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THE
MORNING STAR,

OR
PRECURSOR

OF THE
MILLENNIUM,

A SERMON,

*Delivered in the Presbyterian Church of Lexing-
ton, the 17th of July, 1813.*

BY REV. JAMES M'CHORD.

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SERMON.



“And the Angel which I saw stand upon the Sea and upon the Earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth forever and ever, who created Heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the Seventh Angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the Prophets.”—REV. x, 5, 6, 7.



PROGRESSIVE evolution is a distinguishing feature of all the plans of God. Every class of being in the visible creation, makes its approaches to maturity and usefulness by imperceptible degrees. The full blaze of intellect is not kindled in a moment; nor do the arts of life spring into existence in their full perfection. Even nations may be traced back to inconsiderable hordes; and those eventful changes which serve to mark the rise or the ruin of the nations, to some extremely trivial, often *casual* circumstance. This unchanging trait of universal nature is known to pervade the religion of the Bible, in a variety of respects, and to a very remarkable degree. Unlike all the fabulous theology and sceptical philosophy which have been fostered to the disgrace and ruin of the world, we see in the Bible a production to be exclusively, or even eminently, ascribed to no particular age—a system that unfolds itself under the superintendence of a Being with whom “one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day”; and which has therefore gradually increased from very small beginnings, till through the successive labors of above four thousand years it reached its finished state. The promise of the Savior, as the seed of the woman that should bruise the Serpent’s head, was the germ of all this rich and varied volume with which the world is blessed. And in

the developement of that promise, first handed down by tradition and afterwards committed to writing, when the church was passing into a national, from an obscure and patriarchal form.* In the developement of that promise God employed his Messengers, Patriarchs and Prophets, our Lord and his Apostles, till that little star, at first feintly glimmering through "the palpable obscure," became a mighty and resplendent orb, diffusing its regenerating influence among the nations, and blessing the Universe with a brighter day.

* As this discourse is committed to the press only for the sake of those with a reference to whose condition it was at first prepared, it may not be unimportant to remark that the very much prolonged lives of men before the flood, rendered a *written* rule of faith much less necessary; especially during a period when the sum of revealed truth was very small, and therefore easily preserved. Adam, the first of men, lived two hundred and forty-three years after the birth of Methusaleh, and Methusaleh died within less than one year of the Deluge. As most men's lives were thus prolonged, more than one half the Antediluvians may be said to have been cotemporaries of Adam. The change of the world's inhabitants being so very slow, tradition would be, in the nature of things, less liable to corruption or loss. The same thing was, in part, the case after the flood. The changes brought about by that dreadful catastrophe, have manifestly tended to shorten the period of human life; but as might be naturally expected, they did so very gradually. The soundness and vigor of Antediluvian constitution at first resisted, in a good degree, the change of climate and every other effect produced by the altered state of things. But this native vigor would of course be communicated in an impaired degree to every successive generation, till at length it was brought down in the course of about twelve generations to a standard which it has ever since preserved. *That standard* we may fairly suppose is nothing else than the degree of resistance which the organization of the human frame is capable of making to the increased causes that urge it to the grave, compared with the much fewer and less operative causes of decay which were furnished by the state of things before the flood. And of course when the term of human life had dwindled down to a period that may be said to answer to the altered state of things, it would decrease no further. Such the Scriptures assure us was the fact. Sem the Son of Noah lived five hundred years after the flood, and was for one hundred and fifty years cotemporary with Abraham and fifty years with Isaac. Eber the third in descent from Sem lived altogether but four hundred and sixty years, and died in the nineteenth year of Jacob and Esau. Terah the fifth in descent from Eber, and eighth from Sem, lived two hundred and five years, and died in the seventy fifth year of Abraham. It was only necessary therefore to afford a written record about the time of Moses when the shortened duration of human life rendered tradition dangerous, and made it requisite for the church to put on a national form, for the purpose of enlarging as well as preserving the record. Meantime the flood by thus shortening human life has doubtless put a salutary check to wickedness.

The gradual extension of the privileges made known in that promise of the Savior is no less a subject of our wonder. During the period that elapsed before the flood, we find the great mass of men given over to themselves, and the hope of righteousness handed down in uninterrupted succession through the line of Seth. When men had again dispersed themselves after the deluge, Abraham was chosen ; not all the descendants of Abraham, but Isaac was selected as the heir of the promise ; not both the sons of Isaac, but Jacob was made the inheritor of the blessing. To the descendants of Jacob the Church of the living God was almost exclusively confined for nearly eighteen hundred years. The nations of the earth were left to themselves, and stumbled and fell ; Israel alone had the testimony of Jehovah. When four thousand years had ran their course, the promised Savior came ; the wall of partition was broken down ; and by abolishing those ceremonies and distinctions which had respect to Messiah yet to come, the Church was made capable of extension through all lands, and millions upon millions out of almost every nation speedily hailed, and to this day hail the Savior of the world. This mighty increase however was not the final stage. Still it was not God's purpose that the Gospel of his son should be universally known or generally embraced. Nor has it ever so fallen out. The people of God have always been comparatively few in number. The knowledge of the truth has been but partially disseminated ; and its influence, where known, but partially acknowledged. A succeeding period, however, a crowning blessing marks the plan of God. After this period of partial success and long continued conflict shall have elapsed, God declares it is his purpose to pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, to render the truth universally known and universally respected, and thus after the empire of wickedness shall have contended with Messiah for near six thousand years, victory shall at length crown the efforts of his people, the blessings of his Gospel be imparted to all nations, and a complete millennium of righteousness and peace distinguish the closing stages of the world's duration.

It is in relation to this distinguished epoch that the angel is said to utter the remarkable prediction in the text. Persons acquainted with the scripture prophecies know that the latter ages of the Church, and of the world, are divided by them into several distinct portions. Independently of those almost innumerable subdivisions to which successive æras give birth, the scriptures of truth distinguish four remarkable periods in the duration of the world from Apostolic times. The first embraces the destinies of the Church from the commencement of the New Testament dispensation to the rise of Papal tyranny : The second ex-

tends to the end of the well known thirteen hundred and thirty five years, twelve hundred and sixty of which are so frequently assigned for the domination of that power ; and the residue, comprising a period of seventy five years, for the overthrow of " every thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God," and the preparation of the Churches for millennial glory: the third is the often named millennium itself, a thousand years of peace and righteousness with which all nations shall be blessed : the fourth and last period reaches to the day of judgment, and it is said shall be but " a little season" compared with the peaceful and happy ages that shall have preceded it.

Of these different periods in prophetic history (if we may be allowed the unusual phrase,) the former two, especially the second, are minutely and accurately depicted in the prophecies. They are eminently distinguished as the time of Zion's troubles, and to the delineation of these much of the book of Revelations is devoted. The prediction of the text evidently relates to the consummation of that period ; for it places it after those seven thunders or concluding wars by which the power of the Church's enemies shall be fully overturned. *Concluding wars*, we say, because thunder is among the well known symbols of war, and the number SEVEN is known throughout the scriptures as the emblem of perfection or finished dispensations*.

* Let it be remarked, once for all, that the language of prophecy is generally symbolical. That is to say, persons and events are represented by appropriate imagery ; and these images of things are given us in place of names and literal descriptions. The intent no doubt was in part to prevent men from attempting to defeat the prophecies, by setting themselves to counteract the fulfillment of them, which would of course require a train of miracles in order to secure the result. This is well known to have actually happened in the case of the Emperor Julian, surnamed the Apostate. He actually did set himself to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem and restore the worship of the Jews ; and after he had brought the resources of his vast and powerful empire to bear upon that point, balls of fire from the foundation of the building repeatedly slew the workmen ; and the mighty, the persevering Julian, was obliged eventually to desist. Scarcely any ancient fact is better attested than this ; and though such men as Gibbon may attempt to hide their mortification by a sneer, and affect contempt for all such legendary tales, yet let my readers understand that the story rests upon the authority of most, if not *all*, those authors of the time, on whom the credibility of Edward Gibbon's whole history depends. Gods greatest miracle is no doubt the accomplishment of all his purposes and predictions by ordinary means—by letting the liberty and passions of men workout the results intended by him, but unsought and unknown by them. Therefore follows an evident necessity of wrapping up in something like mystery.

It is foreign however to our present purpose to explain or defend the explanations that may be given of the imagery employed in the prophetic books. This would be a work of months, not of a single hour. We introduce you for the present into the very middle of the system ; and we do so for the purpose of distinctly ascertaining when these mysteries shall end. It shall be, says the text, "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound." Those seven Trumpets of which the last is here mentioned, are well known parts of the imagery of this book. They serve to mark the commencement of those successively alarming dispensations, of which the people of God are forewarned as it were by the sound of trumpets. Before the commencement of this seventh—this *last* alarm, we read of those concluding wars by which the Papal power shall be finally destroyed. The voices of the thunders however, are "sealed up ;" it shall not immediately appear that the influence of the monster has forever departed through their instru-

ous language the events that those who hate him must produce. But it by no means follows from this fact that the interpretation of prophecy is arbitrary. The symbolic or hieroglyphic language is as determinate as any other. In fact more so. Living languages are always subject to change in the acceptation of at least many of their words. Symbols, being analogical representations of things, never can thus change ; for the analogies of things exist as long as their nature remains the same. In this way therefore all ancient writings were performed. All those monumental and other inscriptions of Egypt, &c. &c. which have so long puzzled and delighted the learned world, are just of the same nature with the language of the prophecies. At least the only difference is that they are pictures, and the prophecies are descriptions of pictures framed on a similar plan. Of course, ascertain the meaning of a symbol in one case and you have it in every other. An eye must always stand for wisdom, a lion for a king, a candlestick for a Church, a Star for a minister of religion, because there subsists in the nature of things a strong analogy between the purposes answered or station occupied by these different objects in the several systems of which they form a part. Upon this principle it likewise follows that the same object may be represented by different symbols ; because a striking analogy may exist between some strong trait in the event or thing depicted and some particular feature or features in several other objects of a nature very different from one another. Thus, for example, there is no incongruity in representing the Persian Empire by the silver breast and arms of the great image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in his dream, and by a bear with three ribs in its mouth, as seen by Daniel in one vision, and by a two horned ram, as seen in a succeeding one. The Persian empire was inferior in grandeur to the Babylonian, therefore consistently represented by an inferior kind of metal ; while its known cruel and ravenous character is well portrayed by a bear with ribs in its mouth ; and its constituent members by two horns, as in the case of the ram.

mentality. Even after that, some new arrangement shall take place to give a last, a terrible alarm to the Churches of that quarter, and "the mystery of iniquity" shall not be finished till God's judgments are poured out upon the last destroyer—till "the days of the voice of the seventh angel" shall have been accomplished. In allusion to this, the angel (who is introduced under many of the same symbols by which the Redeemer is described in the first chapter, and consequently must be the same personage,) is represented as lifting up his hand to heaven at the conclusion of those wars, and declaring that "*the time shall not be yet ;*" for *that* is the literal and evidently the correct rendering of the passage. It is intended as a corrective to what is possibly a very natural, and has certainly been a very common mistake, viz. an apprehension that the close of the twelve hundred and sixty years, so well known in prophecy, would be the introduction of the millennium ; for God's suffering his truth to be so long despised and his people trampled under foot is unquestionably the "mystery." Not so, says the Angel : nor shall it be till the Church has stood the shock of another alarm. The *seventh* trumpet tho' threatening her dissolution, shall in fact conclude her miseries—then, and not till then, shall the millennial sun arise.

The commencement of the millennium has been so long the object of the world's expectation, that none of our hearers, not even the most thoughtless, can be at a loss to comprehend the nature of that period. So long ago as the days of Moses it was distinctly foretold. By looking over the latter part of the book of Deuteronomy you will find in that last tender and animated address of the venerable patriot and distinguished Prophet, the destinies of Isreal distinctly portrayed, from the commencement of their national existence to the end of the world. Even there may you read of "a nation of fierce countenance" that should come against them, after many a bitter chastisement inflicted through many an age, should have failed to keep them from transgressing ; and see described the miseries to which they must be reduced when eating "the flesh of their sons and daughters in the siege and straitness wherewith their enemies should distress them." There you will hear how "the Lord would scatter them among all people from the one end of the earth even unto the other," and see many of the miseries, of which all people for above seventeen centuries have been eye witnesses, graphically described*. There also you will find a promise that in due time they shall call to mind his covenant "among all nations whither the Lord their

* Chap. xxviii, 48—57.

God had driven them, and shall return——and shall obey his voice——and God will have compassion upon them and will gather them from among all the nations whither he had scattered them, and bring them into the land which their fathers possessed,” &c. &c.* And finally, there you will see denounced the vengeance to be poured upon Heathen nations for all their cruelty to the sons of Abraham ; and the horrible conflicts amid which their deliverance and return to their own land shall be wrought.† All subsequent prophecies give us the same view ; and many of them with a minuteness that more resembles history than prophetic intimations of a future state of things. The Apostle Paul tells us that the general diffusion of the Gospel among the Gentiles shall be the signal for the conversion of the Jews.‡ And accordingly in all the ancient prophecies we find these two events connected. This is especially the case with the prophecies of Isaiah, whose ardent mind is perpetually darting forward to the days of Zion’s glory, when “ the Gentiles shall come to Judea’s light, and kings to the brightness of her rising.”|| At that time, we are told by the Prophet Ezekiel, God will not only restore Judah, but will also “ take the children of Israel from among the heathen whither they begone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land : and will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel ; and one king shall be king for them all : and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all.”** All our hearers doubtless know that from the days of Rehoboam the son of Solomon, Israel and Judah were separate kingdoms ; and that Israel was carried captive nearly eight hundred years before the final dispersion of the Jews.

From prophecies like these, then, and many of them remarkably minute, the Jews are as much in the habit of expecting their return to their own land, and the peaceful and prosperous period that we call the millennium, as is the Christian world ; and the commencement of that period is just as distinctly marked in Old Testament prophecy as in any portion of the New. But our business this afternoon is not with the proofs that such a period is rationally expected, and has been long expected, by both Jew and Gentile. The few sketches that have been given, or rather references that have been made, were suffered to occupy a moment of your time only for the sake of those who, unhappily for them-

* xxx, 1—9. † xxxii, 36—43. ‡ Rom. xi. 25—32. || Isai. l.x.

** Ezek. xxxvii 15—22

selves, are in the habit of neglecting the oracles of God ; but who nevertheless are apt on occasions like the present to be extremely scrupulous about the kind and degree of evidence submitted for their inspection. Certainly no reader of the scriptures can hesitate to admit that the millennium is frequently foretold, and no believer of them doubts but that it will be here. The time about which we are authorised to look for its commencement is the point to which our attention is principally to be devoted ; and the dates which the Scriptures professedly furnish on the subject must supply the data of our calculations.

It is well known that the prophecies of Daniel, point out four successive monarchies in those parts of the world with which the Church of God was to stand, and in fact always has stood, more immediately connected ;* and that the future character and fate of these monarchies were delineated to him at different times, and under very different symbols. The kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ is uniformly represented as succeeding to the last of these, and then filling the whole world. Of these four universal monarchies the Babylonian occupies the first place in prophetic story, as being the first in order of time, and, in fact, in grandeur too. To this succeeds the Medo-Persian : then the Macedonian, called the *Grecian* in the book of Daniel : and last of all a powerful and terrible dominion which is said to devour the whole earth, but is described without a name. It is however represented as succeeding the Macedonian Empire, and as being the only universal monarchy that shall succeed it. In the vision of Nebuchadnezzar king of Baby-

* It is a very great mistake to suppose that the rise and fall of empires are on their own account the themes of scriptural prophecy. In the estimation of the God of the universe, these are things of very small moment compared with "that Church which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." The destinies of that despised Church is the subject that God has honored with prophetic elucidation ; and the Empires of the world are only noticed as they may stand connected with the fortunes of his people. Hence as Europe and Western Asia were to be for many ages almost exclusively the seat of Christianity, the revolutions of those places (because affecting the Church) are distinctly pointed out. Those countries therefore, especially the parts of them subject to old Rome, are called "the world" in prophetic stile ; and are often in fact so denominated by Roman writers themselves. Had what is great in the eyes of men been the theme of scripture disquisition, we should doubtless have heard something about the mighty lakes and canals and pyramids of the renowned Pharaohs, and less about the miseries of the Israelitish slaves who made the bricks to build them. Glory of Egypt, where art thou ! Israel still lives, though now wounded and dispersed, for a future day of glory.

lon, as recorded and interpreted in the second chapter of Daniel, it is said to form the legs and feet of the great image, whose component parts, of different kinds of metal, represented these four monarchies. "Thou art this head of gold" said the interpreter to the monarch of Babylon. "And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron: for as much as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things:—and whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part potters clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, for as much as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.—And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom &c."* The stone cut out of the mountain, and representing Messiah's kingdom, you will remark "smote the image upon his feet which were of iron and clay" (verse 34), and therefore shall fall upon the last Empire, the first ages of which are "legs of iron;" and upon the feet—the *ten* toes of it, which are part of iron and part of clay. The mixture of iron and clay which yet did not cleave to one another, aptly represents the last stage of imperial Rome's domination. She extends her sway over the ten kingdoms; but it is a kind of dominion diverse from the "iron," the civil sway, and cannot be amalgamated with it. In succeeding visions we find this last Empire described as the most terrible of the beasts that are employed to represent the four Empires. In the seventh chapter of this prophecy it is recorded that Daniel saw in vision "four great beasts come up from the sea, diverse from one another. The first like a lion.—the second like a bear,—and it had three ribs in the mouth of it.—Another like a Leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings like a fowl: the beast had also four heads,—A fourth beast dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and break in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beast that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and behold in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man,† and a mouth speaking great things. I beheld till

* Dan. ii, 31—45.

† The well known characteristic of the four living creatures that in Rev. iv. represent the ministers of religion. The Apostolic age, bold as

the thrones were cast down and the ancient of days did sit &c." The interpretation of these symbols is given us as follows. "These great beasts which are four, are four kings which shall arise out of the earth," out of that part of the world that is *generally called* the earth in prophetic language. You will discover in the twenty third verse that what is here called a king is there called a kingdom ; for a king is certainly a good emblem of a kingdom, through however many hands the sceptre may pass : and as the symbolic language is borrowed from hieroglyphic painting, the less must always be taken to represent the greater ; reduced dimensions being essential or almost essential to the art. "The fourth beast" it is said in verse twenty third, " shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms and shall devour the whole earth,—and the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings" (*i. e. kingdoms*) " that shall arise ; and another" (*the little horn with eyes*) " shall rise after them ; and he shall be diverse from the first" (a different kind of government from the other ten), " and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the Saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws : and they shall be given into his hand, until a time and times and the dividing of time"—it is a Hebraism for a year, two years and a half year, or forty and two months, amounting according to the Hebrew mode of computing time to twelve hundred and sixty days. This is the well known period so often assigned in Scripture prophecy, both old Testament and new, to the domination of that power which should peculiarly exalt itself against God and seek to " wear out the Saints of the most High." A day is a well known prophetic symbol of a year, and doubtless a very natural one ; the diurnal revolution of the earth being the best emblem of her yearly circuit with which all nature can furnish us. Accordingly the Scriptures themselves teach us thus to interpret the symbol.* Thus the Jews uniformly interpreted it ; and hence were expecting, and all nations in their neighborhood are known to have been expecting an extraordinary personage, about the time that Messiah came. For to this Daniel it had been foretold† that seventy weeks

lions ; the persecuting ages, patient as oxen ; the succeeding period speculative as other men ; the millennial period, keen sighted and rapid in dispersing the Gospel as a flying Eagle. And during all ages full of eyes before and behind, looking towards God and towards their flocks.

* Ezek. iv. 6

† Dan. ix. 24.

were appointed for Jerusalem to continue still God's peculiar people, till Messiah should be cut off. Seventy weeks are four hundred and ninety days, which are to be dated from the year 458 before Christ, in which Ezra received liberty to complete the often interrupted rebuilding of Jerusalem & the temple, which had laid waste during the preceding captivity. The Jews correctly interpreted these *days* to be so many years. And as several commandments had gone forth for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, from the first year of Cyrus, they were at a loss to determine which was meant ; but could decide with clearness that the period must elapse *about* that time, as the interval between the several commandments (the last of which only effected what was intended,) was not very great.

Twelve hundred and sixty years therefore is manifestly the period allotted for the domination of the religious little horn. And to this agrees the Revelation. In the thirteenth chapter of that book we find the same horned beast presenting itself before the Christian Apostle that had been seen in vision six hundred and fifty years before, by the Jewish prophet ; “ and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months” after “ his deadly wound was healed.” Of course the times of this fourth Empire had not yet gone by in the days of the Apostle John. Neither yet had it been divided into ten kingdoms ; for no such number was at that time in the parts of the world that constitute the scene of prophecy. It is clear therefore that the Roman Empire must be designed by that terrible nameless beast. It alone can be the fourth universal Empire ; for none but it succeeded the Macedonian as a universal dominion, and none but it ever was divided into ten contemporary kingdoms.* To these ten kingdoms which embrace only that

* Should any of our readers be still disposed to doubt the correctness of our inference that this fourth beast must have been intended for an emblem of the Roman Empire, and its ten horns for the division of the Empire during 1260 years of papal domination ; we must intreat them to turn to another view of this beast as given in the seventeenth chapter of Revelations. It is there represented as having seven heads and ten horns, and with a woman sitting upon it whom it is at that moment carrying to destruction. Listen to the further interpretation given to the vision. “ The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth” verse 9. And who is ignorant that mighty Rome was celebrated during many an age as the City of seven hills. Turn to any Roman history, or to the notes on almost any Roman Poet and you will learn the names of those celebrated hills. But how do we know that the City of Rome is intended by the woman ? Listen to verse 18. “ The woman which thou sawest is that great City which

part of the old empire of which the old capitol, the city of Rome, was to continue the seat of authority and centre of influence, the scriptures uniformly tell us shall succeed "a kingdom which shall never be destroyed" and in which God's Messiah shall be universally acknowledged as King of kings and Lord of lords."

It may perhaps be important to remark before we labor to ascertain when this kingdom shall actually be established, that the preceding destruction of Rome, and the correspondent chastisements of all those nations which "have given their power and strength to the beast" shall be accompanied with very great and general exertions to diffuse

reigneth over the kings of the earth." And what other City reigned over the kings of the earth in the days of the Apostle John, who was at this time under banishment "in the isle that is called," by virtue of an edict of the Emperor Domitian? The seven heads which represent the hills on which imperial Rome stood, are also said in verse 10, to represent seven successive forms of government during all of which that City should preside over the kingdoms of the nations. The common version of the words is certainly obscure. Instead of reading "and *there* are seven kings," &c. read "and *they* are seven kings." This is undoubtedly the true rendering of the passage; as it is in itself equally admissible with the other, and has the advantage of doing away the obscurity which must otherwise perplex every reader. Were the period at the end of the ninth verse exchanged for a semicolon, it would likewise be of service to the sense. Of these seven governments, during all of which Rome was to preside among the cities, it is said "five are fallen, and one is" viz. the Imperial form which at that time existed, "and the other is not yet come." *Five had fallen:* kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, military tribunes with consular authority—these "FIVE" had in succession wielded the power of Rome. The sixth or imperial form then existed. The succeeding fortunes of Rome were to be of such a nature that it might seem difficult to rank her succeeding forms of government. After the removal of the seat of Empire to Constantinople, and especially after the annihilation of the Western Empire by Odoacer in 476, the state of Rome remained unsettled. This was her seventh stage, and continued "a short space" till the year 533, in which the Bishop of Rome was constituted "head of the church," and a new foundation laid for the domination of that city. This was the birth of an eighth condition; but is said by the interpreter to be "of the seven," because in her preceding condition she can hardly be said to have been the mistress of the nations in any sense. The ten horns or kingdoms were to remain cotemporary with the beast, but "one hour," i. e. a very short space of time, for the duration of a kingdom; and the number ten, it is known, never did stand complete for any great length of time. These ten kingdoms are expressly said in the 12th verse to be at that time *in futuro*. It is added in the 13th that "they shall be of one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the Beast," which is said in the 11th verse to be the eighth form of Rome's government, & yet more properly speaking to be the *seventh* form.

the knowledge of the gospel among the nations :* shall be attended with the complete overthrow, the burning and even sinking the city of Rome, the seat of Pagan and Papal tyranny :† shall be in part fol-

If the preceding exposition does not satisfy our readers that the Roman empire must be intended by the ten horned beast of Daniel and John, we confess that conviction is no longer in our power. That the description *does* suit "the city of seven hills" every one must allow ; that it cannot with any degree of propriety be applied to any other, is equally undeniable. And if you still require proof that Rome was actually meant, you are requiring something more than demonstration. But admitting that Rome was the government intended, it requires no stretch of Scripture or of fancy to make out that the little horn which for 1260 years should subjugate the nations and distress the Church, and which rose *after* the division of the Western empire into ten parts, must of necessity be the Papal power, which "is diverse from all other" kinds of dominion that had been exercised, to which the kings of the earth "gave their power and strength ;" and which though wearing "the horns of a lamb" always "spake as a dragon." Who then are the dupes of ignorance and prejudice? Protestants or Philosophers? "Woe worth the day"!!!

* Rev. xiv. 6, Angels are common symbols of Divine dispensations ; and the name is thus used because that class of beings is so very much employed in executing the purposes of God. This angel—this procedure of providence is marked in the same vision with the Angel who is employed in verses 15, 16, to reap the harvest of the earth, i. e. to inflict the last judgment on the *ten* kingdoms that had so long subjected themselves to Rome ; and who is afterwards told to reap the *vine* of the earth, a well known symbol of a religious community, and being here called *the vine* or Church of the earth must of course have respect to the Roman hierarchy of which the mistress of the earth was the centre and soul. The spread of the Gospel therefore "to them that dwell on earth" i. e. the people subject to Rome, and "to every nation and tongue and kindred and people" as contradistinguished from the votaries of Rome (which affords by the way an additional proof that by the *earth* in prophecy we are generally to understand the Roman empire)—the spread of the gospel among all the nations, we say, is to be going on at the same time with those desolations. Let our readers *mark it*.

† Rev. xviii. 8, 9, 2, 2. It is remarkable that the neighborhood of Rome has been for ages emboweling by subterraneous fires. It is said that one valley in the vicinity of the city, once extremely populous and fruitful, has already become the prey of these devouring flames, and is at this day pestiferous as a charnel house. Multitudes of fissures, especially at the sides of the valley, are perpetually sending forth hot and sulphurous fumes, so that the hand can rarely be suffered to approach them for many moments.

Such are the preparations which providence has been for ages making to fulfill "the sure word of prophecy," and to set upon old Rome

lowed by the total and final overthrow of the nations that bow to the faith of Mahomet*—that they shall go hand in hand with God's preparation for the conversion & restoration of the Jews to their own land : and finally that all these things shall be effected amid tremendous conflicts and overturnings of the nations. †

It is generally apprehended by the diligent consulters of the sacred volume, that these eventful times are not now far remote : and we intimated last Lord's day with sufficient clearness our own apprehension that we are already in the midst of them ; that the great prophetic period of twelve hundred and sixty years has already ran its course ; and that THE MORNING STAR which must precede the *millennial day*, the little period of seventy-five years allotted to desolations and to blood, is already considerably in advance. But in order to shew the reasonableness of this opinion, it is necessary to enter with some minuteness into an examination of the dates furnished by the prophecies themselves. It has already been made appear, we hope with sufficient plainness, that twelve hundred and sixty years are allotted to the domination of that professedly religious power that was to have its seat at Rome. That length of time is twice assigned to it by Daniel, and repeatedly in

that mark of reprobation which Sodom and Babylon have been made to endure before her. How easy to sink her into the depths of the sea ! how striking the procedure, how terrible the indignation of Almighty God !

* Rev. xvi. 12. Those seven vials are God's last and overwhelming judgments by which the opposition of his enemies shall be crushed. This is evident from chap. xv, 1. they are there called " the seven last plagues ; for in them " it is said, " is filled up the wrath of God." The fifth of these is said to be poured upon the " seat of the beast " the city and territories of Papal Rome, which is undoubtedly the seat of Popish power. The seventh is poured out into the air, to demolish the whole work of him who is said to be " the prince of the power of the air," and the intermediate air is poured out upon " the great river Euphrates " which is more than once pointed at in this book as if it were the seat of Mahometan power and influence, though for what reason we do not distinctly comprehend. Euphrates however runs through much of the country subjected to Mahometanism, and it must be dried up, the nations about it must be severely visited, " that the way of the kings of the East may be prepared." These kings of the East are God's ancient people, most of whom are now dispersed to the East of the Euphrates ; and Mahometan power in that quarter must be broken, before they can possibly repossess their land.

† The readers may consult, among other places, the last chapter of Daniel in proof of this position. But in fact he can hardly miss of proof to whatever part of the prophetic intimations concerning " the last day " he may choose to turn.

the book of Revelations. There is, however, another and much longer prophetic period to be noticed, the latter part of which synchronizes with the 1260 years, and of course the commencement may afford some light in our researches. The intimation is to be found in a passage of Daniel not yet submitted, the eighth chapter from the beginning. The prophecy is dated in the reign of Nabonadius or Belshazzar, as he is called in scripture ; and of course but a very few years at most before the capture of Babylon and dissolution of that empire. Hence it comes to pass that this empire is not introduced into the vision. The relation is as follows : "In the third year of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first. And I saw in a vision, (and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan the palace, which is in the province of Elam ;) and I was by the river of Ulai." The Ulai is the modern Charon, anciently the Choaspea, upon which stood the city of Susa, or Shushan, as it is here called, the ancient capital of Persia. Here then is the scene of the vision. For we are not to understand that Daniel was actually in that quarter. By the river Ulai "I lifted up mine eyes," he says, "and saw and behold there stood before the river, a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were high ; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. I saw the ram pushing"—*butting*, it is the manner in which those animals are known to fight—"I saw the ram butting westward, and northward, and southward ; so that *no beasts* might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand ; but he did according to his will and became great. And as I was considering, behold an he goat came from the west, on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground ; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram and brake his two horns ; and he cast him down to the ground and stamped upon him ; and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he-goat waxed very great ; and when he was strong the great horn was broken ; and for it came up four notable ones, toward the four winds of heaven."* In the 20th verse the ram is interpreted to be the "kings of Media and Persia" i.e. the Medo-Persian empire. "And the rough goat" it is added "is the king of Grecia ; and the great

* Dan. viii. 1, 2.

horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation but not in his power." It is plain that the Macedonian Empire under Alexander is intended by the one horn, for with *that* the he-goat came from the west and destroyed the Persian monarchy. The four horns that succeeded intimate the same thing with the four heads of the leopard in a former vision, i.e. the division of Alexander's empire under ~~the~~ of his generals. Our business, however, is with the *length* of the vision, rather than with the vision itself. This is given us in the fourteenth verse: "Then I heard the ~~angel~~ speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint ~~which~~ 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? And he said unto me, unto two thousand and three hundred days" — *years*, of course, according to the scheme of interpretation common to the prophecies. This treading under foot the sanctuary is said to be by Antiochus Epiphanes the notorious persecuter of the church of God.* Antiochus however was but a type of the Roman horn to which a similar treading down for twelve hundred and sixty years is ascribed in the book of Revelations, chap. xi. This therefore is but another representation of Papal desolations. And from the time at which this vision opens to to the end of these desolations there shall be, says Daniel two thousand three hundred years. So long then must it be to the end of Papal despotism: two thousand three hundred years from the opening of Daniel's vision; and twelve hundred and sixty years from the rise of the already too often named corrupt and persecuting power. A further period however must intervene before the commencement of the Millennium, the object of which we are in search. It is to this period the angel, whose are the words of the text, so solemnly referred; and by recurring to the last chapter of the prophecies of Daniel we find its duration to be seventy-five years. For after adverting in the seventh verse to the well known time, times and an half, or twelve hundred and sixty years assigned for the settled dominion of the Roman pontiffs, it is said in verse eleventh, that "from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination of desolation set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days," *years*. And there is added a note of blessing to him "that waiteth and cometh to the one thousand three hundred and five and

* He is the ~~first~~ horn said to rise out of one of the four which succeeded the first denoting Alexander. See verses 9—12.

thirty days"—and that blessing evidently refers to the establishment of the church in her millennial glory.

Here then we have four distinct and successive periods marked out. The first consists of one thousand and forty years from the opening of Daniel's vision to the rise of Papal usurpations. The second is the residue of the two thousand three hundred years, i. e. twelve hundred and sixty, all of which are allotted to the continuance of that power in something like a confirmed state. The succeeding thirty are to be marked by the rapid declension of the long established dominion and the infliction of the punishment threatened against those kingdoms which had so long given "their power and strength to the beast." To this period must therefore be referred what the book of revelation calls reaping the harvest of the earth; for the desolation of the kingdoms commences of course at the end of the twelve hundred and sixty years. The conclusion of the thirty years is to produce a new æra, and during the succeeding forty-five we are to look for all those other numerous events already named, by which the millennium will be ushered in.

Fix then the commencement of the 1040 years allotted to the Persian Macedonian and Roman empires, before the rise of the religious or rather anti-religious domination; or fix upon the æra at which the 1260 years of its duration commenced, and you have of course every other date at your command. But it must be at the same time remembered that no admissible date can be assigned for the commencement of any one of these periods, that will not furnish correspondent events to mark the rise of the others. For as 2300 is the whole time assigned for these oppressions, and of that time 1260 years are allotted to the last oppressor, 1040 must of course be the exact period assignable to the first of those divisions.

These things being so obvious it might at first thought appear that there could be no difficulty in calculating the commencement of the several periods to a day. The fact however is otherwise. For though the prophetic scriptures mention epochs and periods with so much precision, yet it was never thereby intended perfectly to instruct the churches or the world with regard to future things. All that is designed is a general and tolerably definite intimation, such as will be sufficient to excite watchfulness and insure preparation: while the accomplishment of the prophecy can alone enable us to discern the minute accuracy with which events are pointed out. So that though we may form a tolerably correct estimation before hand, it is only the accomplishment that fully elucidates as well as verifies prediction. And the reason is that God

in his providence so blends events that it is difficult to ascertain the exact point whence to begin the calculation. Thus, in the case before us, it is plain that the computation of the 2300 years must commence at some point during the existence of the Medo-Persian empire ; for the vision opens with a view of that empire. We can even confine ourselves within a narrower range ; we must calculate from some period during the existence of that empire in which it was engaged in successful warfare, northward, southward and westward from the river Ulai & city of Susa : for thus pushed the ram, and no other beast—*no other kingdom* could stand before it. At a time then during which this empire was in its glory, we look for the commencement of the vision. Now as we know the date of its rise, the periods of its success, and the time of its fall before the Macedonian king (the he-goat from the West,) we have of course a general guide that will keep us from roving very far astray relative to the *conclusion* of the 2,300 years.—The same remark may be made relative to the latter portion of that period. We can assign a time in the history of the Roman empire, during which the Papal authority did not domineer over the nations. We can also assign a time when it was manifestly fully established. And between these extremes we are of course to look for the æra of its commencement, i. e. for the beginning of the 1260 years. Here then we are likewise hedged up from straying very far in our calculations about the conclusion of that period. The difficulty is to assign the exact point of time—to ascertain among a number of events similar in their nature, what was the precise one intended in the prophecy—to seize, in one word, on that particular event which actually gave the tone to all that followed after. And in relation to such event the opinions of men may be expected to vary considerably, especially when several successive transactions similar in their bearings may be urged with equal probability. Accordingly different calculations actually have been adopted by different persons ; and in hazarding the one which we mean this afternoon to offer, we are to be understood as offering one among *the many* ; one that has been adopted by several before us ; and one to which you are to attach just so much credit as the evidence on which it rests many seem to warrant.

We repeat it then that the vision of Daniel commences with an instance of successful warfare waged by the Medo-Persian monarchy ; and therefore, it may be inferred, with some war subsequent to the union of those kingdoms under Cyrus. Upon looking over the history of those times it will be found that such wars were carried on to the extent and in the direction here intimated, during the reign of Darius Hystaspes ;

and so far as we can learn, at no subsequent period. That the calculation cannot commence earlier than this, is plain from the fact that the 2,300 years would have terminated long ago, while there can be nothing, pointed out indicative of their fulfillment. Add to this that subsequent to the union of the Median and Persian empires, no wars waged by Cyrus or his immediate successors quadrate with the description given in the prophecy. To Darius Hystaspes then, or to some future conqueror, we are bound to look. If none of his successors did push westward, northward and southward, driving the nations of the earth before them, we are restricted to that man. In our little circle of reading (and that it is but little we allow) no such person has been met with. To the reign of Darius therefore you are necessarily restricted, unless some searcher into the records of antiquity shall prove more fortunate in his discoveries. The question then is at what period did Darius the son of Hystaspes, the adder (it is said) of seven provinces to the empire, commence his ravages. This is a question involved in some perplexity. It is well known that the chronology of most ancient nations, except the Greeks, is not a little difficult to settle with exactness. The olympic games furnished Greece with a security for the accuracy of her dates superior to any thing known among other nations. Accordingly there actually is a difference of several years in the chronology adopted by different writers, with respect to eastern affairs. Some date the commencement of Darius' conquests in the year 517 before Christ; others somewhat later. A writer to whom we profess ourselves indebted for some of the most important hints in this essay, fixes it to the year 508. And it is worthy of remark that the well known and justly celebrated Faber admits the correctness of this assumption, though he is decidedly hostile to the calculations formed on it. Backed by a judge evidently so disinterested, and every way qualified to determine, as far as such questions can be determined, we may safely assume the year before Christ 508, as the true date of Darius' first conquests in the quarter here referred to. As only a part of that year is to be taken into the account, the 1040 assigned for the duration of the first great period will bring us into the year after Christ 533. Here then we would look for events that gave the tone to Papal superstition; and adding the 1260 years during which the foundations of this latter power must stand firm, we arrive at the year 1793. From this therefore we should date the expected overturnings, and look for the MORNING STAR. Such are the calculations: now for the *facts*.

It is remarkable that in the year of our Lord 533, just 1040 years after the assumed commencement of the *pushing* of Darius, we meet with two events which certainly have considerable claims to be regarded as

the commencement of Papal domination. In that year the title of Head of the Church was conferred by the Emperor Justinian on the Bishop of Rome; and it was the actual assumption of the power acknowledged rather than conferred by that act of the Roman Empire, which has proved the fruitful source of all the usurpation and tyranny of the Popes.*

* It is said that the year 606 furnished the first instance of such assumption and acknowledgment of power; and that the parties then concerned were the Emperor Phocas and Boniface the Third, the successor of Gregory the first, to the celebrity of whose character the distinction is to be attributed. It is however a fact that Phocas did nothing more than confirm to the Bishop of Rome the title formerly bestowed, and that he did it in opposition to the aspiring claims of the Bishop of Constantinople. The reader will find much interesting information relative to the origin and nature of these several claims in Professor Campbell's lectures on Ecclesiastical history. It is sufficient for our present purpose to remark from another source that the title of Oecumenical Bishop was conferred by Justinian on the Bishop of Constantinople at the same time that the Roman title was conferred on Boniface. The principal interference of Phocas seems to have consisted in putting down the constantinopolitan title, as offensive to the Bishop of Rome. In proof of the fact that Phocas was not the originator of the Roman title, we submit the following evidence extracted from a writer in the Christian Observer. "1. The introductory sentence of the Popes answer to the Emperor's epistle.

Inter claras sapientię ac mansuetudinis vestrę laudes, Christianissime principum, puriore luce tanquam aliquod sydus irradiat, quod amore fidei, quod charitatis studeo edocti ecclesiasticis disciplinis, Romanę sedis reverentiam conservatis et ei cuncta subjicitis, et ad ejus deducitis unitatem, ad cujus auctorem, hoc est, apostolorum primum, domino loquente, pręceptum est, *Pace oves meas*: quam esse omnium vere ecclesiarum caput, et patrum regulę et principum statuta declarant, et pietatis vestrę reverendissimi testantur affatus."

Without attempting to translate this not very classical effusion of the bishop's pen, it may be of importance to remark to a majority of our readers that the Pope here celebrates the Emperor's piety and wisdom and affability, in manifesting due reverence for the Roman chair and subjecting all things to it. The concluding paragraph states that both the constitutions of the fathers (i. e. in general council) and the decrees of princes had declared Rome to be *the head of all churches*. My author remarks that the letter from which the above is taken, was published by Justinian in the volume of the civil law. No doubt then can be entertained of its giving a fair representation of his previous decree.

2. In the ninth of the Emperor's novellę constitutiones it is declared that the Roman See is the seat (country) of law and the fountain of the priesthood. The words are, "Unde et nos necessarium duximus PATRIAM LEGUM, FONTEM SACERDOTII, speciali nostri numinis lege illustrare." And in the 131st of his Novellę Constitutiones, it is said that "the most holy Pope of the elder Rome is the first of all

In the same year the Emperor decreed it as an article of faith, to be received by all his subjects, and armed the decree with severe penalties, that the Virgin Mary is, and of right ought to be acknowledged as *the mother of God*. To this dogma he obtained the sanction of the newly erected Pope.* Here then is the germ of that idolatrous worship which deluged for ages the churches of the West. And when we reflect that the legal establishment of the names of blasphemy (for the application of the Savior's titles and imputation of his prerogatives to the Bishop of Rome amount to nothing less) went hand in hand with the authoritative promulgation of opinions which led to direct idolatry and proved the source of saint and demon worship, it can hardly be doubted that such transactions gave the tone to the subsequent state of things, and furnish therefore the proper æra for the commencement of the 1260 prophetic years in question. Here then we have transactions of the requisite description, exactly 1040 years asunder, the period allotted in the prophetic scriptures; nor can we find any period subsequent to the conquests of the Persian king that will furnish scenes such as are described at the opening of the vision. Calculating then 2300 years from the year before Christ 508, or 1260 years from the edict of Justinian in 533 after Christ, you arrive at the year 1793 as the one in which the æra of deliverance should commence. Not that the Papal power must then be utterly overturned, or

bishops." Rome is called the elder in contradistinction from Constantinople, which was often called New Rome.

As a further confirmation that Justinian and not Phocas, was the originator of the Pope's supremacy, it is worthy of remark that "Gothofredus in his edition of *Corpus Juris*, has the following note upon a passage in an epistle of Justinian to the Patriarch of Constantinople: "Hence learn that they are mistaken who insist that of the Roman Emperors Phocas in the first instance decided for Gregory as chief pontiff against John, the patriarch of Constantinople; see: it is manifest from these words that in the times of Justinian the primacy was conferred upon the supreme Pontiff," i. e. upon the Bishop of Rome, whom Gothofredus and all the world acknowledged to be such. Such then is the light in which Justinian and the Romans viewed the decree of 533.

* The decree runs thus: "since we have found some persons carried away by the disease and madness of the impious Nestorius and Eutiches, who are enemies of the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, in as much as they refuse to acknowledge the glorious Mary (always a virgin) to be properly and according to truth the mother of God; we have hastened to teach these persons what is the right faith of christians." The penalty is thus announced: "We order that all such persons shall, as confessed heretics, be subdued by fit punishments"—i. e. by imprisonment, confiscation, banishment, &c. &c. as the history of the times attests.

the church of God be actually released from her distresses ; but that a new state of things should commence, and a new tone be imparted to the feelings and affairs of men. Such atone as must concur in the production of the great events foretold, as about to be wrought in judgment and in mercy, during the seventy five years. Those seventy five years, it has already been remarked are divided into two distinct periods. The first of which, comprehending an interval of thirty years, seems to be assigned by Daniel as the time allotted for the gradual and complete overturning of the whole of those kingdoms that in scriptural language had "given their power to the beast;" and probably for the total unhinging of every thing by which that enormous power was supported. This we gather from the fact that 1260 years are uniformly assigned as the time of its triumph ; whereas the further period of thirty years noted in the twelfth of Daniel seems to mark the extent of its duration. The other forty five years are manifestly allotted to the recall of the Jews, the conversion of the whole Gentile world, and the overthrow of every obstruction, civil or religious, by which the great work might be otherwise impeded. To this last period likewise, in all probability, belongs the total overthrow, the burning and sinking of the City of Rome ; as also the complete developement of that Anti-Christain power which is to appear as the last and most terrific enemy of the Church of Christ, and to the destruction of which shall immediately succeed the reign of universal righteousness and peace.* The result

* The idea that the last enemy of the Church shall be of an Atheistic rather than idolatrous cast seems now to be universally admitted. As also that he is to rise out of the ruins of the Roman sway. The procedure of providence upon this subject is evidently conceived on a very large scale. God appears to have exhibited to the universe a course of experiments in relation to the tendency of sin, of which the one before us is the last. The first experiment reached from the days of our first father to the flood. We have no intimation that during that period the knowledge of the true God was lost ; nor is it conceivable that it should have been, or that any foot hold to idolatry could be afforded, while less than the period of two lives filled up the whole measure of antediluvian ages ; and correct tradition must have been therefore universally preserved. But God gave them up to ways of their own choosing ; & the result of the experiment was that the earth was filled with violence, & God whom they knew was universally disregarded. From the flood, to the birth of Christ was the reign of idolatry. The shortening the period of human life and the omission to establish and preserve among men generally, such ordinances as might counteract their propensity to stray, manifestly opened the door to this consequence. And it has served to show where our boasted reason will lead us, when God is pleased to withhold his illuminations. The third period presented the Savior as

of the whole is, that if we are correct in assuming the events recorded of the reign of Darius Hystaspes, as the æra from which to begin our calculations, it will follow that the reign of Justinian witnessed the commencement of the Papal sway, and that the 93d of the last century saw the consummation of its settled state. Of course the thirty years assigned for the visitation of the nations that formed the pillars of the hierarchy are already far advanced, and the year 1823 will present events of

“a light to the Gentiles and for Salvation to the ends of the earth.” But the settling down of Mahomedan and Papal superstitions upon the whole of those countries that had once been blessed with “the true light” has served to evince that even the enjoyment of the means of grace will not of itself counteract the native tendencies of wickedness. Even from the light men will run away, and pursue a new course of rebellion, answerable to their new circumstances. The fearful dissoluteness of the old world and the stupid idolatry of unenlightened nations will not indeed be acted over with so high an hand, but their hearts will still wander in appropriate ways. The prophet of Mecca or the Bishop of Rome may usurp the place of God the Saviour, & strike out new avenues for departure from God. The last experiment is now in a course of exhibition. The lights of philosophy are opposed to the light of Heaven, and they are fast plunging men into Atheism. In Europe it is well known that the effects of a very few years furnished the nations with philosophising Atheists in every little hamlet and from among every class of men. And in our own country we meet with myriads just as ignorant of the first principles of philosophy as they are of the first principles of the oracles of God, but who nevertheless at grammar schools, and behind the counter, and in Mechanic’s shops and between the handles of the plow, can vent their impieties with as much confidence as if they had really examined matters to the bottom. The effects of this spirit are already evident in the walks of public and of private life. The laws of nations stand completely nullified; social feeling is almost universally destroyed; even the most commonly received laws of morality are trampled underfoot. And virtue has every where lost its currency in estimating public or private character. Such the first fruits of that benevolent system by which all men are to be loosed from the trammels of superstition; or dropping the cant phrases of infidelity, by which conscience is to be unshackled from all those restraints that spring out of its allegiance to Almighty God. It would appear from the prophecies, that in his usual manner God intends to make men’s wickedness correct them. He will permit the spirit of Atheism to increase; he will rear upon the ruins of the Romish hierarchy a huge Atheistic power to scourge and crush the world. But in mercy to the nations he will shorten its existence. Forty-five years at furthest from its complete organization shall conduct it to its end. Nor indeed can we see how society could be held together for any great length of time, were a very general predominance allowed to Atheism. That perfect destitution of every moral principle which it necessarily secures, must speedily issue in the disruption of every precious tie by which man is bound to man. The experiment however must be tried. The world, so prone to trust its own wisdom, must be taught by experiments of every kind that its wisdom is but folly; and when the last experiment is tried, it will be ripe for the blessings of Messiah’s reign.

such a nature as shall entitle it to be looked upon as the commencement of another æra—the beginning of a period that shall finish “the mystery of God.”

We are aware that objections may be made with considerable shew of reason to the assumption of either or of all the epochs that have been submitted. But we are not without a persuasion that a careful examination would shew them to be at least inconclusive, if not altogether nugatory. For such an examination however the present occasion affords no opportunity. The intention of this exercise is simply to furnish you with a general view of the prophetic scheme, to shew you that the principles of interpretation are not arbitrary; the particular subject has been selected in the expectation that it would more readily excite interest and attention: and we meddle not with difficulties that have never fallen in the way of the persons we address, and the discussion of which would be a work of hours. It is of much more importance to occupy the few remaining moments in contemplating the aspect of the present times, and inquiring whether the year to which we have been led to look for the concluding moments of the great prophetic period, has actually furnished events of a suitable description.* Looking to day upon the turmoil of the nations, we may certainly discern a multitude of things that answer the expectations we have been taught to form.

In the beginning of 1793 the throne of the Bourbons fell. The execution of the king of France and dissolution of the monarchy over which he had presided, were undoubtedly the events that fixed the character of the present times. It was the signal given to the demons of destruction to begin their wide spreading havoc. Potentate after Potentate have been tumbled from their thrones; revolution after revolution has filled

* As this discourse may however fall into the hands of persons very differently circumstanced from those with a view to whom it was prepared, it may be proper to notice the principal objection that can be brought against the assumption of the æras in question. It may be said that if 1793 was the last of the 1260 years, the witnesses who prophesied in sackcloth ought then to have been slain. It may however be suggested as a question worth consideration, whether the slaying must necessarily take place at the conclusion of their work, any more than that the sceptre must have departed from Israel the moment that Shiloh came. The fact is the witnesses have laid aside their sackcloth. The voice of thanksgiving, the songs of salvation, the joyful annunciations of the latter day are every where to be heard. They remain still, to be sure, in difficult and hazardous circumstances. But so were they during the scenes of Pagan persecution, before they began to prophecy in sackcloth. And these circumstances of difficulty and hazard may continue notwithstanding their altered tone, till the day of their last calamity, which the atheistic spirit of the times is evidently hastening.

central Europe with desolation and blood ; and wherever there were kingdoms that through the ages of darkness gave their power to the beast, thither the curse has gone. Backward and forward, from the south to the north, the cup of trembling has repeatedly gone round. Who, when beholding the desolations of those nations, the blood of Spaniards and of Frenchmen, of Britons and of Germans, of Portuguese and Danes spouting in such torrents—who does not seem to hear that voice of the destroying angel “Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus : for they have shed the blood of the saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink.” For twenty years these desolations have been going on : the ancient Papal kingdoms are generally unhinged : and the thunders of the Vatican are neither heard nor dreaded. And who can tell, who can imagine what in ten years more the tremendous destroyer of the peace of nations may be able to effect ? Or should he be cut off, it is no wild supposition to assert that the anarchy which will follow, may produce blood in greater torrents than has yet been drawn from the weakened and affrighted nations. Meanwhile in the East we see every thing working for the desolation of the Turk. Arabia has withdrawn her allegiance from the Porte, and the tomb of her Prophet is no more. Ten years ago the temple in which she gloried was rifled and defaced, and those objects which commanded the reverence of the Moslems and formed the bond of union throughout many a land, were blotted out from under heaven. In the church also we see movements directly calculated to bring about the great event. The scriptures translating and diffused in myriads among every nation and in every language of the earth : missionaries planting in the midst of the wilderness to turn the Heathen to the obedience of faith ; the churches of Europe stretching forth the helping hand to the scattered remnant of Asiatic christians, the knowledge of whom had been lost to the world for 1300 years : the ascertained discovery of the ten tribes of Israel carried captive by the Assyrians 700 years before the christian æra, with so much of the Old Testament still in their possession as had been written at the period of their captivity. We see those sons of Israel still a separate people, though contaminated with much of the wickedness and idolatry of the nations among whom they dwell, as had been foretold by Moses the man of God. We see those sons of Abraham now laboring under the curse for 2,500 years ; without the knowledge of the prophetic scriptures written after their removal ; without the knowledge of the second temple ; without having heard of the coming of Messiah, or of his rejection and crucifixion by their Jewish brethren. And we at this

day see the most extensive and energetic measures planned and put in a train of execution to make known to them, to their brethren of Judea, to all the sons of Abraham with all the nations of the Gentiles and all the islands of the sea, that Israel may be visited, Israel may be restored, all Israel may be saved, at the time when the fullness of the Gentiles shall be brought in.

These things, my brethren, the last twenty years have unfolded to the astonished world ; and how far they answer the description of the prophecy, how much they resemble the founding the dominion of the king of glory amid the overturnings of the kingdoms of the nations, ye yourselves must judge.*

Should the suggestions that have been dropped relative to the consummation of "the mystery of God," be looked upon as well supported by the facts exhibited in successive ages, the over sanguine hearer may be ready to conclude that the days of mourning are already ended ; and that little now remains for Zion but to put on her beautiful garments, or for the friends of Zion but to raise the song of triumph. By such, however, let it never be forgotten that even upon the most favorable hypothesis, ten years more seem to be allotted to the destruction of the nations now engaged in conflict :—ten years that are fraught with a deluge of wrath to be poured almost exclusively upon the several kingdoms which under the influence & management of Rome made havoc of the church of God. Nor are we at all justified in supposing that the tribulations of that period will be followed with peace in Europe, or in the world at large. On the contrary, we are abundantly warranted in saying that it will only produce such alterations in the face of things as will entitle the succeeding revolutions to be dated from another & perhaps more important era. When this harvest is completed, the vine must still be reaped ;† and before great Rome shall be ranked with Sodom and with Babylon, the prodigious efforts of her friends must be crowned with what the scriptures call the death of the witnesses, or the almost total suppression of evangelical

* The facts adverted to relative to the fortunes of Arabia and its renowned religion, have appeared in several late publications. A satisfactory exhibition of them will be found in the account of the travels of Dr. Clarke, in Egypt, Palestine, &c. &c. lately printed in London, and in June or July last reprinted in New-York. The researches of Dr. Buchanan, a work lately reprinted in Lexington, will furnish the reader with very satisfactory documents upon many other points of great interest, adverted to in the above sketch.

† Revelations, xiv. 14—20.

truth. Any one who regards the present state of the religious world with an intelligent eye, cannot but be persuaded that such a suppression will never be effected without horrible conflicts accompanied with oceans of blood. The prospect of such conflicts for fifty and five years more, is enough to damp the ardor of the most determined spirit : the prolongation of the trial to a period so remote is enough to rouse the anxieties of every man who knows that he has children to leave amid the coming desolations—children who must be armed to withstand the shock of unparalleled persecutions, or who must finally perish in a criminal adherence to the enemies of God. The approaching order of things will undoubtedly reduce men to the absolute necessity of choosing whom they will serve : not *peace* but *the sword* will precede Messiah's coming ; and a neutral position shall be no longer known on earth. The importance therefore of Christian men arming themselves, and especially training their children for the approaching season may be seen by all. If men will be Christians ; if they would have their descendants retain like precious faith, it is high time that they should cultivate the spirit of the fathers who counted not their lives dear unto them, provided they might finish their course with joy : high time that they should cultivate the habits of the faithful, who were accustomed to feel themselves but strangers and pilgrims on the earth, as all their fathers were : high time that they should cease to occupy their hearts with an overgrown attachment to a multitude of things that will ere long reduce their children to the necessity of denying that Lord God who bought them, or of parting at once with their lives and with an inheritance too often accumulated by criminally neglecting the kingdom of God. Nor do these remarks lose much of their force by admitting the supposition that we have given too early a date to the prophetic period. You must unquestionably begin it at some period during the successful conflicts of the Medo-Persian Empire ; and assuming, if you will, the very last of these, still it must follow that “the time is at hand.” If not upon yourselves, yet upon your children shall come these latter days : if not your own eyes, yet the eyes of your children shall see the vanity inscribed on every portion except that to which we are called through the faith of the son of God : if not upon yourselves therefore, yet certainly upon your children it should be inculcated by every mean, that “they that weep should be as though they wept not ; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not ; and they that buy as though they possessed not ; and they that use this world as not abusing it.” For the day is at hand in which a selection *must* be made ; as the friendship of this world will be clearly incompatible with the friendship of Almighty God, and the alternative be forced upon the

choice of every man, *peace* in alliance with the last destroyer, or the "*peace of God* that passeth understanding." Let the churches then consider what should be their preparatives to sustain the approaching trial; and let christian parents ask themselves on which side they would have their little ones appear. If the daughters of Zion now slumber at their post; if there be no adequate efforts to secure both an abundant and an enlightened ministry, to maintain a vigorous and diffusive discipline, to put *the children of the church* in a proper course of training—who will express surprise if, when the master cometh, the improvident virgins should be found without their oil! While the judgments of God are abroad upon the earth, may his saints learn righteousness!—AMEN.



ERRATA.

Page 4th—line 3. For the period under the asterisk insert a comma.

Page 14—line 1. For Capitol read Capital.

Id.—line 7. For *preceeding* read *preceding*.

Id.—in the note, line 3 after *called* insert *Patmos*."

Id.—line 4 from the bottom, for *futuo* read *futuro*.

Page 15—In the note on Rev. xviii. instead of 8, 9, 2, 3. read 8, 9, 22.

Page 16—line 9 of the note on Rev xvi. 12, after *intermediate* for *air* read *one*.

Id.—line 4 from the bottom for *readers*, read *reader*.