

Nathan Smith Tindal

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
PROPHECIES
WHICH RELATE TO THE
RISE AND FALL
OF
ANTICHRIST,
AND SUCH AS APPEAR TO POINT TO THE
EVENTS OF OUR TIMES,
WITH SOME
CALCULATIONS
ON
PROPHETICAL NUMBERS,
TO SHEW THAT
HIS FALL
MAY NOT NOW BE FAR OFF.

Handwritten scribbles and signatures on the right side of the page.

BY THE REV. JOHN KING, D. D.
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Advertisement.



The substance of the following observations was written in the spring of last year, and published in the *Evangelical Magazine*, of August last. As the circulation of the *Magazine* is very partial, it was desired by many, that they should be published by themselves, for which purpose it has been prepared with some corrections, and considerable additions, to be submitted to the public.

THE AUTHOR.

MAY 1809.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

PROPHECIES.



IT is one of the most extraordinary events, which have taken place, in the progress of human affairs, that out of a religion, which breaths nothing but peace and good-will to man, which prescribes love, as its first and great commandment, and which condemns pride, ambition, worldly-mindedness, and persecution, as most contrary to its nature, and inconsistent with its end ; that, out of such a religion, should have arisen a dominion, the most tyrannical, oppressive and persecuting, beyond any, ever before known in the world. It was not wonderful, that the prophets, foreseeing, by divine illumination, the rise and progress of that power, should have been filled with astonishment ; as it is said by St. John, Rev. 17. 6.—“ And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and of the martyrs of Jesus, and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.” It was not strange, that Jews and heathens should tyrannize over and persecute christians. This had been experienced, and might be expected ; but that the *woman*, the professed Church of Christ, should do so, was a just cause of astonishment,

And, indeed, it is not much less to be wondered at that so many, who live among christians, in our day, who are not blinded, by prejudice, in favor of the grand apostacy, who yet have the plain and descriptive prophecies,* and the faithful page of history before their eyes, yet cannot see the clear evidence of the spirit of God, in his word, and be led to believe it to be a divine revelation. To convince such of this truth, and to confirm and comfort believers, is the use and end of prophecy; it therefore demands of all a very serious attention.

It is proposed to make some observations and some calculations on the prophecies which relate to the rise and fall of antichrist, and then to take notice of such as appear to relate to the events of our times.

The period of antichrist's reign is mentioned in the revelation of St. John, as 1260 days, (a day for a year) as 42 months; and three years and an half; all which amount to the same time. The same is mentioned in the prophecy of Daniel, ch. 7. 25 & 12. 7. as "*a time, times and an half, or dividing of time.*" But the time of the beginning of this period has been the subject of various conjecture.

Mr. Lowan, Dodridge, Frazer, and other very respectable writers, have placed it, in the year of our Lord 756, when Pepin, king of France, bestowed upon the Pope the Exarchate of Ravenna, which, together with the Dutchy of Rome, was called St. Peters patrimony. This, however, does not appear to have been so much the beginning of his reign, or setting him in his throne (where he was already, long before that time) as the compleating of his dominion, as a temporal sovereign.

Other times have been mentioned, with some ap-

* Rev. 13th and 17th chap. Dan. 7th and 8th chap. and 11th chap. from v. 36. 2. Thes. 2.3. &c.

pearance of probability—Particularly, when Justinian, the Emperor, after a war of several years, by his generals Bellisarius and Narses, had extinguished the power of the Goths, in Italy; established the seat of his government at Ravenna, and gave up Rome to the Pope, in 552, or 553. “He protected the Pope, in his authority, and greatly contributed to his advancement, by penal and sanguinary laws, which he made against all, who dissented from the Romish church.” So that, then it may be said (as in Rev. 13. 2.) “*The Dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.*”

Mr. Fleming takes notice of this great accession of power; and judging that there must be some thing corresponding to it, in his fall, when his period is run out, predicted, very exactly, the fall of the French monarchy in 1794, viz. $552 + 1260 - 18 = 1794$.* He calls the French Monarchy the Sun of the popish kingdom, as being its chief support, and when that sun was darkened, the fall of the kingdom may be near. We may yet see reason to conclude, that these events are connected; the one introductory to the other; that the fall of the old monarchy of France prepares to introduce that person, which is to destroy the dominion of Rome.

These conjectures are founded upon the Pope's temporal sovereignty, when, after the Roman empire, in the west, had been distributed into several kingdoms, and the imperial power of Rome was gone; the little Horn arose (Dan. 7. 8.) in the antient seat of the Empire, and his period commencing from that circumstance, its end must terminate his reign.

But his spiritual supremacy had not the same beginning, nor is it supposed, that it will have the same end. Both these, however, go to make up his prophetic and real character, and were jointly the ground of

* Mr. Fleming wrote in the beginning of last century.

his great dominion; and it is probable, that the causes, which will destroy the one, will also operate to destroy the other, and their fall may not be very distant in time.

It was the spiritual supremacy of the Pope, which most contributed to his great dominion and which most concerned the world. This made him diverse from all the other beasts, (or monarchies) which were merely temporal. This distinguished him, in prophecy, and was the source of that enormous power, whereby he reigned in the highest; whereby he deceived and governed the world; and assumed such high attributes, and divine authority, to dispose of the kingdoms, and govern the consciences of men. This was the source of his great riches—it extended in profession and character, over the whole world, and was that, whereby, according to prophecy, he became a *Head*, or the continuation of the fourth Beast. Rev. 17. 11. *terrarum orbis imperium*—the head of the *holy Roman empire*.

Tho' his spiritual supremacy, was the principal feature of the character of the beast, yet his temporal authority was also essential to it, according to prophecy. He was to be a *horn*, Dan. 7, 8, i. e. a temporal sovereign. It was fit, that he should have a seat for himself. It contributed to the dignity and grandeur of his assumed character, as *universal bishop*, that he should be independent, and free from the dominion of any other Prince, and it was agreeable to the prophecy (Rev. 13, 2. 17, 18.) that it should be *Rome*. Hence it was that the "man of sin," with his "mystery of iniquity," which so early began to work, could not be fully revealed, till that which letted (or hindered) viz. the imperial power, "was taken out of the way." 2. Thes. 2. 6. 7. Now this may have taken place, when the Emperor gave up Rome to the administration of the Pope, in the year of our Lord 552.

The rise of the *spiritual supremacy* was gradual, and it is difficult to assign any date to it. It was, however, early working, long contended for, assumed and granted before the year 756. It was in nearly as high exercise before, as after that time. In 726, when Leo, the Emperor forbade the worship of images in Italy, and gave orders to remove them out of the churches, the Pope rejected the order, and excommunicated the emperor ; forbade the payment of taxes to him in Italy, and exempted the people of the west from all obedience to him. A public grant of the title of universal bishop was made to the Pope, by the emperor Phocas, in the year 606 ; yet he appears to have considered himself as possessed of the supremacy over all the west, before that time, and the clergy and people acknowledged it, yea, they acquiesced, without murmuring, when the title was conferred upon him, tho' by the basest emperor that ever filled the throne

It does not appear, that the *temporal sovereignty* of the Pope, began with the gift of Ravenna by Pepin, in 756. He seems to have had authority in Rome itself before that time ; and to have considered it as his seat, and his possession ; which was not difficult for one of his acknowledged dignity and aspiring spirit to obtain. Hence it was, that when Aistulphus, king of the Lombards, threatened to take it from him, he applied to Pepin for protection. The king of France undertook to support him. First, he sent ambassadors to dissuade the Lombard, from any attempts against the Pope ; and when that failed, he went against him with an army. It was well known, that it was not the Pope, but the city, which Aistulphus wanted : So that the Pope was evidently supposed to have had the possession and sovereignty of Rome, at that time ; and might have had it, long before ; even from 552, before mentioned. It does not appear that he was ever dispossessed of it, or of the sovereignty of it, from that time.

These observations may be sufficient to induce a suspicion, that the era 756, so much relied on, by many, for the rise of antichrist, is too late. Besides, this (carrying his fall, by the addition of 1260—18, to 1998) would place those remarkable events, the burning of Rome & the conversion of the jews, which are to precede the millenium, far beyond the year 2000; whereas the common expectation of christians has been, that the seventh chiliad, from the creation, to commence with the year 2000, is to be the millenium, or sabbatical chiliad; the 1000 years mentioned in the 20th chapter of the Revelation.

The mystical number 666, ch. 13, 18, on which Mr. Lowman, and others depend so much, to determine, the time of the rise of antichrist, counting from the time of the vision, in the isle of Patmos, in the year 90, may not be of great weight, as it seems natural to apply what is there said, as a part of the description of the second beast; and that it is said to be, not the time of the beast, but the number of his name. This number some have found, in one name, and some in others. Mr. Vivian shews it in the name, *Loudovicus*, (Louis) and applies it to the Royalty of France, because that was the common name of most of the sovereigns of France, for several centuries. And perhaps no power, that has yet arisen, better answers to the description of the second Beast, (Rev. 13. 11. &c.) than the present Emperor.—This will be afterwards considered.

Some calculations on prophetic numbers, to shew, that the fall of the Roman antichristian power, may not be far from the present time.

Calculations on prophetic events may not be expected to answer with minute exactness, on account of the necessary and designed obscurity of prophecy; and because large periods may be stated in whole numbers, without noticing smaller parts; yet when the compleat fulfilment arises, the history may be sufficiently exact, to satisfy well disposed minds, and to establish the faith and confidence of christians. Such are disposed to consider the ways of God, and observe, with pleasing anxiety, the gradual opening up of his plans, in the government of the world; and though they may fall into mistakes, they know, that "the vision is for an appointed time, but in the end, it will speak, and will not lie."

The calculation on Mr. Lowan's era, is easily made, by adding the period of antichrist's reign, and deducting 18 years, to reduce the prophetic years (of 360 days) to the siderial years (of 365 .. 6 hours)—the result will be 1998. This I have supposed to be too late. If we take the year 552, or rather 553, when Rome was effectually recovered from the power of the Goths, and left to the Pope, $553 + 1260 - 18 = 1795$. Now, it may be remembered, that about that time, the French generals overran Italy, entered Rome in triumph, took the Pope prisoner, and carried him thro' some of the provinces of France. Since that time his temporal power has been little, and his spiritual authority is very low, among the kingdoms of the world. The Emperor of the French, who is also King of Italy, in the latter part of 1807, or beginning of the year 1808, sent an army and took possession of the castle of St. Angelo, set up his arms in all parts of the new kingdom, and ordered

public processes to be carried on in his name ; and since that time he has incorporated the Pope's troops with his own army.

There is a number, 2300, in the eighth chapter of Daniel, introduced in the following manner—v. 13. “ Then I heard one saint (or holy one) speaking ; and another saint said unto that certain saint, who spake ; 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 ? ” v. 14. “ And he said unto me, unto two thousand and three hundred days ; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”

The *vision* includes a representation of the three great monarchies. 1. The *Medo-Persian*, represented by the Ram, with two horns, v. 3. and 20.—2. The *Grecian*, by the Goat, with one notable horn, v. 5. and 21.—3. The *Roman* monarchy, represented by a little horn waxing exceeding great, and by the standing up of a king of fierce countenance, &c. See vs. 9. and 23. This power shall do great mischief in the world, and to the church of God, and shall continue along time, in its various forms, *practising and prospering*. It shall take away the daily sacrifice, and destroy the sanctuary ; desolate the church, and “ cast down the truth to the ground.” Now, the question is, how long shall these things last ; and when will be the end of these desolations ? The answer is, unto 2300 days. Then the obstructions will be removed, and “ the sanctuary will be cleansed.” The church will be purified, and the true worship of God established.

This number, therefore, 2300, may be considered, as including a line of events, in prophecy, from a certain time in the reign of the Persian monarchy, to the

end of the fourth, the Roman and antichristian monarchy; which is meant by "the transgression of desolation." See Matthew 24. 15.

It is of importance here to ascertain, at what time this period of 2300, was to begin. Not, from the time of the vision, which was about 553 years before the coming of Christ, and which would have ended the 2300, about 60 years ago, of which there has been no sensible appearance. The beginning assigned by Bishop Newton, that is, when Alexander entered upon his expedition for the conquest of Asia, 334 years before Christ, would end in 1926; but this beginning does not appear sufficiently marked. No good reason appears, why the beginning of the third monarchy should be fixed upon, rather than that of the second or fourth. Besides, the *vision* evidently takes in a part of the Persian monarchy, (the ram) and may reach far back into it.

We may suppose this long period, including different subjects, in which the church of God, both jews and christians were greatly interested, may be connected as a *consequent* to the former period of seventy years distress in captivity, then near a close. The captivity of the jews, in Babylon, was typical of their dispersion by the Romans—Babylon, the oppressor of the antient people of God, was typical of *mystical Babylon*, or antichrist, the great oppressor of the church of Christ—The fall of Babylon and the Assyrian Empire, was connected with the first deliverance of the jews; and the fall of "*Babylon the great, the mother of harlots,*" is to be connected with, and introductory to the future enlargement of the church, the conversion of the jews, and cleansing of the sanctuary.

This long period then, may be supposed to begin, with the conclusion of the seventy years captivity, or with the beginning of the seventy weeks mentioned ch. 9. 24. i. e. 490 years before the death of Christ.

If this beginning is taken, then this number 490, together with the period of antichrist's reign 1260, must be included in the 2300 years; and their sum, being subtracted from that number, will give the time when antichrist rose; and his period being added to this, will shew, when he should fall: See calculation (1.) We must observe, that the prophetic years should be reduced to solar years; and the age of Christ added, to bring it to the common era.

As the period of 70 weeks is divided by the angel, ch. 9. 25. 26. into three parts; viz. seven weeks, or forty-nine years, for the compleat establishment of the jews in their own land; sixty-two weeks, or 434 years, to the death of Christ; and one week, or seven years, for "confirming the covenant with many;" if we suppose, that the period 2300, should begin with the sixty-two weeks, or 434 years before the death of Christ, this will make the result different, by fifty-six years: See calculation (2.)

(1.)	(2.)	(3.)
2300 <i>Daniel's No.</i>	2300	2300
32	32	1260
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
2268 <i>reduced</i>	2268	1040
1242 <i>antichrist's period reduced.</i>	1242	434
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
1026	1026	606
*490 <i>seventy weeks.</i>	434	1260
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
536	592	1866
33 <i>age of Christ.</i>	33	
<hr/>	<hr/>	
569 <i>when antichrist rose.</i>	625	
1242	1242	
<hr/>	<hr/>	
1811 <i>when he should fall, as to his } temporal power. }</i>	1867	

* As this number is mentioned in weeks (seventy sabbatical years) it is not certain whether it ought to be reduced or not. If it should be reduced to 483, the result will be 1818.

As it is supposed, that antichrist rose in 606, when the title of universal Bishop was conferred upon the Pope; it is remarkable, that the calculation with those numbers, without reducing them, gives exactly that number (see 3.) for his rise, and 1866 for his fall—that is, for the loss of his spiritual supremacy, which is 56 years beyond the time of the fall of his temporal dominion. And this long time may be fully required to annihilate that respect, submission and devotion which is paid to him, as the sovereign head of the Church, in so many parts of the world. The means of accomplishing this extinction of his authority over the minds of men will probably be some great manifestation of the light and glory of the Gospel, which is to prepare for the conversion and restoration of the jews, and the prophetic numbers in Dan. 12. 11. 12. may have a reference thereto. On these I make no further observations.

After these observations on dates and numbers, which, though new, may perhaps deserve some notice, I am led to make a few remarks on some parts of the prophecies, which appear to relate to the events of our times.

It might be expected that some notice would have been taken, in prophecy, of the remarkable events, which have come to pass, and are daily coming to pass, in our times. Europe is the field of prophecy, and has been, for two thousand years, the theatre of its principal subjects; ever since the remains of the Grecian empire was overturned by the Romans, about 170 years before the coming of Christ. After that time, the attention of prophecy is directed to the fourth, or Roman monarchy; *Rome, pagan, christian, antichristian*, until its end. Many events, previous to this time, have been foretold, and have come to pass; but scarcely any seem to be of greater note, and importance, than are the revolutions and overturnings of our times. It is, therefore, not improbable, but that an attentive inquirer, seeking

to know the meaning of what the spirit saith unto the church, may find some prophecies answerable to these events. Almost all the prophecies have had their particular application, by different writers; who, while they have differed widely from each other, may have differed as far from the truth. Who can search the mind of the spirit? Yet with respect to past events, we may form comparisons, and conjectures, with respect to the future,

There are two remarkable events mentioned, in prophecy, to take place during the period of antichrist's reign, viz. the rise of the second Beast, Rev. 13. 11. to the end: and the pouring out of the vials, chap. 16. called the last plagues, which are to put an end to the antichristian dominion.—On these it is proposed to make some observations.

1. The rise and description of the second Beast, Rev. 13. 11. to the end.—The first beast, who rose out of the sea, mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, was the same, which Daniel saw, chap. 7. 7. and is described in the same manner, as having seven heads, and ten horns, himself nameless; and tho' possessing the savage nature of the other beasts, the bear, the lion and the leopard, yet was diverse from them all. He is referred to, in prophecy, sometimes under one head or form, and sometimes under another; yet he is still considered as the same beast, under all his diverse forms. He sitteth in the same seat or throne, and has the same extent of dominion, still representing the last, or Roman monarchy, and to have continuance until the end of the desolation.

The second beast was to be different from the first, (also thērion) not having the same seat or throne, nor the same character of his empire, but was to resemble him in such a manner, as to be justly called his image. He is called thērion, the same name which is given to the other monarchies; which shews that it was to be a *monarchy*, and to have dominion, like them. This shews,

also how unapplicable to the subject are all these things which have been commonly assigned to be the second Beast. Such as pagan philosophy, Apollonius Tyaneus with his miracles, the Pope with his clergy, ecclesiastical persons with secular power, &c.

It was observed before, that, perhaps, no power has yet arisen which better answers to the description of the second Beast, than the present emperor of the French. Let us particularly consider and compare the description of him, Rev. 13. 11. to the end.

1. He arose "*out of the earth,*" (tes ges) i. e. the territory of the Roman empire, and among the kingdoms into which it was to be divided.

2. He had "*two horns, like a Lamb.*" Horns in prophecy, commonly signify kingdoms, and the description would be answered thus far, by the *Emperor of the French and King of Italy*. But here, they are described by the innocence and gentleness of a lamb, which should lead us rather to consider them as signifying these means, whereby he ruled or professed to rule, and extend his power; those things wherein his chief strength lay. These, I think were, *Liberty and Equality*. These were his grand pretensions; the primary means whereby he rose, and whereby he pushed his victories. Yea still, wherever he goes, or sends his generals, it is to deliver from oppression, to give liberty, to regenerate, to protect. By this, the world was deceived, and his victories rendered easy, until his power was established. It may not be easy for Americans, who have always enjoyed these blessings, to understand the full force of these words, when they came, supported with power, among nations, where differences of rank were so great, and the oppressions of the poor were so intollerable. They were the cant words, the enchanting arguments, which had a most astonishing effect, in the French revolution, and not only on that nation, but wherever their armies were sent or their missionaries travelled.

3. “ *He spake like a dragon,*” fierce and *terrible*; the attribute assumed by that new power, *the terrible nation*. And no one, except the first Beast, (Dan. 7. 8.) ever “ had a mouth speaking so great things.” The majestic, proud, imperious, haughty style of that power, is proverbial.

4. “ *He exercises all the power of the first beast, before him,*” (enōpion autou) i. e. *in his presence*; while he yet lives, and sees his power assumed by another. He assumes all the power of the empire, civil, military and ecclesiastical, in the presence of him, who yet styles himself, *the head of the holy Roman empire*.

5. “ He causeth the earth, and them that dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” We may observe upon this, that (proskunein) which signifies, to kiss, or to bow down to one, may not signify religious worship, but voluntary submission and subjection. And the meaning here is, that he causeth the people of the territory, or empire, to become submissive to the *imperial power*; to that form of the “ first beast, which was wounded, and whose wound was healed.” This will be further explained under the 7th particular.

6. “ He doth great wonders, so that he maketh fire to come down from heaven, on the earth, in the sight of men.” v. 13. The word, which is here translated *wonders* (someia) is, in the next verse, rendered *miracles*.

It signifies *wonderful things*, great exploits, which appear uncommon and admirable, and may mean the astonishing efforts of power & victories, so sudden & extraordinary, *as if he could cause fire** to come down from heaven, as Elijah did, to destroy his enemies at once.

* So should, ina kai pur poiē, be rendered, and not so that he maketh fire, &c.

7. "He deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by these miracles (mighty exploits) which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." v. 14. The plain meaning is, that, by his great exploits, and wonderful success, he deceived, persuaded, and prevailed upon the inhabitants of the territory of the antient western empire, to make an image to the Beast, viz to make and acknowledge an *emperor*; one, who, though not the same, as to his seat and character, yet should be a just representation and image of the antient imperial power, which had been wounded, and yet came to life again.

To explain this more fully, observe, that the first beast, or Roman monarchy, is represented, as having *seven heads*. Those are understood to signify seven different forms of government. According to Tacitus, the first six heads were, kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, military tribunes, and emperors. These six heads were all of the same kind, temporal, military conquering, like the other monarchies. In the last of these heads, i. e. the *imperial*, the beast, or monarchy, received a deadly wound, when Rome was taken by the Goths, and the imperial power was annihilated in Italy, and all the west. It appeared to be dead of the wound, and continued so for above an hundred years; but being recovered again, as has been mentioned, the papal power arose in Rome, and revived the beast, in a seventh head, *diverse* from all the other heads; that is a *professedly spiritual and religious dominion*, but still tyrannical and bloody as the others. Now, in this form, the papal power of Rome, he ever had his *image*, in the temporal authorities, throughout the empire, with their religious establishments; and inspired with his spirit, and supporting the Popedom. Thus we find this *image* of his is mentioned under the first vial, when the new power, the second beast, was rising, that "a grievous sore fell

upon them, that worshipped the image of the beast." But it is evident, that the *image*, which the second beast is here said to persuade the inhabitants of the territory to make, and to worship, v. 12. 14. was not the image of the papal beast ; but of the imperial form, or head of the beast, in which he had received the deadly wound.

Now, this consideration affords a pretty strong evidence of the justness of this interpretation. Many things have been taken for the second beast ; but none of all that have ever been supposed, could possibly persuade the people of the earth (or territory of the Roman empire) to make an *Emperor*. Bonaparte has proved the fact, and removed all objections.

8. " He had power to give life to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, & cause, that as many as should not worship the image of the beast, should be killed." v. 15.—When the people had made the image, or emperor, he had power and address enough, not only to provide, that it should not be a lifeless inactive idol, as such commonly are ; but to give it authority to command and enforce subjection, on pain of death. Now, how literally and dreadfully this has been fulfilled, upon all people or nations, who have dared to oppose his ambition, or to defend themselves, the history of his successful wars will abundantly shew. He must, in the work of blood, be ranked above all the great destroyers of men, whom history has given us any account of in the world.

9. " That no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark—of the beast." v. 17. The various decrees and orders of the Emperor, now in force, afford evidence enough, that none are to trade, but such as submit to his authority.

Whoever considers these several descriptions, and compares them with recent facts, will be at no loss to see, whose image and superscription it is.

The rest of the character, vs. 16. 18. may soon be developed. In a letter from Wirtemberg, published in the Christian's Magazine, it is said, that Cardinal Fesch, Bonaparte's uncle, minister of religion, for the Confederation of the Rhine, lately ordered the protestant clergy, at Augsburg, to wear certain popish garments; to place alters in their churches, and to read some new made popish liturgies, and thro' fear of the Emperor, they complied. The same letter states, that a new sect had arisen, who distinguish themselves, by a particular dress, and a sign worn in their hats; who have deified Bonaparte! The progress of such affairs, may soon discover what is meant by the *mark*, the *name*, and the *number of the name* of the beast, which seem yet to be too much involved in mystery, to allow us to venture any conjectures upon them.

The next subject of prophecy, which appears to relate to our times, is the *pouring out of the vials*. ch. 16.

Much difference of opinion has taken place among interpreters about the application of the vials; there has been, however, a general consent, with respect to the use and end of them, viz. that they signify the judgments of God, upon antichrist and his supporters. They are intended to be preparations for, and the means of the downfall of that great oppressor: and as that event appears to be fast approaching from his great loss of power; and of almost all consideration in the political world; and from the foregoing calculations, if any stress can be laid upon them, I think the effect of the vials may be applied, with propriety to the events of our times, since the beginning, or some time before the beginning of the French revolution.

Previous to a particular application of the vials to these events, I observe

1. That they are called the *last plagues*, intended for

the destruction of the beast. ch. 15. 1. Whatever plagues have been sent upon him, before, as many had been, these are the last, and intended for his fall; and therefore they may not require a long time, in succession to accomplish their object. This may also be concluded from the suddenness of threatened judgment on Babylon the Type of antichrist. Is. 47. 11. Jer. 51. 8. and from Rev. 18. 9.

2. We ought to expect that this great event will be brought about, agreeably to what is said of it, in the word of God. 2. Thes. 2. 8. "Whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming," viz. That *light or knowledge*, which, of every kind, and upon all subjects, is the gift of God, is to be the primary means, in the providence of God, of effecting the great work.

The first vial was *poured on the earth*. ch. 16. 2. viz. as before observed, the territory of the beast; the country in general, belonging to the antient Roman empire—The effect was, "And there fell a noisome and grievous sore on the men who had the mark of the beast, & who worshipped his image." Now, that which was such a grievous sore to the beast, and his supporters, may have been the rise and astonishing progress of perverted philosophy. The diffusion of knowledge under a corrupt religion which had long kept the world in ignorance and bondage, generated a kind of philosophy, perfectly atheistical, and an enemy to all religion & established order. This was supported by a vast number of men, of great talents and learning, and by many in high authority. They were formed into sects and secret societies, over most of those countries; and used all their abilities, with extraordinary zeal, to overturn religion, and establish what they called the reign of reason; and as the religion they had to contend with, was very vulnerable, they had great success. The great effects which this had on the revolution of France, and

in other places, the history of those countries abundantly shews; and what a grievous sore it must have been to all that worshipped the beast and supported his tyranny, may easily be conceived. Nothing can be more applicable. Knowledge is a precious gift of God, but in the wicked it will be perverted, and may become a powerful instrument of the judgments of God upon corrupted society. It was a mean, peculiarly adapted to introduce the overturning of a religious tyranny, founded in ignorance and implicit faith.

The dominion of antichrist was so founded, and supported by ignorance. He was in the zenith of his power, about the end of the 15th century,* all the nations round him were subjected to him—all opposition was silenced. He dreaded nothing more than the light of

* About this time, Mr. Fleming, with considerable probability places the death of the witnesses. The remains of the Piedmontois and Waldenses had been dispersed over different countries of Europe, and propagated their principles in opposition to the Church of Rome. They obtained some footing, in different places, but chiefly in Bohemia. Here also they were pursued, and subjected to a severe persecution, for many years; and about the last of the 15th century, the faithful Taborites and Calixtines were so reduced, that they were no longer worthy of any public notice, even by their enemies. They were called *speculani*, from their living in dens and caves; and according to Comenius's history of the Bohemian Church, they sent out four of their number thro' Russia, Greece, Bulgaria, Egypt, Italy, France and other places, who reported that they could find no church or people free from the grossest errors, superstition & idolatry; that popery was triumphant in all the west. About 1512, the remains of these Taborites were discovered and persecuted, which was but three or four years, before the reformation by Zuinglius and Luther, which answered nearly to the 3½ days or years of the unburied state of the Witnesses. Rev. 11. 11. At the reformation they rose and advanced gradually into honor, rest and security, and tho' in many places subjected to persecution, in others they obtained a public establishment. Their testimony and prophesying against the apostacy continues still, yet considered as the church of Christ, they are disunited, and divided into parties, detached from each other; and in such a low condition, they may be said to "*prophesy in sackcloth.*"

knowledge : and when it broke out upon the world, by the art of printing, and by the reformation, he exerted all his authority and power to prevent its effects. He kept the scriptures in an unknown tongue ; he prohibited the reading of useful books ; he enforced all, by persecution, formed into a system ; and he must have been subjected to very painful feelings, when, notwithstanding all his continued efforts, he found it at last beginning to break down the strongest supports of his throne.

Knowledge was to destroy him, according to 2. Thes. 2. 8. By this, however, was not meant primarily the saving knowledge of the gospel. That will, doubtless, be the ultimate end of the divine manifestation. But that true " heavenly wisdom is pure, & peaceable and gentle." It is not calculated for such scenes of violence and blood, as would be necessary to overturn the foundations of 1200 years. The first vials produced that power, the *second beast*, which was suited to that purpose. And this was brought about thro' the influence of an atheistical philosophy ; on which account, he is also, in prophecy, called *the false prophet*.

The second vial was *poured on the sea*. Sea, in prophetic language, sometimes signifies the great body of mankind, agitated by human passions, as in Da. 7. 2. And as a *sea* is a great collection of water, in one body, so, it may signify the great united body of people in one kingdom ; and here is applied to the people of France. The effect was, "*and it became as the blood of a dead man,*" quite corrupted, "*And every living soul died, in the sea.*" This was the native effect of the foregoing judgment—a being given up to the deranging and destructive effects of atheistical principles universally prevailing. The spirit and temper of that nation became entirely and suddenly changed ; and former restraints being removed, they gave themselves up to the most violent passions, and were prepared for the most horrid scenes of insurrection, massacre and

blood. They became dead, not only to religion, and civil order; but to all the humane and benevolent affections, which are the ornament and happiness of living men. The number and horror of the bloody scenes, that were acted, among them, fully answered the description, and shewed that the nation was so entirely corrupted, that men of a good spirit could not live among them; all were dead.

The third vial was poured “*on the rivers and fountains of water.*” This, I apprehend, means *the ministers of religion.* The figure is very proper, as they are, by office, designed to water the vineyard; and the doctrines, ordinances and consolations of religion, administered by them, are the waters of life. The consequence was, “*they became blood.*” That is (as appears from the following verses) subject to bloodshed and death; exposed to suffer death or banishment without mercy. Now, this was literally fulfilled. All, who refused to swear to the civil constitution for religion, were condemned to death or banishment—and Barruel says, that 138 Bishops, & 6400 Priests were banished, at once, from that country, with circumstances of great misery and degrading contempt. And that 300, who were principally of the higher orders, were inhumanly massacred in one month. “Such, says he, was the spectacle exhibited to the world, by the French revolution!” The propriety of this interpretation, further appears, from the following verses. 5. 6. “And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O, Lord, who art, and wast, and shall be, because thou hast judged them, for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.” Thus the angel of the waters, the guardian of the waters of life, praises God for his righteous judgments. “And another out of the alter,” that is, *a martyr*, joins him in the same doxology. “Even so Lord, God Almighty, true and righteous are they

judgments.” And whoever considers the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and other examples of persecution in that nation will not think those praises misapplied. The judgment came, in kind, and in dreadful measure, upon the same order, who were the agents and approvers of the manifold severities, exercised upon the protestants, in former times,

The fourth vial was “*poured on the Sun.*” The ruling power ; the reigning authorities. France has been called also the sun of the popish kingdom, as having always been its chief support. Now, a great change takes place. The consequence was, *an intensity of heat, “and power was given him to scorch men with fire.”* Now, it seems very proper to apply this to the ruling power of France, which has also become the ruling power of Europe. All the powers of that nation, (since the fall of the old monarchy, whether national, constitutional, directorial, or imperial, have been truly a reign of terror ; the intensity of whose heat has scorched that nation and almost all the parts of Europe, beyond the severity of any other judgment that has ever befallen them.—This needs no further illustration.

The fifth vial was *poured on the seat of the Beast.* And it is said, “his kingdom was full of darkness ; and they gnawed their tongues for pain.” The seat of the beast is *Rome*, ch. 13. 2. ch. 18. His kingdom signifies his temporal dominions. Now, this appears to have been completely fulfilled, when the French armies, as already mentioned, overrun Italy, took possession of Rome, made the Pope prisoner, and carried him away thro’ some of the provinces of France, and when the emperor sent his army, in 1808, and took possession of the castle of St. Angelo, added the Pope’s troops to his own, and set up his authority in all the parts of Italy. Mr. Frazer applies this vial to the burning of Rome ; but that, I think, is evidently reserved for the seventh vial, when great Babylon is said to “come into remem-

brance, before God," &c. Besides, here, his *kingdom* is said to be *darkened*, his *seat* is not destroyed. Tho' he is become weak and "brought down to the sides of the pit," yet he still subsists, and men see him still, in his seat. It may be said of him, according to Is. 14. 16. "They that see thee, shall narrowly look upon thee, saying, is this the man, that made the earth to tremble, and did shake the nations?" O, what darkness, over all the holy Roman empire! How doth the city sit solitary! Its head, and power fallen! Its great riches come to nought!

In all the foregoing vials we see, 1. The workings of Divine providence in those great changes, in the state of the world, until it has come down to our times. 2. We see this remarkable circumstance; that the French nation, which was the principal active power in raising and supporting the dominion of antichrist, is made the chief instrument in the judgments that bring him down. "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord, God Almighty!"

The sixth vial must be future. It is contained in vs. 12. 16. "And the sixth angel poured out his vial, upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.—For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth to the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty—Behold I come, as a thief; blessed is he, that watcheth and keepeth his garments; lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.—And he gathered them together, into a place, called, in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon."

This leads, in some measure, into the region of con-

jecture. Mr. Lowman thinks it may signify the removing of obstructions, to make way for some empire or kings, to invade the Pope's territory, from its eastern boundary. Mr. Frazer supposes it may signify the removing of obstructions, that the jews, whom he calls "*the kings of the east,*" may pass freely to their own land. Neither of these appear probable. The last seems greatly to overstrain the metaphor; and as to the first, it appears from Rev. 17. 16. that Rome is not to be destroyed by any invasion from the east, but by the kings or powers, among whom the Roman territory had been divided. "They shall hate the whore, and make her desolate, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."

Since the attempt that has been made by the emperor of the French, to invade England, and especially since the mention of the grand combination of the powers of Europe, under him, for that purpose, I am inclined to think, that the invasion of England is the subject intended in this prophecy. It has been so long meditated & threatened, and so great preparations have been made for it, that considering the daring courage of Napoleon, his inveterate hatred of England, his success in exciting the animosity of other nations, and his uninterrupted success in every other undertaking, it may be expected.

The feasibility of this application of the sixth vial may appear from the following considerations :

1. The application of the forgoing vials seems to be natural, easy and unstrained. And this, the invasion, being a part of the plan of the principal actor, or instrument, in these great scenes, comes in naturally, in time and place, among them.

2. Great rivers, and great waters are natural boundaries between nations. Euphrates was such, between Judea, the country of the Jews, and the Assyrians, their constant enemies. And the drying up of rivers, ren-

dering them passable, is a scriptural figure for an invasion. Ezek. 30. 12.

3. The invasion of the antichristian powers cannot be meant here, for it is evident, from the contents of the vial, that they are the aggressors, and invading powers. They send out their messengers, to call the kings of the earth, and of the *whole world* (oikoumenés of the empire) to the battle. Besides, no invasion of the Pope's territory is to be expected from the east. Some other power must, therefore be meant.

4. All the kings, or powers, said to be combining, or which may be expected to combine, to carry on the grand scheme of invasion, are situated on the east of England, and the narrow sea, between Calais and Dover, may be the prophetic Euphrates.

From the contents of the vial, it appears,

1. That the invasion will take place. "*The water thereof was dried up;*" and the way of the kings prepared

2. It is intimated, that secrecy and surprise will be studied, in the undertaking. "Behold I come as a thief, whose great care is to be undiscovered. There will upon this view of the case, be sufficient reasons for such caution to the invading powers, to avoid interruption, by the British navy.

5. That there will be a *great battle*. The head powers of the antichristian empire are all engaged in the grand effort. 1. The Dragon. This signifies the old serpent, Satan, who, as the god of the wicked world, is considered, as directing the ravages of those monarchies represented as furious beasts of prey. 2. The Beast—that is *antichrist*, the head of the holy Roman empire. 3. The false prophets, i. e. the atheistical re-

presentative, or image of the first or imperial beast. These send out their messengers, "*three unclean spirits.*" What these are may be difficult to particularize; only, their evil nature is intimated, that they "*are spirits of devils,*" and that they go out of the mouths of these chief powers. This may imply, that there are to be some things spoken, delivered or proclaimed by them; such as manifestoes, proclamations, summonses to the kings of the earth and of the whole world (*oikoumenēs*) i. e. to all the bounds of the empire, to gather them to the battle: Proclamations and manifestoes, filled, as might be expected with falsehood, slander and blasphemy.—These spirits are said to "*work miracles,*" which, doubtless signifies the wonderful effect, which the delusive means employed will have upon the kings of the earth, to lead them to conspire, in an undertaking so evidently against their own interest, and the interest of the world.

4. Observe, that as, in the language of scripture, God is said to do, what he permits to be done, in the course of his providence, and what he does not hinder, which yet his mighty power could hinder, if he so willed; so this work is, in the 16th verse, ascribed to God, "*and he gathered them together,*" &c. And in v. 15. "*Behold I come, as a thief.*" The gathering them, and the manner of their coming, is under the superintendence of the providence of God, as were the ravages of the king of Assyria; or the means used to persuade the kings of Israel and Judah to go to the battle at Ramoth-gilead.

Now, on the supposition of the propriety of this application, I proceed to examine, whether any thing, in the contents of this vial, affords ground to believe, that the end of the invasion will be accomplished. That is the annihilation of the power of England; which the Emperor has threatend, and sworn to effect. Nothing of this kind, I think appears, but the contrary. For,

1. The battle is called, "the battle of the great day of God Almighty." This is a form of expression very common in the scriptures. "*The great day of the Lord,*" which commonly signifies, a time of manifesting the righteous judgments of God, in favor of his cause, and against his enemies. Here, it seems to intimate the greatness of the battle ; and of the day, as a great deciding day, when the power and justice of God will be displayed, in a signal victory over the antichristian powers, the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet.

2. The place of the battle is called, Armageddon. v. 16. (the mountain of Megiddo) evidently referring to the victory over the confederate armies of the Canaanites, at the waters of Megiddo. This is described, Judges, 4th, as the battle of the Lord, and celebrated, in a song on perpetual record, ch. 5th, as the Lord's victory. The reference implies, that there is something similar and exemplary in the cases. As *there*, God is said, v. 7. to "*draw Sisera and his host, his chariots and his multitude to the river Kishon ;*" and Sisera fulfilled the order, v. 13. So *here* it is said, v. 16. "And he gathered them (the confederate kings) together to a place, called, in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon."—As *there* it is said "the heavens, and the stars, in their courses, fought against Sisera, and the antient river Kishon, swept them away," so *here*, it may be, that the state of the waters and of the elements, may contribute to discomfit the invading powers. As *there*, it is said, that the Lord discomfitted Sisera, his host, & subdued, before Israel, the king of Canaan, so *here*, the victory may be so complete, and attended with such circumstances, as to appear evidently to be the Lord's. And we may add, that as *there*, some, through cowardice or disaffection refused to unite and appear against the common enemy ; and consequently were subjected to a curse ; this may be a solemn warning that none interested may be disaffected to the cause, or refuse their aid, in the approaching trial,

lest they fall under a similar condemnation. “Curse ye Meroz saith the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly, the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord; to the help of the Lord, against the mighty.”

3. We ought to understand this vial, as we do the others, and as the prophecy teaches, to be one of the last plagues, brought upon the empire of the beast. But if the invasion should be successful, this would change the meaning of the vial, and bring the judgment upon England, and not upon the beast.

4. The same conclusion may be drawn from the affectionate warning, v. 15. “Blessed is he, that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, &c.” which is not the way of dealing with enemies; and also from the consequences of this vial, as reaching into the next, which intimates division and confusion among the invading powers, and the utter ruin of the great city, mystical Babylon.

Other reasons may be suggested, to support the opinion, that the invasion will not be successful.

1. England has never, since the reformation, (except a few years, under a popish Queen) bowed to the beast, or received his mark; which is mentioned as the description of them, who are to be subjects of the last plagues. On the contrary, they have been of those, who have obeyed the warning; “*come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*” England has been the principal support of the reformation, and the great object of the hatred of the pope and popish powers, and is especially so, of the present powers of France. Besides, by her established doctrines, she is an eminent *public* witness for the pure doctrines of the religion of Christ, against the great apostacy. We may therefore conclude, that England is not

to become a subject of the last plagues, however severely she may be chastised of God, in the general shaking.

2. There is reason to think, that the Lord is continuing salt enough, in that nation, to preserve it, in the great trial, and notwithstanding the general corruption and desert of the judgments of God, yet still, he has many pious, faithful, praying people there, which will be a better defence than walls and bulwarks. Their tin and dross may be purged by the same fire, which is to burn up the hay and stubbles on the other side of the water ; yet they may come, more purified, out of the furnace.

3. It is a remarkable fact that England has been, for some hundred years, preserved from contagion, by the great impostor ; and, of late, from the deranging influence of a revolutionizing philosophy, and, altho' but a little island ; but a speck, in comparison of the vast dominions, now under the controul of the conqueror of Europe, she appears to have been raised up, by divine providence, to her present greatness and power, on purpose to check the progress of that ambitious enemy of mankind, and withstand the last and most furious efforts of the antichristian powers. It is therefore reasonable to think, that she will be supported, and not overthrown.

4. It appears from prophecy, Dan. v. 44, and 7th ch. and Rev. 18. 19th ch. that after the fall of the Roman monarchy, in its last and papal form, no new universal monarchy shall arise, until the reign of Christ, in the promised great reformation, commences, Dan. 7. 27. which may yet require many years to come. All attempts therefore, of that kind, must be restrained. England is the only power, at this time, that appears to be prepared and employed under the providence of God, to prevent the ambition of the French monarch, from accomplishing that end : All good people should therefore, pray for their preservation and success.

Now, if this be the true interpretation of the sixth vial, the battle of Armageddon will be fought in England. She will have a severe and dreadful trial, but will be finally successful. The contest may, for a while, be doubtful ; but she will arise with greater glory, and her enemies will be confounded.

5. The seventh vial shews that the judgment is intended to be upon the beast, and not upon England. It is the effect and consequences of the sixth vial, carried into the territory of the beast.

The second beast had been going on, *before him*, doing great exploits, every where successful, believed to be irresistible. A check would be, to him, equal to a defeat. The courage of his enemies would rise ; the confidence of his friends would fall. They would be disposed to desert his banners, and assert their own rights. Their attachment, hitherto supported by force or fear, would be weakened, and division and defection would take place. And these consequences would more certainly follow, if the victory over him should be signal and complete ; as is intimated, by its being called "the battle of the great day of God Almighty," all whose work is perfect. This appears to be the effect of the seventh vial, a great shaking (*seismos*) and the ruin of "great Babylon, which comes into remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."

It was "*poured into the air.*" *The air*—the changeable wind of public opinion, which drives the affairs of men whichever way it blows. This, agitated by human passions and rising into a tempest, kindles new wars in Europe, more terrible than all, that were before. "*a great shaking, such as was not, since men were upon the earth ; so mighty an earthquake, and so great.*"—The last convulsions of the nameless monster, before its death, which is to make way for the peace of the world.