I. page 267, that only two of the three are mentioned in his catalogue of the ten kingdoms, the senate and dukedom of Rome not being included in the number. But there were not only three horns to be plucked up before the little horn, but three of the first horns; therefore none should be reckoned as one of three, but what was among the ten. But this objection is easily answered; for he might have taken the dukedom of Rome into his catalogue of the ten kings, and left out another for it; and this is what he ought to have done, if he believed that the said dukedom was one of the three horns. But the reason, I suppose, why he did not, is because he makes the rise of the Beast to be in the latter half of the eighth century, and at that time the government of Rome by dukes was gone, having been supplanted by the Pope as some think, and by the senate according to others; but
 this

this is no reason why those who fix the rise of the Beast at an earlier period may not take the dukedom into their catalogue. Bishop Newton, who also places the rise of the Beast in the eighth century, to remedy this defect of Sir Isaac's, gives us a catalogue of the ten kingdoms, as they stood in the eighth century, somewhat different from his; and instead of the dukedom he takes the senate of Rome into it, for which he gives this reason: The people of Rome revolted from the Emperor in the year 727, after which, though in things spiritual they were subject to the Popes, yet in things temporal they were governed by the senate. But this opinion is liable to great objections.

First, It is contrary to the testimony of the historians of that time, particularly of Sigonius; for, speaking of the revolt of the Romans from the Greek Emperor, he says, Thus Rome, and the Roman dukedom came from the Greeks to the Roman Pontiff; from which it is evident, that he took the Pope, and not the senate of Rome, to be the chief ruler in that city after the revolt thereof.

2dly, It is contrary to the opinion of the Bishop himself in another place; for in Vol. II. of the ninth edition, page 375, he says, What appears to be most probable, is, that the beginning of the reign of Antichrist is to be dated from the year 727, and then quotes the words of Sigonius cited above, and immediately after he adds, Hereby he, viz. the Pope, became in some measure a temporal prince.

3dly, If after the revolt of the Romans, the senate and not the Pope had the chief power in their hands, then

then they were the head of the city; and as this was a form of government different from any of the former, and also from that which succeeded, then Rome must have had nine heads, and not eight only, contrary to the words of the angel, chap. 17.

As a farther proof of his opinion, the Bishop tells us, that the senate had the power of electing the western emperor; but this is contradicted by all the historians I have seen, who expressly affirm, that Charles was elected by the Pope. As to the struggle betwixt the senate and the Pope which he mentions, it does not prove that the senate had the chief power in their hands, but only that they wished to have it.

From what has been said, therefore, it is evident, that it is not the senate, but the dukedom of Rome, that ought to be reckoned either among the ten kingdoms, or the three that were plucked up before the little horn. To this it may be objected, that the dukedom of Rome was not a kingdom, or a distinct independent government, but a part of the exarchate; these two therefore are, properly speaking, but one power or government. But to this it may be answered, neither was the exarchate an independent government, and yet it is commonly reckoned one of the three kingdoms. The duchy of Rome was a country of considerable extent, containing, besides the city itself, which was then one of the largest in the world, part of Tuscany, and Campania. Though dependent on the exarchate, it was something distinct from it. Accordingly when it revolted from the Greeks, no other part of the exarchate joined with it. It would appear also, that it was not just reduced to a level with the
other

other dukedoms into which Italy was divided, but enjoyed something more of liberty and power. Its senate, says Bishop Newton, still retained many of its old privileges, Vol. II. page 268. The dukedom might therefore be called a kingdom, as well as some other states and countries that have been so called, at least as well as the exarchate.

What has made me dwell the longer upon this is, that the government of the senate, if ever there was such a thing, did not begin till the year 727; and therefore, if we admit that it was one of the horns, we must also admit that their number was not complete till then, and consequently that the rise of the Pope could not be at an earlier period.

Mr Bicheno is of opinion, that the second woe, or sixth trumpet, terminated in the year 1697, when prince Eugene overthrew the Turks at Zenta: See Bicheno, page 86.—90, 92. that France was the street of the great city, where the witnesses lay dead three lunar days and a half, or 105 years, viz. from A. D. 1685, when the edict of Nantz was revoked, till A. D. 1789, when the French revolution began; that this was the resurrection of the witnesses, the commotions which followed, the prophetic earthquake, and that the fall of the tenth part of the city was accomplished in the overthrow of the monarchy or tyranny in France. This interpretation is very plausible, and perhaps is true in the main. In one thing, however, I apprehend Mr Bicheno is mistaken, namely, in making the second woe terminate in the year 1697; for it is evident from the prophecy itself, that the resurrection of the witnesses, the fall of the tenth part of the

the city, and the passing of the second woe, are all cotemporary, or happen within a few years of one another; whereas, by placing the end of the second woe in the year 1697, he makes it to happen near 100 years before the resurrection of the witnesses. If the French revolution be indeed the thing signified by the resurrection of the witnesses, I should rather think, that the passing of the second woe was at the conclusion of the last war which the Empress of Russia had with the Turks; wherein, after giving them many defeats, killing some hundred thousands of them, and taking a considerable part of their territory from them, she at last forced them to conclude a peace very much to their disadvantage; at the same time, a law was passed by the Grand Signior, that no Mahometan should henceforth insult a Christian, as they had heretofore been in use to do. This peace, which was concluded in the year 1791, and coincides exactly with the French revolution, looks more like the passing of the second woe, than any of the events or times above mentioned. If this was indeed the passing of the second woe, then the revolution in France must be the resurrection of the witnesses, and the overthrow of the monarchy, or rather of Popery in that country, will be the fall of the tenth part of the city, and the wars that have since that time ravaged Europe, particularly Italy, will be the beginning of the seventh trumpet or third woe. Several things concur to render this probable:

First, The third woe comes quickly after the second, and the late war occasioned by the French revolution,

revolution, succeeded quickly to the war between the Russians and Turks.

2dly, The late war has been carried on with such fierceness and spirit, productive of so much bloodshed and slaughter so general, and accompanied with such awful judgments of a different kind, viz. famine and pestilence, that it has all the appearance of being the third woe.

3dly, As the second woe, i. e. the devastations and bloodshed caused by the Turks, was worse than that caused by the Saracens or first woe, so it is natural to think that the third woe would be worse than either. This character also agrees perfectly to the present time. For I believe most people will agree with me, that there has not been as much bloodshed, and as many miseries of every kind occasioned by any war that has been in Europe for upwards of 1000 years, at least not since the days of Mahomet II. who overturned the Greek empire, and was the principal instrument in executing the judgments signified by the second woe.

4thly, The French in their character very much resemble the other two woes, viz. the Saracens and Turks, being all three alike infidels and enemies to Christ. They resemble them likewise in their ambitious, restless, and warlike disposition. Notwithstanding this argument, however, I doubt much if the second be yet past.

First, Because, from the order of the events in the xith of Revelation, the passing of the second woe seems rather to come after the resurrection of the witnesses than to go before it; but if we suppose the
French

French revolution to be the resurrection of the witnesses, and the passing of the second woe to be in the year 1791, we make the passing of the second woe to go before the resurrection of the witnesses.

2dly, Because, as we observed before, the words of St John, Rev. xi. 14. "the second woe is past," seem to imply a total cessation of that plague, or a complete deliverance from it. But the Turkish empire is still standing, and still continues to oppress the eastern churches, though not to that degree that it once did.

3dly, As the third woe is said to come quickly after the second, if we suppose the passing of the second woe to have been in the year 1791, then the late war with the French, which began soon after that period, must be the third woe, at least one would think so; but if the late war was the third woe, what events shall we suppose to be the great earthquake, and the falling of the tenth part of the city? for both these precede the third woe.

4thly, The late troubles could not be the third woe, because this comes after the second; and the end of the second, as we have already seen, either coincides with the resurrection and ascension of the witnesses, or follows hard after these events. But though the French revolution was probably the resurrection of the witnesses, yet their ascension seems to be still future; for it is natural to think that this will be a joyful event and productive of good to the church; but the French revolution has not been productive of any great good to the church as yet, although, I believe, it has paved the way for good to it.

5thly,

3thly, It is said, that when the tenth part of the city fell, and so many thousands were slain in the earthquake, the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven; that is, as I conceive, renounced the idols of the church of Rome, and turned to the true God; but I do not see how this has been fulfilled: neither have the remnant of the Papists, that is, the other Popish powers, as Austria, Spain, and Portugal, repented of their idols; nor yet the remnant of the French themselves, that is, those who have survived the desolations of the late war: neither, I say, have they repented, but are either turning deists, or sliding back into Popery; however, their repentance may come about in time. They have hitherto been so busied with the operations of war, and their minds so occupied with the revolutions thereof, that they have not had time to think seriously of religion, or to examine the evidences thereof. Their passions have not yet had time to subside, or their prejudices to wear off; and therefore it is possible, that they may yet see their error, and instead of casting off all religion, or returning to the superstitions of Popery, turn to the true God, by acknowledging the truth of his word, and embracing the pure and uncorrupted doctrines thereof. Perhaps they are not yet sufficiently humbled, and may yet meet with afflictions that will force them to this, or perhaps some great event or revolution, such as the conversion of the Jews, may be the means of opening their eyes, and leading them to an acknowledgement of the truth. But whatever shall be the means of their conversion, I trust it will come about ere long,

and if it does, it will, in my opinion, be the ascension of the witnesses; for the beginning of the French revolution, I suppose, was their resurrection: the late war was the great earthquake, and the conversion of the French, or their becoming Protestant, should it happen, would be the ascension of the witnesses; or we may suppose the beginning of the French revolution was the resurrection of the witnesses; the year 94 or 95, when the republican form of government was fully established in that country was their ascension, and their conversion to the Protestant religion will be the fall of the tenth part of the city, or the remnant's giving glory to God. Mr Mede, I acknowledge, gives a different turn to these words. He thinks, that the remnant's giving glory to God, means no more but their acknowledging unwillingly his hand and power by their astonishment or surprize; for, says he, to acknowledge the wisdom, power, and goodness of God, by what token soever, is to give glory to him. In this I apprehend he is mistaken, mere astonishment at any of the dispensations of Providence, unless it be expressed by word or deed, is not giving glory to God, is not acknowledging either his goodness or his power. He instances in the case of Achan, but this I imagine is against him, for Achan acknowledged God by an open confession. Bishop Newton's gloss on the words, though not very explicit, is rather better than Mede's, and the remainder in their fright and fear shall acknowledge the great power of God. But by what deed or token have either the French, or any of the neighbouring powers, acknowledged the power of God or his Providence in the late events
that

that have taken place on the continent, None that I know of; sure I am they have not yet repented of their idolatry in worshipping the creature, nor acknowledged the true God as the only object of religious worship, which I take to be the true sense of the phrase, giving glory to God in this place. This part of the prophecy, therefore, seems not to be fulfilled as yet, neither this concerning the remnant's giving glory to God, nor that concerning the passing of the second woe, which, as I observed formerly, seems to coincide with it. It is probable, however, that both will be fulfilled ere long.

The late revolution in France looks so like the falling of the tenth part of the city, and the troubles that followed it so like the great earthquake, in which 7000 names of men were slain; the revolution which happened in Rome in the year 1797, and the calamities which at that time befel the Pope, are so like what is said of the fifth vial, that I cannot help thinking, that the events which have lately taken place in France and Italy, were a fulfilling of these prophecies; and consequently that the fall both of the Pope and Turk is near. This, I say, is my opinion, although, for reasons which shall be given immediately, I am not without fear that the death and resurrection of the witnesses is still to come.

First, Because, though this prophecy applies surprisingly well to the above events, I mean to the French revolution, and the events that have hitherto accompanied it, yet, as Bishop Newton has shewn, Vol. III, page 87, it is applicable to different times and events, and had been several times fulfilled before that in
which

which he wrote ; and therefore it is uncertain whether there be not some period or revolution still future, to which it will apply as well or better than to any that are past.

2dly, Both Mr Mede and Bishop Newton are of opinion, that the death of the witnesses, whatever it means, whether a persecution against the Protestants in general, or a silencing of the ministry, and not permitting them to exercise their prophetic office, or to testify against the errors of Popery, or whatever else it may be, that it will be universal or general through Christendom ; for which Bishop Newton assigns this reason, Vol. III. page 88, that as the witnesses are designed to be the representatives of the Protestants in general, so the persecution signified by their death must be general too, and not confined to this or that particular church or nation. In answer to this it may be said, that the Apostle's using the word *street* in the singular number, looks as if the death of the witnesses was not to be general, but confined to some one of the kingdoms belonging to the great city.

3dly, It may be objected to the above application of the prophecy, that it supposes the French to be the witnesses, a supposition that seems ill to agree with their present character. There are, however, many good people, and not a few Protestants in France, and their having now obtained a free toleration, after having been so long persecuted, is perhaps the thing meant by the resurrection of the witnesses.

Another thing that makes me apprehensive, that the death of the witnesses, or the three days and a half

half are still to come, is, that according to the best information that I am able to procure, Popery both here and in England is at present rather upon the increase. But what most of all excites my fears, is the general decay of true piety, and the prevalence of vice and infidelity among all ranks, and in all countries in Europe; for, as we observed before, men often run from one extreme to another, and as Popery has led others to infidelity, so it is not impossible that our infidelity may lead us to Popery, not that I imagine it possible for any man, who has been properly educated in the principles of the Protestant faith, ever to become a Papist at bottom, or truly to believe the absurdities of Popery; but when once men have lost all sense of religion, they will, when tempted to it, profess any thing; and therefore, should it ever be our misfortune to be under a Popish government, or should the Roman Catholics ever attempt, by the power of money, or any other means, to introduce their religion amongst us, it is to be feared, considering the laxness of the present age, and the prevalence of infidelity amongst us, that too many would yield to the temptation. Thus, as Popery made way for infidelity in one country, so it is possible, that vice and infidelity may open the door to Popery in another. However, I would fain hope that the death of the witnesses is already past, although, for the reasons just now mentioned, I am not without fear that it is still to come; but if it is, it cannot be very distant. The late war was so general, bloody, and destructive, caused such expence, misery, and trouble to all parties, and fell with such vengeance on the territories of the

Beast,

Beast, who is one of the principal subjects of Scripture-prophecy, that as it seems well to deserve being taken notice of by the Holy Spirit, so I cannot help thinking it must have a place somewhere in the Revelation, which is one of the longest and fullest prophecies in Scripture, and, as most of our Divines think, contains all the great and important events that were destined to happen in the church, from the Apostles days to the end of the world. And if it is any where to be found in that book, it must be either in the xith, xivth, or xvth chapters, which are the only places where the different steps of Antichrist's fall are treated of. In the xith chapter, I can find nothing that resembles the late war, but the great earthquake, in which the tenth part of the city fell, or the third woe. In the xivth chapter, there are two periods of great war and bloodshed, spoken of under the metaphors of the harvest and vintage; perhaps the many cruel and murderous battles, that were lately fought in Germany and Italy, are the thing meant by the first of these metaphors, and what is meant by the second is still future. The xvth chapter treats of the vials or the seven last plagues, whereby the Beast or Papal power is gradually destroyed and brought to nothing; and as the late revolution in France was a heavy stroke on the Papacy, it is probably signified by some of them. The first three vials, according to Mede, Fleming, and several of the most approved writers, are long since past; the sixth, as we have shewn above, is still future; and therefore, if the French revolution be signified by any of the vials, it must be either the fourth or fifth: but considering

considering it is now 300 years nearly since the first of the vials, which was undoubtedly fulfilled in the reformation of religion by Luther began, considering also the many calamities that have fallen on the Papists since that time, it is more than probable that the fourth vial is past. For this, and for other reasons mentioned above, I am fully of opinion that we are now under the fifth vial, and in this I agree with Dr Kett and Mr Fleming. The last of these writers thought that this vial would begin in the year 1794, and end in the year 1848. But though I agree with him in the main with respect to his explanation of the vials, yet I apprehend that the length of them, or the precise time when each of them begins and ends, is still a matter of uncertainty; so that we may either add to or subtract from any of them, when this is necessary to make it agree with other prophecies where the same events seem to be pointed out. Now if the French revolution was indeed the resurrection of the witnesses, and the fall of the tenth part of the city, the end of the fifth vial must be nearer than Mr Fleming supposes; for we have already shewn, that the ascension of the witnesses, which cannot be long after their resurrection, coincides with the passing of the second woe, and this with the sixth vial. But suppose the French revolution was not the resurrection of the witnesses, still it may be, and very probably was the beginning of the fifth vial; and in that case, the death and resurrection of the witnesses, and consequently the fall of Antichrist, cannot be very distant; for the fifth vial comprehends the principal step of Antichrist's fall, and this undoubtedly is the resurrection

resurrection or ascension of the witnesses ; at any rate, the French revolution has been a great means of weakening the power of Antichrist, and humbled him more than any thing that has ever yet befallen him. Besides the slaughter of many thousands of his best friends, he has been stripped of the greater part of the revenue which he formerly drew from France, which he can never recover without a new revolution ; he cannot appoint a single clergyman to any office in that country without the consent of the chief consul, who is now properly speaking the head of the Gallican church : but the severest blow that the Pope's interest has got, is the free toleration that has lately been granted to the Protestants, both in France and the duke of Bavaria's dominions. This, unless some unforeseen accident should spring up to hinder it, must sooner or latter bring on a reformation in these countries ; for when men are at liberty to chuse for themselves in matters of religion, it is natural to think they will chuse the best. Enlightened minds will certainly do so, and these will lead the rest. It is true, their worldly interest may determine some to make a wrong choice, and wicked men in power may influence others ; but in a land of light and liberty, such as France, where the most perfect freedom of inquiry is allowed, at least with respect to matters of religion, error cannot last long. Another effect of the French revolution, and a severe blow on the Papal authority, is the secularization at present going on of the Bishopricks or ecclesiastical states in Germany. These ecclesiastical princes, notwithstanding their temporal sovereignty, have great dependance on the Popes ;
they

they are obliged to send immediately to Rome for a confirmation of their elections, and to omit it is a reason sufficient for the Popes to set aside their elections as defective. Besides, their dependence on the Popes, their interests were so mutually linked together, they supported them as one common interest: See Lowman, page 149. The fall of these Prince Bishops, therefore, must be a great weakening of the Pope's interest. In a word, every thing in the present state of the world seems to declare, that the fall of Antichrist is near. Besides, it was the general opinion of sober people, that the late troubles in Europe would issue in something very much for the good of the church, and we see it has done so in part, and hope it will be productive of still greater good ere long. God does nothing in vain; but should Popery obtain a permanent establishment, or continue to flourish for any length of time, all the blood and treasure that was spent in the late war would go for nothing; nay, all that God has been doing in Europe for these nine or ten years bygone, would, according to our view, be counteracted and undone. But this can never be. God is not like weak man, to fail or miscarry in any of his undertakings: as he is unchangeable, he cannot alter his purposes; and as he is all-mighty, no difficulties or opposition can stay his hand, or hinder his designs from being accomplished; and therefore, having begun to pull down the fabric of Antichristian superstition and tyranny, he will, in all probability, never cease till he has razed the foundations thereof. God indeed often suspends his judgments on his enemies, that he may give them time

to repent, and, in case of impenitence, to render his justice in punishing them more evident; and so he may do with the great whore: but as both her impenitence and destruction are foretold in Scripture, it is probable the time of his forbearance will not last long. Besides, her judgment has been long suspended already, viz. ever since the beginning of the Reformation, when her destruction was first threatened, and when, besides the exposure of her wickedness, she was actually punished with the loss of near one half of her dominions; but as she repented not then, nor has done since, and as God is now begun to prosecute her a second time, it is probable, her judgment will not be deferred much longer; and, therefore, though Antichrist should recover his former power, and even be raised to a greater height than before, it will in all probability only be for a very short time. This however is possible, and God may permit it for many wise ends.

First, To fulfil the predictions in his word; for I sadly fear, that the three days and a half are still to come. 2dly, To convince us more thoroughly of the evil of Popery, of which many of us seem to have lost a sense, he may see it meet once more to cause us pass under the yoke, and to feel the smart of it. 3dly, To punish us for our abuse of spiritual mercies, slighting the word, neglecting its ordinances, and not profiting by them, he may suffer the light of the Gospel to be eclipsed among us for a time, and give us up to Popish darkness. 4thly, God may suffer Antichrist not only to rise again, but even to an extraordinary height, on purpose to render his fall the greater.

greater. To fulfil these ends, it is probable God may see it meet to suffer the churches called Protestant once more to feel the iron yoke of Antichrist, before he completes their deliverance by the final destruction of this great adversary. This time of darkness will no doubt be a great trial to the church, and for this reason it is, that she is so particularly forewarned of it, and that it is expressly said to be of such short continuance. Such is the opinion that some of our divines have entertained concerning the death of the witnesses; and these, so far as I am able to remember them, are the reasons by which they endeavour to support it; and it is possible they may be in the right, though I rather incline to think, that the death of the witnesses, if it is still future, will not be universal, but confined to some one particular nation or kingdom: as the word street is used in the singular number, perhaps it means no more, but that France, which is one of the streets of the great city, and the principal one thereof, shall again be brought under the yoke of Popery, and continue for such a time.

But whatever is of this, from what has been said, it is exceeding probable, not to use any stronger expression, that the death and resurrection of the witnesses, if they be not already past, they cannot be very distant. But besides the above, there are other reasons for thinking that the fall of Antichrist is near. The Turkish empire seems to be tottering, and for sometime bygone has owed its existence entirely to the help of others; but as it is said, Daniel xi. 45. "He shall come to his end, and none shall help him,"

" him ;" which seems to imply, that for some time before his final overthrow, he should owe his preservation to the help of others ; whence I infer that his doom is near. I have already shewn, that the fall of the Turkish empire is the thing meant by the sixth vial ; and if this is near, the fall of the Pope, which happens during the fifth vial, must be still nearer.

The greater part of those who have hitherto treated of this subject, have laboured chiefly to find out the æra of the Beast, or the rise and fall of the western Antichrist. They would probably have succeeded better, had they employed their time on the eastern, or on the rise and fall of Mahometanism. The Papacy rose so gradually, or by so many different steps, that it is difficult to say which of these was the principal, and to be accounted the time of its rise.

Mahometanism, on the other hand, sprang up hastily like a mushroom, and by one or two, or at the most three steps, was brought to maturity. It must, therefore, be easier to determine which was the principal step ; and as they are all within a few, that is, thirty years of each other, we cannot be much mistaken in computing the years of its duration from any of them. Besides this, the prophecies which relate to the eastern Antichrist, are upon the whole rather clearer than those which relate to the Papacy ; at least, men have been more lucky in discovering the meaning of the former than of the latter. Nothing, for example, can be plainer or more satisfactory than the explanation which Mr Mede and Bishop Newton have given us of the fifth and sixth trumpet, concerning the Saracens and Turks ; but it is otherwise with the prophecies

phesies concerning the Papacy. Some of these are still very dark: the reason of this difference perhaps is, because the prophecies concerning the Papacy were to be for a long time in the hands of Papists, who would not in all probability, have taken such care of them, had they known their meaning, and might even have been tempted to corrupt them; whereas the Mahometans being without the pale of the church, the plainness of the prophecies concerning them could give no offence, and consequently be no inducement to the Papists to corrupt them. Besides, it was necessary that the prophecies concerning the Pope should be dark, lest they should have hindered their own accomplishment; whereas the Mahometans being ignorant of the prophecies concerning themselves, having no faith in the word of God, and very little knowledge of it, the plainness of the prophecies concerning them could have no effect, either to help or hinder their accomplishment; consequently it may be expected, that these prophecies should be somewhat clearer than those concerning the western Antichrist. We shall therefore try, if we can find out the time destined for the fall of Mahometanism, or which is the same thing, the fall of the Turk, who is the main pillar and supporter of that religion. The discovery of this, will perhaps lead us to that of the time when the Papacy is to fall; for, in the opinion of most learned men, these two events will go hand in hand, or follow hard upon each other.

It appears pretty clear from that of Daniel xii. 7. that Mahometanism will prevail in the east as long a time as Popery does in the west; that is, for 1260 years;

years. Now, since we know when Mahometanism began, one would think it should be easy to tell when it will fall. But in the rise of this religion, as in that of Popery, there were different steps, though not so many, nor so distant from one another; yet it is not easy to determine which is the principal, or from which of them it is, that the years of its duration are to be computed; probably from all of them, that is, if to each step of its rise we add the 1260 years of its continuance, they will terminate in some remarkable step of its fall. This, as we have seen, was the case with the western Antichrist, and it is probable it will be so with the other. Now the rise of Mahometanism was distinguished by three steps: the first was in the year 606, when Mahomet retired to his cave to forge his imposture; or in the year 608, when he began publicly to teach it, and to make proselytes. These two we shall consider as one, the difference in respect of time being so small. His scheme, however, was attended with no great success till after his flight from Mecca. This was in the year 622, the famous Hegira or epoch of the Mahometans. This, therefore, may well be reckoned the second step in the rise of Mahometanism; for now Mahomet began to do what he had not done before, to propagate his religion by fire and sword, and in a little time conquered a great part of Arabia. His successor Abubeker broke into Palestine and Syria. Omar, the next, Caliph was one of the most rapid conquerors who ever spread desolation on the face of the earth: his reign was of no longer duration than ten years and a half; and in that time he subdued all Arabia, Syria,

Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, and Egypt. In the year 637, he took the city of Jerusalem, and built a mosque on the very spot where the Temple of the Lord had stood. This was the most notable event in the reign of that great conqueror, and a remarkable fulfilment of the prophecy of Daniel, as was observed at that time by the Patriarch of the place, who said, upon Omar's taking possession of the city, "This is of a truth the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place." Besides, the Saracen empire was then fully established, and had taken such root as enabled it to stand for ages afterwards. This, therefore, may be reckoned the third and last step in the rise of Mahometanism. Here then we have three remarkable periods in the rise of that religion, viz. the year 606, or 608; the year 622, and 637. If to the first of these numbers we add the 1260 years of the reign of this Antichrist, they will end in the year 1866; and if we add to it the second number in the xiith of Daniel, viz. the 1290 days, at the end of which the sanctuary is to be cleansed, they will end in the year 1897; and it is remarkable, that this year 1897 answers also to the year 637, when Jerusalem was taken by the Saracens; for if to the year 637 we add 1260, they will also terminate in the year 1897.

Thus, the cleansing of the sanctuary will correspond with the pollution thereof; that is, there will be just 1260 years betwixt them. And what is more remarkable still, is, that if we suppose the reading of the Seventy, Daniel viii. 14. unto 2400 days, to be the true one, and compute these years from the year
before

before Christ 503, when the Persians, under the command of Aristagoras, first made war upon the Grecians, by attempting to reduce the island of Naxos, they will also terminate in the year 1897. This attack of the Persians was an event memorable enough, as it was the beginning of a war, the most famous in history, and which continued with little interruption, till it ended in the final overthrow of the Persian empire; that too was the first time when the ram pushed directly westward, which was the first thing seen by Daniel in the vision. And if we compute the 2400 days of the Seventy from this period, they will also terminate in the year 1897. That three prophetic numbers should in this manner all terminate in that year is somewhat remarkable, and as that year answers to the year 637, when Jerusalem was taken by the Saracens, and which, as we observed before, was the highest or last step in the rise of Mahometanism; so it will in all probability, form the last step in the fall thereof, that is, the final overthrow of the Turk, and all the Mahometan and Antichristian powers leagued with him in the battle of Gog or Armageddon.

The restoration of the Jews happens some time before this, for they are represented as dwelling in unwalled villages when Gog comes upon them. Their restoration coincides with the sixth vial, and their conversion, which, as we have shewn before, happens at the fifth vial, must be earlier still. Thus all things concur to prove, that this glorious event is fast approaching.