

# The Prophecy of Matthew 24

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## Our Saviour's Prophecies Relating to the Destruction of Jerusalem Which Have Remarkably Been Fulfilled

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### Dissertation XVIII

#### Part One

THE Jewish church consisting only of a single nation, and living under a theocracy or the immediate government of God, experienced continual interpositions of a particular extraordinary providence in its favour and protection, and was from time to time instructed by prophets raised up and sent one after another as occasions required. But the Christian church being designed to comprehend the whole world, was like the world at first erected by miracle, but like the world too is since governed by a general ordinary providence, by established laws, and the mediation of second causes. This difference in the nature and constitution of the two churches, is the reason why prophecies, and miracles, and other supernatural powers, which were continued so long and repeated so frequently in the Jewish church, were in the Christian church confined to the first ages, and limited chiefly to the persons of our blessed Saviour, and his disciples, and their companions. There were "prophets," Acts 11:27, who "came from Jerusalem unto Antioch. One of them, named Agabus," ver. 28, foretold the 'great dearth, which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.' The same prophet foretold likewise, Acts 21:10, 11, the bonds and imprisonment of St. Paul. Philip the evangelist had also, ver. 9, 'four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.' Prophetic as well as other spiritual gifts abounded in the primitive church; their sons and their daughters did prophesy, Acts 2:17, 'their young men saw visions, and their old men dreamed dreams.' But the only prophecies, which the Spirit of God hath thought fit to record and preserve, are some delivered by our blessed Saviour himself, and by his apostles, particularly St. Paul and St. John.

Our blessed Saviour, as he was the great subject of prophecy, so was an illustrious prophet himself; as he excelled in all other spiritual gifts and graces, so was eminent in this also, and gave ample proofs of his divine commission by his prophecies as well as by his miracles. What he said upon one occasion, is equally applicable to all his predictions, that their accomplishment is a sufficient attestation of his being the Messiah; John 13:19,— ' Now I tell you before it come, that

when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.' He foretold not only his own passion, death, and resurrection, but also the manner and circumstances of them, that he should be betrayed by one of the twelve, even by Judas Iscariot the son of Simon; that all the rest should be offended because of him that very night, and, notwithstanding their protestations to the contrary, should forsake him and fly: that Peter particularly, who was more zealous and eager than the rest, before the cock crew twice, should deny him thrice; that he should be betrayed to the chief priests, and be delivered to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, to spit upon, and to kill him; that he should be crucified, and the third day should rise again, and appear to his disciples in Galilee. He foretold that his apostles should be enabled of plain fishers to become fishers of men; that they should be endued with power from on high to speak with new tongues and to work miracles ; that they should go forth into all nations, and publish the glad tidings of the gospel unto the uttermost parts of the earth. He foretold the persecutions and sufferings which his disciples should undergo and particularly by what manner of death Peter in his old age should glorify God, and that John should survive till after the destruction of Jerusalem. He foretold the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles; that the kingdom of heaven should be taken away from the former, and be given to the latter, who should bring forth the fruits thereof; that the number of his disciples from small beginnings should increase wonderfully, as a little seed groweth into a tree, and a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump; that his church should be so founded upon a rock, that it should stand for ever, and all the powers of hell should not prevail against it. These things were most of them contrary to all human appearances and impossible to be foreseen by human prudence, or effected by human power; and he must be thoroughly acquainted with the hearts of men, and with the direction and disposition of future events, who could foretel them with such certainty and exactness and some of them are actually accomplishing in the world at this present time.

But none of our Saviour's prophecies are more remarkable than those relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, as none are more proper and pertinent to the design of these discourses: and we will consider them as they lie in the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew, taking in also what is superadded by the other evangelists upon parallel occasions. These prophecies were delivered by our Saviour about forty years, and were committed to writing by St Matthew about thirty years, before they were to take effect. St Matthew's is universally allowed to be the first of the four Gospels; <sup>1</sup> the first in time, as it is always was the first in order was written, as most writers affirm, in the eighth year after the ascension of our Saviour. <sup>2</sup> It must have been written before the dispersion of the apostles, because St. Bartholemew <sup>3</sup> is said to have taken it along with him into India, and to have left it there, where it was found several years afterwards by Pantaenus. If the general tradition of antiquity be true, that it was written originally in Hebrew, it certainly was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, for there was no occasion for writing in that language after the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews into all nations. It is asserted upon good authority, <sup>4</sup> that the Gospels of Mark and Luke were approved and confirmed, the one by St.

Peter the other by St. Paul. So Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, and Clemens Alexandrinus say expressly that the Gospel of St. Mark was written at the desire of the new converts, and ratified by St. Peter. So the learned Origen affirms, that the second Gospel is that of Mark, who wrote as Peter dictated to him; and the third Gospel is that of Luke, which is commended by Paul. So Tertullian saith, that Mark's Gospel is affirmed to be Peter's whose interpreter Mark was; and Luke's Gospel they are wont to ascribe to Paul. So Jerome saith, that the Gospel according to Mark, who was the disciple and the interpreter of Peter, is said to be Peter's. These authorities are more than sufficient to weigh down the single testimony of Irenaeus to the contrary; but besides these, Gregory Nazienzen, Athanasius, and other fathers might be alleged to prove, that the Gospels of Mark and Luke received the approbation, the one of St. Peter, the other of St. Paul: and it is very well known, that both these apostles suffered martyrdom under Nero. The Gospel of St. Mark must have been written at latest in the reign of Nero, for he died in that reign, "in the eighth year of Nero,"<sup>5</sup> according to Jerome. The Gospel of St. Luke was written before the Acts of the Apostles, as appears from the preface to the latter; and the Acts of the Apostles concluding with St. Paul's dwelling at Rome two years, it is probable that this book was written soon after that time, and before the death of St. Paul. It may be concluded then as certain, that three of the four Gospels were written and published before the destruction of Jerusalem; Dr. Lardner himself, who fixed the time of writing the three first Gospels later than most other authors, yet maintains that they were all published some years before the destruction of Jerusalem;<sup>6</sup> and in all probability the writers themselves were dead before that period; St. Matthew and St. Mark were certainly so: and consequently it cannot with any colour of reason be pretended that the predictions were written after the events. St. John is the only evangelist, who lived and wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem; and he purposely omits these prophecies, to prevent this very cavil, as we may suppose with reason. Neither can it be pretended, that these predictions were interpolations made afterwards,<sup>7</sup> because they are inserted in several places, and woven into the very substance of the Gospels; and because they are cited and alluded to by ancient writers as well as other parts; and because they were not to be accomplished all at once, but required several ages to their perfect completion and we see them, in some instances fulfilling to this very day.

In the conclusion of the twenty-third chapter of St. Matthew, our Saviour had, with the most merciful severity, with the most compassionate justice, pronounced the sentence of desolation upon Jerusalem; ver. 37, 38, — 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.' In like manner, upon another occasion, when he was approaching to Jerusalem, Luke 19:41, 42,— 'he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.' So deeply was our Saviour affected, and so tenderly did he lament over the calamities, which were

coming upon his nation ! Such a generous and amiable pattern of a patriot spirit hath he left to his disciples: and so contrary to truth is the insinuation of a noble writer, <sup>8</sup> that there is nothing in the Gospels to recommend and encourage the love of one's country.

When our Saviour uttered that pathetic lamentation, recorded in the twenty-third chapter of St. Matthew, he was in the temple, speaking to a mixed audience of his disciples and 'the multitude:' and as he was departing out of the temple, ver. 1st, of the twenty-fourth chapter,— his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple,' intimating, what a pitiable calamity they thought it, that so magnificent a structure should be destroyed. In the other gospels they are represented as saying, Mark 13:'Master, see what manner of stones, and what buildings are here;' and as speaking of the temple, Luke 21:5, - ' how it was adorned with goodly stones, and gifts.' The gifts of ages were repositied there, the presents of kings and emperors, as well as the offerings of the Jews : <sup>9</sup> and as the whole temple was built with the greatest cost and magnificence, so nothing was more stupendous than the uncommon measure of the stones. The disciples appear to have admired them particularly, and to have thought them very extraordinary; and indeed they were of a size almost incredible. "Those employed in the foundations, where, in magnitude, forty cubits," that is, above sixty feet, a cubit being somewhat more than a foot and a half: "and the superstructure was worthy of such foundations." <sup>10</sup> There were some stones of the whitest marble, forty-five cubits broad, five cubits high, and six cubits broad, as a priest of the temple hath described them.

Such a structure as this is, one would have expected, might have endured for many generations, and was indeed worthy of the highest admiration: but, notwithstanding, our Saviour assures his disciples, ver. 2,— ' There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.' Our Saviour in his prophecies frequently alludes to phrases and expressions used by the ancient prophets; and as the prophet Haggai, 2:1.5, expresseth the building of the temple by 'a stone being laid upon a stone,' so Christ expresseth the destruction of it by 'one stone not being left upon another.' In the same manner he speaketh of, and to, the city, Luke 19:44.— 'They shall lay thee even with the ground, and shall not leave in thee one stone upon another.' It is a proverbial and figurative manner of expression, to denote an utter destruction : and the prophecy would have been amply fulfilled, if the city and temple had been utterly ruined, though every single stone had not been overturned. But it happened in this case, that the words were almost literally fulfilled, and scarce 'one stone was left upon another.' For when the Romans had taken Jerusalem, "Titus ordered the soldiers to dig up the foundation, both of all the city and the temple." <sup>11</sup> The temple was a building of such strength and grandeur, of such splendour and beauty, that it was likely to be preserved, as it was worthy to be preserved, for a monument of the victory and glory of the Roman empire. Titus was accordingly very desirous of preserving it, and protested to the Jews who had fortified themselves within it, "that he would perserve it, even against their will." <sup>12</sup> He had

expressed the like desire of preserving the city too, and sent Josephus and other Jews again and again to their countrymen, to persuade them to a surrender.<sup>13</sup> But an over-ruling Providence directed things otherwise. The Jews themselves first set fire to the porticos of the temple, and then the Romans.<sup>14</sup> "One of the soldiers, neither waiting for any command, nor trembling for such an attempt, but urged by a certain divine impulse,<sup>15</sup> threw a burning brand in at the golden window, and thereby set fire to the buildings of the temple itself." Titus ran immediately to the temple, and commanded his soldiers to extinguish the flame.<sup>16</sup> But neither exhortations nor threatenings could restrain their violence. They either could not hear, or would not hear; and those behind encouraged those before to set fire to the temple. He was still for preserving the holy place. He commanded his soldiers even to be beaten for disobeying him: but their anger, and their hatred of the Jews, and a certain warlike vehement fury overcame their reverence for their general and their dread of his commands. A soldier in the dark set fire to the doors: and thus, as Josephus says, "the temple was burnt against the will of Caesar."<sup>17</sup> Afterwards as we read in the Jewish Talmud and in Maimonides,<sup>18</sup> Turnus Rufus, or rather "Terentius Rufus, who was left to command the army at Jerusalem,"<sup>19</sup> did with a ploughshare tear up the foundation of the temple; and thereby signally fulfilled those words of Micah, 3:12, 12, — 'Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field.' Eusebius too affirms, "that it was ploughed up by the Romans, and he saw it lying in ruins."<sup>20</sup> The city also shared the same fate, and was burnt and destroyed as well as the temple.<sup>21</sup> "The Romans burnt the extremest parts of the city, and demolished the walls."<sup>22</sup> Three towers only, and some parts of the wall were left standing,<sup>23</sup> for the better encamping of the soldiers, and to show to posterity what a city, and how fortified, the valour of the Romans had taken. And the rest of the city was so demolished and levelled with the ground, that they who came to see it, could not believe that it was ever inhabited. After the city was thus taken and destroyed, great riches were found among the ruins; and the Romans dug it up in search of the treasures, which had been concealed and buried in the earth.<sup>24</sup> So literally were our Saviour's words accomplished in the ruin both of the city and of the temple: and well might Eleazar say, that "God had delivered his most holy city to be burnt, and to be subverted by their enemies:"<sup>25</sup> and "wish that they all had died, before they saw that holy city demolished by the bands of their enemies, and the sacred temple so wickedly dug up from the foundations."<sup>26</sup>

In this plain manner our Saviour, now drawing near to his fatal hour, foretold the absolute ruin and destruction of the city and temple. The disciples were curious to know more of these events, when they should be, and how they should be; but yet thought it not proper to ask him at present, the multitude probably still flocking about him: and therefore they take an opportunity of coming unto him 'privately, as he was sitting upon the mount of Olives,' from whence was a good prospect of the city and temple, and there prefer their request to him, ver. 3, — 'Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?' These are only different expressions, to denote the same period with the destruction of Jerusalem; for when

they conceived would be the destruction of Jerusalem, then they conceived would be the coming of Christ; and when they conceived would be the coming of Christ, then they conceived would be "the end of the world," or rather (as it should be rendered) 'the conclusion of the age.'<sup>27</sup> 'The end of the world,' or 'the conclusion of the age,' is the same period with the destruction of Jerusalem; for there being two ages (as they were called) among the Jews, the one under the law, the other under the Messiah; when the city and temple were destroyed, and the Jewish polity in church and state was dissolved, the former age must of course be concluded, and the age under the Messiah be commenced. It is true, the phrase *ounteleia ts aiwnos* most usually signifies 'the end of the world,' properly so called; as in the parable of the tares, Matt. 13:39, — 'the harvest is *ounteleia tj aiwnoj* the end of the world ; ' ver. 40, — 'As therefore the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire, so shall it be *en th sonteleia tj aiwnoj* in the end of this world.' And again, ver. 49, — 'So shall it be *en th ounteleia aiwnoj* at the end of the world, the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just.' In like manner our Saviour says to his disciples, Matt. 28:20, — 'Lo, I am with you alway, *ewj Tin ounteleiaj aiwnoj* even unto the end of the world.' But here the phrase appears to be used much in the same manner as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, 9:26,— 'But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; in the end of the world,' *epi ounteleia A wn aiwnwn*, in the conclusion of the Jewish age or ages: and these, I think, are all the places where the phrase occurs in scripture. 'The coming of Christ' is also the same period with the destruction of Jerusalem, as may appear from several places in the Gospels-, and particularly from these two passages 'There are some standing here,' saith our blessed Lord, 'who shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom,' —Matt. 16:28, that is, evidently, there are some standing here, who shall live, not till the end of the world, to the coming of Christ to judge mankind, but till the destruction of Jerusalem, to the coming of Christ in judgment upon the Jews. In another place, John 21:22, speaking to Peter concerning John, he saith, 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee ?' what is it to thee, if I will that he live till the destruction of Jerusalem ? as in truth he did, and longer. 'The coming of Christ,' and 'the conclusion of the age,' being, therefore, only different expressions to denote the same period with the destruction of Jerusalem, the purport of the question plainly is, when shall the destruction of Jerusalem be, and what shall be the signs of it?' In the parallel place of St. Mark 13:4, the question is put thus: 'When shall these things be, and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled ?' In the parallel place of St. Luke, 21:7, the question is put thus.: 'When shall these things be, and what sign will. there be when these things shall come to pass ?' So that the disciples ask two things, first, the 'time' of the destruction of Jerusalem, 'when shall these things be;' and secondly, the 'signs' of it, 'and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled,' as it is in St. Mark; 'and what will be the sign when these things shall come to pass,' as it is in St. Luke; 'and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the conclusion of the age,' as it is in St. Matthew. The latter part of the question our Saviour answereth first, and treateth of the 'signs' of his coming and the destruction of Jerusalem, from the 4th to the 31st verse inclusive; and then

passeth on to the other part of the question concerning the 'time' of his coming: and these two heads of our Saviour's answer shall likewise, in the same method and order, be made the subject of this, and some subsequent discourses.

Our blessed Saviour treateth of the signs of his coming and the destruction of Jerusalem from the 4th to the 31st verse inclusive by 'signs' meaning the circumstances and accidents, which should forerun, usher in, and attend this great event : and I am persuaded the whole compass of history cannot furnish us with a prophecy more exactly fulfilled in all points than this hath been.

False Christs our Saviour mentions as the first sign of his coming, ver. 4 and 5,— 'Take heed that no man deceive you, for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.' With this he begins in all the evangelists, and in all useth almost the very same words; only in St. Luke, 21:8, he addeth 'the time draweth near;' and indeed within a little time this part of the prophecy began to be fulfilled. For very soon after our Saviour's decease appeared Simon Magus, Acts 8:9, 10,— 'and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying This man is the great power of God! He boasted himself likewise among the Jews, as the Son of God. <sup>28</sup> Of the same stamp and character was also Dositheus the Samaritan, who pretended that he was the Christ foretold by Moses. <sup>29</sup> In the reign of Claudius, about twelve years after the death of our Saviour, when Cuspius Fadus was procurator of Judea, a certain impostor, named Theudas, persuaded a great multitude with their beat effects to follow him to the river Jordan; for he said that he was a prophet, and promised to divide the river for their passage, and "saying these things he deceived many," <sup>30</sup> saith Josephus. But Fadus sent a troop of horse against them, who falling unexpectedly upon them, killed many, and made many prisoners; and having taken Theudas himself alive, they cut off his head, and brought it to Jerusalem. A few years afterwards, in the reign of Nero, and under the procuratorship of Felix, these impostors arose so frequent, that "many of them were apprehended and killed every day." <sup>31</sup> They seduced great numbers of the people still expecting the Messiah; and well therefore might our Saviour caution his disciples against them.

The next signs be giveth of his coming are several terrible calamities, as, wars and rumours of wars, famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places, ver. 6 and 7,— ' And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.' Accordingly there were wars and rumours of wars,' as appears in the historians of those times, and above all in Josephus. To relate the particulars would indeed be to transcribe great part of his history of the Jewish wars. There were more especially 'rumours of wars,' when Caligula the Roman emperor ordered his statue to be set up in "the temple of Jerusalem, <sup>32</sup> which the Jews refused to suffer, and

persisted in their refusal : and having therefore reason to apprehend a war from the Romans, were in such a consternation that they omitted even the tilling of their lands: but this storm was soon blown over, and their fears were dissipated by the timely death of that emperor.

It is said, moreover, that 'nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom., Here, as Grotius well observes, "Christ declares, that greater disturbances than those which happened under Caligula, should fall out in the latter times of Claudius, and in the reign of Nero. That of 'nation against nation' portended the divinations, insurrections, and mutual slaughter of the Jews and those of other nations, who dwelt in the same cities together; as particularly at Caesarea,"<sup>33</sup> where the Jews and Syrians contended about the right of the city, which contention at length proceeded so far, that above twenty thousand Jews were slain, and the city was cleared of the Jewish inhabitants.<sup>34</sup> At this blow the whole nation of the Jews were exasperated; and dividing themselves into parties, they burnt and plundered the neighbouring cities and villages of the Syrians, and made an immense slaughter of the people.<sup>35</sup> The Syrians in revenge destroyed not a less number of the Jews, It and every city," as Josephus expresseth it, was divided into armies."<sup>36</sup> At Scythopolis the inhabitants compelled the Jews who resided among them to fight against their own countrymen, and after the victory basely setting upon them by night, murdered above thirteen thousand of them, and spoiled their goods.<sup>37</sup> At Ascalon they killed two-thousand and five hundred, at Ptolemais two thousand, and made not a few prisoners.<sup>38</sup> The Tyrians put many to death, and imprisoned more. The people of Gadara did likewise, and all the other cities of Syria, in proportion as they hated or feared the Jews. At Alexandria the old enmity was revived between the Jews and Heathens, and many fell on both sides, but of the Jews to the number of fifty thousand.<sup>39</sup> The people of Damascus too conspired against the Jews of the same city, and assaulting, them unarmed, killed ten thousand of them.<sup>40</sup> That of 'kingdom against kingdom' portended the open wars of different tetrarchies and provinces against one another; as that of the Jews who dwelt in Peraea against the people of Philadelphia concerning their bounds, while Cuspius Fadus was procurator:<sup>41</sup> and that of the Jews and Galilaeans against the Samaritans, for the murder of some Galilaeans going up to the Feast at Jerusalem while Cumanus was procurator:<sup>42</sup> and that of the whole nation of the Jews against the Romans and Agrippa and other allies of the Roman empire,<sup>43</sup> which began while Gessius Mortis was procurator. But as Josephus saith, "there was not only sedition and civil war throughout Judea, but likewise in Italy,"<sup>44</sup> Otho and Vitellius contending for the empire.

It is further added, 'and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places.' There were famines, as particularly that prophesied of by Agabus, and mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, 11:28, and by Suetonius and other profane historians<sup>45</sup> referred to by Eusebius, 'which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar,' and was so severe at Jerusalem, that, as Josephus saith, "many perished for want of victuals."— And 'pestilences,' for these are the



usual attendants upon famines. Scarcity and badness of provisions almost always end in some epidemical distemper.<sup>46</sup> We see many died by reason of the famine in the reign of Claudius : and Josephus farther informs us, that when Niger was killed by the Jewish zealots, he imprecated besides other calamities famine and pestilence upon them, (Limonie kai loimon the very words used by the evangelist) "all which, (saith he,) God ratified and brought to pass against the ungodly."<sup>47</sup> — 'And earthquakes in diverse places,' as particularly that in Crete in the reign of Claudius, mentioned by Philostratus in the life of Apollonius, and those also mentioned by Philostratus at Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos."<sup>48</sup> in all which places some Jews inhabited; and those at Rome mentioned by Tacitus ;<sup>49</sup> and that at Laodicea, in the reign of Nero, mentioned by Tacitus,<sup>50</sup> which city was overthrown, as were likewise Hierapolis and Colosse; and that in Campania, mentioned by Seneca;<sup>51</sup> and that at Rome in the reign of Galba, mentioned by Suetonius;<sup>52</sup> and that in Judea, mentioned by Josephus. " For by night there broke out a most dreadful tempest, and violent strong winds with the most vehement showers, and continual lightnings, and horrid thunderings, and prodigious bellowings of the shaken earth: and it was manifest, (as he saith,) that the constitution of the universe was confounded for the destruction of men; and any one might easily conjecture, that these things portended no common calamity."<sup>53</sup>

To these St, Luke addeth, 21:11, that 'there shall be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.' Josephus, in the preface to his history of the Jewish war, undertakes to relate " the signs and prodigies, which preceded the taking of the city;"<sup>54</sup> and he relates accordingly, that "a star hung over the city like a sword, and the comet continued for a whole year ;"<sup>55</sup> that "the people being assembled to celebrate the feast of unleavened bread, at the ninth hour of the night there shone so great a light about the altar and the temple, that it seemed to be bright day, and this continued for half an hour;"<sup>56</sup> that " at the same feast a cow, led by the priest to sacrifice, brought forth a lamb in the middle of the temple;"<sup>57</sup> that " the eastern gate<sup>58</sup> of the temple, which was of solid brass and very heavy, and was scarcely shut in an evening by twenty men, and was fastened by strong bars and bolts, was seen, at the sixth hour of the night, opened of its own accord, and could hardly be shut again;" that "before the setting of the sun there were seen over all the country chariots and armies fighting in the clouds, and besieging cities ;"<sup>59</sup> that " at the feast of Pentecost, as the priests were going into the inner temple by night as usual to attend their service, they heard first a motion and noise, and then a voice as of a multitude saying, Let us depart hence;"<sup>60</sup> and what he reckons as the most terrible of all, that one Jesus, an ordinary country fellow, four years before the war began, when the city was in peace and plenty, came to the feast of tabernacles, and ran crying up and down the streets day and night, 'A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the temple, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, a voice against all the people.'<sup>61</sup> The magistrates endeavoured by stripes and tortures, to restrain him; but he still cried with a mournful voice, 'Woe, woe to Jerusalem!,' This he continued to do for seven years and five months together, and especially at

the great festivals; and he neither grew hoarse nor was tired; but went about the walls, and cried with a loud voice, 'Woe, woe to the city, and to the people, and to the temple;' and as he added at last, 'Woe, woe also to myself,' it happened that a stone from some sling or engine immediately struck him dead. These were indeed fearful sights and great 'signs from heaven:' and there is not a more creditable historian than the author who relates them, and who appeals to the testimony of those who saw and heard them. But it may add some weight to his relation, that Tacitus, the Roman historian, also gives us a summary account of the same occurrences. He saith that "there happened several prodigies, armies were seen engaging in the heavens, arms were seen glittering, and the temple shone with the sudden fire of the clouds, the doors of the temple opened suddenly, and a voice greater than human was heard, that the gods were departing, and likewise a great motion of their departing." <sup>62</sup> Dr. Jortin's remark is very pertinent. "If Christ had not expressly foretold this, many, who gave little heed to portents, and who know that historians have been too credulous in that point, would have suspected that Josephus exaggerated, and that Tacitus was misinformed ; but as the testimonies of Josephus and Tacitus confirm the predictions of Christ, so the predictions of Christ confirm the wonders recorded by these historians." <sup>63</sup> But even allowing all that incredulity can urge that in the great calamities of war, and famine, and pestilence, the people always grow superstitious, and are struck with religious panics;— that they see nothing then but prodigies and portents, which in happier seasons are overlooked ;— that some of these appear to be formed in imitation of the Greek and Roman historians as particularly the cow's bringing forth a lamb ;— that armies fighting in the clouds, seen in calamitous times in all ages and countries, are nothing more than meteors, such as the aurora borealis ;— in short allowing that some of these prodigies were feigned, and others were exaggerated, yet the prediction of them is not the less divine on that account. Whether they were supernatural, or the fictions only of a disordered imagination, yet they were believed as realities, and had all the effects of realities, and were equally worthy to be made the objects of prophecy. 'Fearful sights and great signs from heaven' they certainly were, as much as if they had been created on purpose to astonish the earth.

But notwithstanding all these terrible calamities, our Saviour exhorts his disciples not to be troubled. The Jews may be under dreadful apprehensions, as they were particularly in the case of Caligula above mentioned; but 'be not ye troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet,' but the destruction of Jerusalem is not yet. 'All these are only the beginning of sorrows,'- ver. 8, aroch wsinwn.. Great troubles and calamities are often expressed in scripture-language metaphorically by the pains of travailing women. All these are only the first pangs and throes, and are nothing to that hard labour which shall follow.

From the calamities of the nation in general, he passeth to those of the Christians in particular: and indeed the former were in great measure the occasion of the latter ; famines, pestilences, earthquakes, and the like calamities being reckoned judgments for the sins of the Christians, and

the poor Christians being often maltreated and persecuted on that account, as we learn from some of the earliest apologists for the Christian religion. Now the calamities which were to befall the Christians were cruel persecutions, ver. 9, — 'Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations,' not only of the Jews but likewise of the Gentiles, 'for my name's sake.' St. Mark and St. Luke are rather more particular. St. Mark saith, 13:9, 11 — 'They shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten, and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye; for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.' St. Luke saith, 21:12.- 15,— 'But before all these they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer. For I will give you a mouth, and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist ! We need look no farther than the Acts of the Apostles for the completion of these particulars. There are instances enough of the sufferings of some Christians, and of the death of others. Some are 'delivered to councils,' as Peter and John, 4:5, & 100. Some are 'brought before rulers and kings,' as Paul before Gallio, 18:12 ; Felix, 24; Festus and Agrippa, 25: Some have 'a mouth and wisdom which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay, or resist,' as it is said of Stephen, 6:10, that 'they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake,' and Paul made even Felix to 'tremble,' 24:25, and the gospel still prevailed against all opposition and persecution whatever. Some are imprisoned, as Peter and John, 4:3. Some are beaten, as Paul and Silas, 16:23. Some are to put to death, as Stephen, 7:59, and James the brother of John, 12:2. But if we would look farther, we have a more melancholy proof of the truth of this prediction in the persecutions under Nero in which (besides numberless other Christians) fell those two great champions of our faith, St. Peter and St. Paul. <sup>64</sup> And it was *nominis praelium*, as Tertullian calleth it; <sup>65</sup> It was a war against the very name. Though a man was possessed of every human virtue, yet it was crime enough, if he was a Christian; so true were our Saviour's words, that they should be hated of all nations 'for his name's sake.'

But they were not only to be hated of all nations, but were also to be betrayed by apostates and traitors of their own brethren, ver. 10,— 'And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.' By reason of persecution - many shall be offended,' and apostatize from the faith ; as particularly those mentioned by St. Paul in his second epistle to Timothy, 1:15,— 'Phygellus and Hermogenes, who with many others in Asia turned away from him,' and 4:10, — 'Demas who forsook him, having loved this present world.' But they shall not only apostatize from the faith, but also 'shall betray one another, and shall hate one another! To illustrate this point we need only cite a sentence out of Tacitus, speaking of the persecution under

Nero. "At first," says he, "several were seized who confessed, and then by their discovery a great multitude of others were convicted and barbarously executed." <sup>66</sup>

False teachers too, and false prophets, were to infest the church, ver. 11,— 'And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.' Such particularly was Simon Magus ; and his followers, the Gnostics, were very numerous. Such also were the Judaizing teachers, false apostles, as they are called by St Paul, 2 Cor. 11:13, 'deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.' Such also were Hymeneus and Philetus, of whom the apostle complains, 2 Tim. 2:17, 18, that they affirmed 'the resurrection to be passed already, and overthrew the faith of some.'

The genuine fruit and effect of these evils was lukewarmness and coolness among Christians, ver. 12,- 'And because iniquity shall abound, the love, of many shall wax cold.' By reason of these trials and persecutions from without, and these apostacies and false prophets from within, the love of many to Christ and his doctrine, and also their love to one another, shall wax cold. Some shall openly desert the faith, as ver. 10 ; others shall corrupt it, as ver. 11 ; and others again, as here, shall grow indifferent to it. And (not to mention other instances) who can hear St. Paul complaining at Rome, 2 Tim. 4:16, that 'at his first answer no man stood with him, but all men forsook him;' who can hear the divine author of the Epistle to the Hebrews exhorting them, 10:25,— 'not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is,' and not conclude the event to have sufficiently justified our Saviour's prediction ?

'But he that shall endure unto the end;' ver. 13, but he who shall not be terrified by these trials and persecutions; he who shall neither apostatize from the faith himself, nor be seduced by others; he who shall not be ashamed to profess his faith in Christ, and his love to the brethren; 'the same shall be saved,' saved both here and hereafter. 'There shall not an hair of your head perish,' as it is in St. Luke, 21:18: and indeed it is very remarkable, and was certainly a most signal act of providence, that none of the Christians perished in the destruction of Jerusalem. So true and prophetic also was that assertion of St. Peter upon this same occasion, 2 Pet. 2:9,— 'The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations.'

But notwithstanding the persecutions and calamities of the Christians, there was to be an universal publication of the gospel before the destruction of Jerusalem, ver. 14,— ' And this gospel of the 'kingdom' (this gospel of the kingdom of God) 'shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come;' and then shall the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish polity come to pass ; when all nations shall be or may be convinced of the crying sin of the Jews in crucifying the Lord of glory, and of the justice of God's judgments upon them for it. The Acts of the Apostles contain only a small part of the history of a small part of the Apostles; and yet even in that history we see, the gospel was widely disseminated, and had

taken root in the most considerable parts of the Roman empire. As early as in the reign of Nero, the Christians were grown so numerous at home, as to raise the jealousy of the government, and the first general persecution was commenced against them under pretence of their having set fire to the city, of which the emperor himself was really guilty, but willing to transfer the blame and odium upon the poor innocent Christians.<sup>67</sup> Clement, who was a contemporary and fellow laborer with St. Paul, says of him in particular, that 'he was a preacher both in the east and in the west, that he taught the whole world righteousness, and travelled as far as to the utmost borders of the west :'<sup>68</sup> and if such were the labours of one apostle, though the chiefest of the apostles, what were the united labours of them all ? It appears indeed from the writers of the history of the church, that before the destruction of Jerusalem the gospel was not only preached in the lesser Asia, and Greece, and Italy, the great theatres of action then in the world ; but was likewise propagated as far northward as Scythia, as far southward as Ethiopia, as far eastward as Parthia, and India, as far westward as Spain and Britain. Our ancestors of this island seem to have lain as remote from the scene of our Saviour's actions as almost any nation, and were a "rough inhospitable people,"<sup>69</sup> as unlikely to receive so civilized an institution as any people whatever. But yet there is some probability, that the gospel was preached here by St. Simon the apostle ;<sup>70</sup> there is much greater probability, that it was preached here by St Paul; and there is absolute certainty, that Christianity was planted in this country in the days of the apostles, before the destruction of Jerusalem. Agreeably to this, Eusebius informs us, that "the apostles preached the gospel in all the world ; and some of them it passed beyond the ocean to the Britannic isles."<sup>71</sup> Theodoret likewise affirms, that the apostles had induced every nation and kind of men to embrace the gospel, and among the converted nations he reckons particularly the Britons.<sup>72</sup> St. Paul himself, in his Epistle to the Colossians, 1:6,23, speaketh of the gospel's being 'come into all the world, and preached to every creature under heaven :' and in his Epistle to the Romans, 10:18, very elegantly applies to the lights of the church what the Psalmist said of the lights of heaven, ' their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.' But how improbable, and in all human appearance impossible was it, that a few poor fishermen, and such inferior, illiterate persons should propagate and establish a new religion, in so short a space of time, throughout the world ! Doubtless it was not man's but God's work, and from the same divine spirit proceeded both the prophecy and the completion !

We have deduced the prophecies as low as to the siege of Jerusalem ; and now let us stop to make a few short reflections upon what has been said.

The first reflection that naturally occurs, is the strange and surprising manner in which these prophecies have been fulfilled, and the great argument that may thence be drawn for the truth of our Saviour's divine mission: but we shall have a fitter opportunity for enlarging upon this hereafter.

Another reflection we may make on the sincerity and ingenuity of Christ, and the courage and constancy of his disciples. Had Jesus been an impostor, he would, like all other impostors, have fed his followers with fair hopes and promises: but, on the contrary, we see, that he denounced persecution to be the lot of his disciples, he pointed out to them the difficulties they must encounter, the fiery trials they must undergo ; and yet they did not therefore stagger in their faith, they did not therefore, like fainthearted soldiers, forsake their colours and desert his service. One hardly knoweth whom to admire most, him for dealing so plainly with them, or them for adhering so steadily to him. Such instances are rarely found of openness on one side, and of fidelity on the other.

A third reflection we may make on the sudden and amazing progress of the Gospel, that it should spread so far and so wide, before the destruction of Jerusalem. The greatness of the work that was wrought, the meanness of the instruments which wrought it and the short time that it was wrought in, must force all considering men to say, 'This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes,' -Psal. 118:23. The Mahommedan religion, indeed, in less than a century overran a great part of the world ; but then it was propagated by the sword, and owed its success to arms and violence. But the Christian religion was diffused over the face of the earth in the space of forty years, and prevailed, not only without the sword, but against the sword; not only without the powers civil and military to support it, but against them all united to oppress it. And what but the Spirit of God could bid it thus go forth 'conquering and to conquer ?' — Rev. 6:2. ' Had this counsel or this work been of men,' as Gamaliel argued, 'it would have come to nought; but being of God, nothing could overthrow it,' Acts 5:38.

A fourth reflection we may make, (and it is the last that I shall make,) that seldom any state is mined, but there are evident signals and presages of it. Few people have their fate particularly foretold by prophets, like the Jews; nor indeed can the fate of any people be so particularly foretold, the time, the manner, and all the circumstances preceding and succeeding, without divine inspiration. So many passages and circumstances cannot be particularly foretold unless particularly revealed ; but in the general, without the spirit of prophecy, it is no difficult matter to perceive when cities and kingdoms are tending towards their final period and dissolution. There are as certain tokens and symptoms of a consumption and decay in the body politic, as in the body natural. I would not presage ill to my country; but when we consider the many heinous and presumptuous sins of this nation, the licentiousness and violation of all order and discipline, the daring insolence of robbers and smugglers, in open defiance of all law and justice, the factions and divisions, the venality and corruption, the avarice and profusion of all ranks and degrees among us, the total want of public spirit, and ardent passion for private ends and interests, the luxury and gaming; and dissoluteness in high life, and the laziness and drunkenness and debauchery in low life, and, above

all, that barefaced ridicule of all virtue and decency, and that scandalous neglect, and I wish I could not say contempt, of all public worship and religion ; when we consider these things, these signs of the times, the stoutest and most sanguine of us all 'must tremble at the natural and probable consequences of them. God give us grace that we may know, at least in this our day, the things which belong unto our peace,' before 'they are hid from our eyes,' — Luke 19:42. Never may such blindness happen to us, as befel the Jews; but may we 'seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near; and return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon us, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon,' -Isa. 4:6, 7.

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### Footnotes

1. prwton men gegraplai to cata ton vo telwnhn, ujeron as apojolon Ihoē xrijc MatQaion  
Primum evangelium scriptum ease a Mattaeo, prius quidem publicano, postea vero apostolo Jesu Christi. Origen, apud Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 5, cap. 25, &100. &100. [The first gospel was written by Matthew, who was originally a publican, but afterwards an apostle of Jesus Christ.]
2. On croit que saint Matthieu commença a travailler a son evangile, la huiteme annee apresla resurrection du Sauveur; 100'est a dire, lan 41 de 51'ere vulgaire. Presque tons les anciens manuscrits Grecs le marquent ainsi a la fin de son volume. [It is thought that St. Matthew began the writing of his Gospel, in the eighth year after the resurrection of our Saviour; that is to say, in the forty-first of the common era. Almost all the Greek MSS. notice it at the end of the volume.] Calmet preface. Magno consensu perhibent Patres, Matthaeum, in gratiam credentium ex Judaeis in Palaestina, evangelium suum scripsisse, et quidem, ut multi addunt, Hierosolymis, octavo post ascensionem Christi anno, qui Claudii imperatoris primus fuit. [The fathers generally agree that Matthew wrote his gospel for the sake of the believing Jews in Palestine: and indeed as many add, in Jerusalem, in the eighth year after Christ's ascension, which was the first of the emperor Claudius.] Wetstein.
3. Euseb. Eccles. Hist, lib. 5. cap. 10. Hieron. Catalog. Script. Ecc'es. in Pantaeno p. 112, vol, 4, par 2 edit. Benedict.
4. Papias et Clemens Alex. apud Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 2, cap. 1.5; Origen. spud Euseb, lib. 6 cap. 25 ; Tertull. advers. Marcion. lib. 4, sect. 5, p. 416 edit- Rigaltu Paris. 1674. Hieron. de Script. Eccles. p. 101 vol. 4, edit. Benedict, &100 &100.
5. Mortuus cat autem octavo Neronis anni. [Translated in the text.] De Script. Eccles. 105, vol 4. edit. Benedict.
6. See vol. 1. of his supplement to the Credibility of the Gospel History .
7. See this argument pursued more at large in Dr. Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History vol. I - p. 72 - 77.
8. Shaftsbury's Characteristics, vol. 1, P. 99.

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9. Vide Joseph de Bell. Jud. lib. 5, cap. 13, sect. 6, edit Hudson .
10. pelpai meggeqoj to mjgeqo omhmaloj. Saxis Vero in extrucone usi sunt quadragenorum cubitorum magnitudinis. [Translated in the text.] 'Hn se ezia twn toislwn zameliwn cai ta icer autwn erga. Tantis autem fundamentis digna erant opera illis imposita. [Translated in the text.] Twm Be a, autw liqwn enioj unxor wenij cai assoraconin wncwn hsan, uyoj wenle, euroj 41 ez. Saxorum autem quibus exstructum at templum, quaedam erant 14:cubitos longa, alta 5:et lata 6:[Some of the stones with which the temple was built, were forty-five cubits long, five high, and six broad.] Joseph. de Bell, Jud. lib 5, cap. 5, sect 1, 2, 6, edit. Hudson.
11. Kelenei Kcisor hoh thn , woliy apasan cai Top newg xwtascaptein. Jubet eos Caesar totam funditus jam evertere civitatem et templum. [Translated in the text.] Joseph. & Bell. Jud. lib. 7, cap. 1, sect. 1, p. 1295, edit. Hudson.
12. Thrown de To naon umjn, cai mh qalsi. Vobis autem eniam invitis templum. servabo. [Translated in the text.] Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 6, cap. 2, sect. 4, p. 1269 edit. Hudson.
13. Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 5, cap. B. sect. 51, cap. 9, sect. 2, &100. cap. 11, sect. 2; lib 6, cap, 2, sect. 1, edit. Hudson.
14. Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib 6, cap. 2 sect 9, edit. Hudson.
15. 'Enqa oh twg jratiwtwn Tic, @Ti paraggelma werimeinas, "Ti M tnlixstw deisaj egcei st ohmati, daimoniw ormh tini Crwmenos, 10:T. 51:Quo tempore miles quidam, non expectato, cujusquam mandato, neque tanturn facinus veritus, divino quodam impetu fretus, " [Translated in the text.] Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 6. cap. 4, sect. 5, P. 1278, edit. Hudson.
16. Joseph. ibid. sect. 6 et 7.
17. '0 hen cy naoj xtwj, acontos Kaisaroj, empiwratai. Et templum quidem hoc mode exuritur, invito Caesare. [Translated in the text] Sect. 7. p. 1279.
18. See them quoted in Lightfoot, Whitby, Wetstein, &100. upon the place.
19. Tereiyos Psqoj Axf-yap apc wn thj jrالياj xaieleleipla, Terentius Rufus; namque in exercitui praefectus relictus erat. [Translated in the text.] Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 7, cap. 2, p. 1298.
20. Eusebii Demons. Evangel 52:6, cap. 13, p. 273; edit. Paris. 1628.



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21. Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 6, cap. 6, sect. 3, cap. 7, sect 2, cap. 8, sect. 5, edit. Hudson.
22. pwmaioi so taj 78 esgaliaj tw asleoj enhphsan, ta teich caiescayan. Romani vero extremas urbis partes incenderunt, et maenia funditus everterunt. [Tranlated in the text.] Joseph. ibid. cap. 9, sect. 4, p. 1292, edit. Hudson.
23. Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 7, cap. 1, sect. 1, edit. Hudson..
24. Joseph. ibid. cap. 5, sect. 2.
25. Prohcaio de rnv ierwllalhg autu woXii, wup cai caiascaqaij wolamiwn. Urbemque sibi sacratissimam, tradidisset hostibus ut incendio periret et funditus dirueretur. [Tranlated in the text.] Joseph. ibid. cap. 8, sect- 6, p. 1318.
26. 'All' eiqa wantaj eteohce ' may, wren ' thn ierag eceihn woliq carsin idein catascapto ' win wolwmiwg, =pay TOY naon TOY agion ctwj anosiwj ezorwrugmeon Atque utinam omnes fuisse wus Mortui, priusquam illam sacram civitatem hostium manibus excindi videremus, priusquam templum taints, impietate funditus erui. [Translated in the text.] Joseph ibid. sect. 7, p. 131-12, edit. Hudson.
27. Sunteleia tw aiwnoj. [Translated in the text] .
28. Irenai lib. 1, cap. 20, p. 94, edit. Grabe. Theodoret. Haeretic. Fab. lib. 1, cap. 1, p. 192, vol. 4, edit. Paris. 1642.
29. Kai meta Tife Ihos SE cronsj hqelhde cai 6 Samareuj Deoiqej wesai Samareij Sri autoj eih 6 wroqhteumenoj ipo Mwoewj Xpi ar cai eoozs tigwg daf sautc didascalial cecoathcegai. Post Jesu tempora voluit et Dositheus quidam Samarita suis persuadere, se ease Christam illum, quem Moyses praedixerat, visusque est nonnullos sibi sua doctrina conciliare. [And after the time of Jesus, Dositheus of Samaria wished to persuade the Samaritans that he was the Christ predicted by Moses; and he appeared to have gained some by his doctrine.] Origen contra Celsum, lib. 1, p. 372. Vide Wain lib. 6, p. 638, vol. 1, in Matt. Tract. 27, p. 851, col. 2, vol. 3, edit. Benedict.
30. Kai tauta Legwg wollej Et hujusmodi sermonibus plurimos decepit. [Translated in the text.] Joseph. Antiq. lib. 20, cap. 4, sect. 1, p. 886, edit. Hudson.
31. Tatwn pip wollej xaq exajhn hmeran - amBanwn anhrei. Horum quidem multos,- quotidie captos, Felix sustulit. [Translated in the text.] Joseph. ibid. cap. 7, sect. 5, p. 892.
32. Joseph. Antiq. lib. 18, cap. 9. De Bell. Jud. lib 2, cap. 10, edit. Hudson. Philo contra Flaccum. Tacitus Hist. lib. 5

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33. Indicat Christus majores quam sub Caio evererant caedes imminere ultimis temporibus Claudianis, et Neronis principatu. Illud eqnoj epi eqnoj significat Judaeos et qui aliarum erant gentium iisdem in civitatibus morantes mutuis inter me caedibus collidendos : quod contigit Caesareae primum, [Translated in the text.] deinde Scythopoli, Ptolemaide, Tyri, Gadaris, rursus Alexandriae, deinde et Damasci. [Afterwards at Scythopolis, Ptolemais, Tyre, Gadara, and again at Alexandria.] Illud autem Baseileia epi Basileian significat tretrarcharum ant provinciarum aperta inter me bella — Huc referri debet Judaeorum in Peraea habitantium bellum adversus Philadelphenos ob finium controversiam, Cuspio Fado procuratore; Judaeorum et Galilaeorum bellum adversus Samaritas, procuratore Cumano; postremo bellum primum a sicariis quos vocabant, deinde, ab universa Judaeorum gente sumtum adversus Romanos et Agrippum aliosque Romani imperiaocios, quod initium habuit Gessio Floro procuratore. [Translated in the text, p. 386.]

34. Joseph. Antiq. lib. 20, cap. 7, sect. 7, &100. De Bell. Jud. lib. 2, cap. 13, sect. 7 cap. 18, sect. 1, edit. Hudson.

35. Ibid. cap. 18, sect. 1.

36. Ibid. sect. 2. Ka wesa wolij ej duo dihrhto jpatpesa. Et uuaquaeque civiias in quos divisa erat exercitus. [Translated in the text] p. 1095.

37. Ibid, sec. 3. Vita Joseph , sect. 6.

38. De Bell. Jud. lib. 2, cap. 18, sect. 5.

39. Ibid, sect. 7 et 8.

40. Ibid. cap. 20, sect 2.

41. Joseph. Antiq. lib. 20, cap. 1, sect. 1.

42. Ibid. cap. 5. De Bell. Jud. lib. 2, cap. 12 sect. 3, &100.

43. Ibid. cap. 17.

44. On monon Be cata rip Ijsaijan jasij hn cai wolemoj emqulioj alla cai alla thj Italiaj Verum non solum per Judaeam erat seditio et bellum civile, sed etism in Italia. [Translated in the text.] De Bell. Jud. lib. 4, cap. 9, sect. 9, p. 1200.

45. Suetonius in Claudio 18. Taciti Annal. lib. 12. Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 2, cap. 8.

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46. Pollwn up endeiaj agalwmatwn Qosoiromegwg. Multis afirmentorū inopia pereuntibus. [Translated in the text.] Joseph. Antiq. lib. 20, cap. 2, sect. 6, p. 8 31 Ibid. cap. 4. sect. 2, edit. Hudson.

47. 'A sn-ra -rwy &as\$wy exupwo-my 100 esor. Quae sane univers; contra improbos rata habuit Deus, [Translated in the text.] Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib 4, cap. 6, wet. 1. P. 1186, edit. Hudson.

48. Gravis terrae motus qui in Crete accidit Claudio imperante meminit Philostratus in vita Apollonii. Item terrae motaū Smyrnae, Mileti, Chii, Sami, panio ante tempora excisae urbis Hierosolymorum. [Translated in the text.] Grot. in locum.

49. Tacit. Annal. lib. 12, p. 91, edit. Lipsii.

50. Tacit. Annal. lib. 14, p. 113, edit. Lipsii. Orosius, lib. 7, cap. 7, 5:473, edit. Havercamp.

51. Nat. Quaest. lib. 6, cap. 1.

52. Suet Galb. cap. 18.

53. Joseph. DeBell. Jud. lib. 4, cap 4, sect. 5. Nocte enim gravissima crumpit tempestas, ventusque violentus cum imbre vehementi conjunctas, et crebra fulgura, horrendaque tonitrua, et ingentes terrae concuum mugitus: manifestaraque erat, hominum in exitium, mandi statum. fuisse contarbatmen : eratque ut quis conjiceret ea non vulgares portendere calamitates- [Translated in the text.] p. 1811 edit. Hudson.

54. Quaeque praecesserant signa et prodigia [Translated in the text.] Sect. 11, p. 957.

55. [Translated in the text.] Lib. 6, cap. 5, sect. 3, p. 1281,

56. [Translated in the text.] Ibid.

57. [Translated in the text] Ibid.

58. [Translated in the text.] Ibid.

59. [Translated in the text.] Ibid. p. 1282

60. Festo autem die qui Pentecoste appellatur, sacerdotes noctu templum ingressi ad obeunda ex more ministeria, primum quidem motum ac strepitum se examilisse dixerant, tum deinde vocem quasi confertie multitudinis simul clamiantis, Migreinus hinc. [Translated in the text.] Ibid.

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61. Quod vero his omnibus terribilitatibus est, Jesus quidam, &100. [And what was more terrible than all the rest, there was one Jesus, &100.] Ibid.

62. Evenerant prodigia-Visae per coelum concurrere acies, rutilantia a. ma, et subito nubium igne collucere templum. Expassm repente delubri fores, et andita major humini vom, Excelere deos. Simul ingcns moms excedentium. [Translated in the text.] Tacit. Hist. lib. 5, p. 217, edit. Lipsii.

63. Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. 1, p. 41.

64. Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 2, cap. 25.

65. Tertul. Apol. cap. 2, p. 4, edit. Rigaltii. Paris, 1675.

66. Primb correpti qui fatebantur, deinde indicio eorum Multitudo ingens convicti sunL Et pereuntibus addita ludibris, &100. [Translated in the text] Tacit, Annal 11. 16, p. 128, edit. Lipaii.

67. Tacit. Annal. lib. 15.

68. [Translated in the text.] Clem Epist. ad Corinth. 1, cap. 5.

69. Britannos hospitibus feros. [Translated in the text] Hor. Od. M. 4:3.3.

70. See Stillingfleet's Origines Britannicae, chap. 1. Collier's Eccles. Hist. b. L Ussem. Britan. Eccles. Antiquitates, cap. 1, &100.

71. Trans. oceanum evasisse, ad eas insulas quae Britannicae vocantur. [Translated in the text-] Demons EvangeL lib 5, cap. 5, p. 112, edit. Paris. 1628.

72. Theod. Serm. 9, tom. 4, p. 610, edit. Paris. 1642. Neque solum Romanns —sed et-Britannos-atque, ut semel dicam, omne hominum genus nationesque omnes, Le. [And not only the Romans - but also the Britons,- and in one word, every nation and race of men, &100]

## Dissertation XIX

### Part Two

THE preceding discourse was concerning the 'signs' of the destruction of Jerusalem, that is, the circumstances and accidents which were to be the forerunners and attendants of this great event. Those are already specified which passed before the siege and now we proceed to treat of those which happened during the siege, and after it. Never was prophecy more punctually fulfilled, and it will be very well worth our time and attention to trace the particulars.

'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth let him understand,). Then let them which be in Judea, flee into the mountains,' - - ver. 15 and 16. Whatever difficulty there is in these words, it may be cleared up by the parallel place in St. Luke, 'And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains,'-21 - 20, 2 1. So that,'the abomination of desolation' is the Roman army, and 'the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place' is the Roman army besieging Jerusalem. This, saith our Saviour, is 'the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet,' in the ninth and eleventh chapters ; and so let every one who readeth those prophecies, understand them. The Roman army is called 'the abomination,' for its ensigns and images, which were so to the Jews. As Chrysostom affirms; "every idol, and every image of a man, was called an abomination' among the Jews." <sup>1</sup> For this reason, as Josephus informs us, the principal Jews earnestly entreated Vitellius, governor of Syria, when he was conducting his army through Judea against Aretas, king of the Arabians, to lead it another way; <sup>2</sup> and he greatly obliged them by complying with their request. We farther learn from Josephus, that after the city was taken, the Romans " brought their ensigns into the temple, and placed them over against the eastern gate, and sacrificed to them there." <sup>3</sup> The Roman army is therefore fitly called 'the abomination' and 'the abomination of desolation,' as it was to desolate and lay waste Jerusalem : and this army's besieging Jerusalem is called 'standing where it ought not,' as it is in St. Mark, 13:14; or 'standing in the holy place,' as it is in St. Matthew; the city, and such a compass of ground about it, being accounted holy. When therefore the Roman army shall advance to besiege Jerusalem, then let them who are in Judea consult their own safety, and flee into the mountains. His counsel was wisely remembered, and put in practice, by the Christians afterwards. Josephus informs us, that when Cestius Gallus came with his army against Jerusalem, "many fled from the city, as if it would be taken presently :"<sup>4</sup> and after his retreat, "many of the noble Jews departed out of the city, as out of a sinking ship :"<sup>5</sup> and a few years afterwards, when Vespasian was drawing, his forces towards Jerusalem, a great multitude fled from Jericho aij thn opeinhn — into the mountainous country, for their security. <sup>6</sup> It is probable that there were some Christians among these, but we learn more certainly from ecclesiastical historians, <sup>7</sup> that at this juncture all who believed in Christ left Jerusalem, and

removed to Pella, and other places beyond the river Jordan: so that they all marvellously escaped the general shipwreck of their country, and we do not read any where that so much as one of them perished in the destruction of Jerusalem. Of such signal service was this caution of our Saviour to the believers.

He prosecutes the same subject in the following verses, 'Let him which is on the house-top, not come down to take any thing out of his house;'—ver. 17. The houses of the Jews, as well as those of the ancient Greeks and Romans, were flat on the top, for them to walk upon, and had usually stairs on the outside, by which they might ascend and descend without coming into the house.<sup>8</sup> In the eastern walled cities, these flat-roofed houses usually formed continued terraces from one end of the city to the other, which terraces terminated at the gates. He therefore who is walking and regaling himself upon the house-top, let him not come down to take any thing out of his house; but let him instantly pursue his course along the tops of the houses, and escape out at the city as fast as he possibly can. 'Neither let him which is in the field, return back to take his clothes,'— ver. 18. Our Saviour maketh use of these expressions to intimate, that their flight must be as sudden and hasty as Lot's was out of Sodom. And the Christians escaping just as they did was the more providential, because afterwards all egress out of the city was prevented.<sup>9</sup>

'And woe unto them that are with child, and unto them that give suck in those days,'— ver. 19. For neither will such persons be in a condition to fly, neither will they be well able to endure the distress and hardships of a siege. This woe was sufficiently fulfilled in the cruel slaughters which were made both of the women and children, and particularly in that grievous famine, which so miserably afflicted Jerusalem during the siege. For, as Josephus reports, "mothers snatched the food from their infants out of their very mouths :"<sup>10</sup> and again, in another place, "the houses were full of women and children, who perished by famine."<sup>11</sup> But Josephus still relates a more horrid story; and I make no question that our Saviour, with his spirit of prophecy had this particular incident in view. There was one Mary, the daughter of Eleazar, illustrious for her family and riches. She having been stripped and plundered of all her substance and provisions by the soldiers, out of necessity and fury, killed her own sucking child, and, having boiled him, devoured half of him, and, covering up the rest, preserved it for another time.<sup>12</sup> The soldiers soon came, allured by the smell of victuals, and threatened to kill her immediately, if she would not produce what she had dressed. But she replied that she had reserved a good part for them, and uncovered the relics of her son. Dread and astonishment seized them, and they stood stupified at the sight. "But this," said she, "is my own son, and this my work. Eat, for even I have eaten. Be not you more tender than a woman, nor more compassionate than a mother. But if you have a religious abhorrence of my victim, I truly have eaten half, and let the rest remain for me." They went away trembling, fearful to do this one thing; and hardly left this food for the mother. The whole city was struck with horror, says the historian, at this wickedness: and they were pronounced blessed, who died before they

had heard or seen such great evils. So true also was what our Saviour declared on another occasion, when the women were bewailing and lamenting him, as he was led to execution: 'Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us ; and to the hills, Cover us,' Luke 23:29, 29, 30. Proverbial expressions, to signify their desire of any shelter or refuge; and so very desirous were they of hiding themselves, that some thousands of them crept even into the common sewers, and there miserably perished, or were dragged out to slaughter. <sup>13</sup>

'But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath-day,'— ver. 20. Pray that these evils be not further aggravated by the concurrence of other natural and moral evils, such as the inclemencies of the seasons and your own superstitions. 'Pray that your flight be not in the winter; for the hardness of the season., the badness of the roads, the shortness of the days, will all be great impediments to your flight: 'neither on the sabbath-day ;' that you may not raise the indignation of the Jews by travelling on that day, nor be hindered from doing it by your own superstition. It seemeth to be spoken a good deal in condescension to the Jewish, prejudices, a sabbath-day's journey, among the Jews, being but about a mile. In the parallel place of St. Mark, it is observable, that the evangelist saith only, 'And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter,' — 13:18, without any mention of the sabbath-day.

As our Saviour cautioned his disciples to fly, when they should see Jerusalem compassed with armies; so it was very providentially ordered, that Jerusalem should be compassed with armies, and yet that they should have such favourable opportunities of making their escape. In the twelfth year of Nero, Cestius Gallus the president of Syria, came against Jerusalem with a powerful army. "He might," as Josephus affirms, "if he would have assaulted the city, have presently taken it, and thereby have put an end to the war." <sup>14</sup> But without any just reason, and contrary to the expectation of all, he raised the siege, and departed. Vespasian was deputed in his room, to govern Syria, and to carry on the war against the Jews. This great general, having subdued all the country, prepared to besiege Jerusalem, and invested the city on every side. <sup>15</sup> But the news of Nero's death, and soon afterwards of Galba's, and the disturbances which thereupon ensued in the Roman empire, and the civil wars between Otho and Vitellius, held Vespasian and Titus in suspense ; and they thought it unseasonable to engage in a foreign war, while they were anxious for the safety of their own country. By these means the expedition against Jerusalem was deferred for some time; and the city was not actually besieged in form, till after Vespasian was confirmed in the empire, and Titus was sent to command the forces in Judea. These incidental delays were very opportune for the Christians, and for those who had any thoughts of retreating and providing for their own safety. Afterwards there was hardly any possibility of escaping; for, as our Saviour said in St.

Luke's Gospel, 'The days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,' -19. 43. Accordingly, the Romans having begirt Jerusalem with their forces, and having made several assaults, without the desired success, Titus resolved to surround the city with a wall; <sup>16</sup> and by the diligence and emulation of the soldiers, animated by the presence, and acting under the continual inspection of the general, this work, which was worthy of months, was, with incredible speed, completed in three days. The wall was of the dimensions of thirty-nine furlongs, and was strengthened with thirteen forts at proper distances: so that, as the historian saith, "all hope of safety was cut off from the Jews, together with all the means of escaping out of the city." <sup>17</sup> No provisions could be carried in, and no person could come out unknown to the enemy. But, to return to St. Matthew.

In the preceding verses, our Saviour had warned his disciples to fly, as soon as ever they saw Jerusalem besieged by the Romans; and now he assigns the reason of his giving them this caution and 'For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be,'— ver. 21. St. Mark expresseth it much in the same manner: 'For in those, lays shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created, unto this time, neither shall be,'— 13 19. This seemeth to be a proverbial form of expression, as in Exodus, 'And the locusts were very grievous, before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such,' — 10:14: and again in Joel, 'A great people and a strong, there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations,' — 2:2. Of the same kind is that in Daniel, 'There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time,'— 12:1 : and that in the first book of Maccabees, 'There was great affliction in Israel, the like whereof was not since the time that a prophet was not seen amongst them,'— 9:27. Our Saviour therefore might fitly apply the same manner of speaking upon the present occasion : but he doth not make use of proverbial expressions without a proper meaning, and this may be understood even literally. For indeed all history cannot furnish us with a parallel to the calamities and miseries of the Jews ; rapine and murder, famine and pestilence within ; fire and sword, and all the terrors of war without. Our Saviour wept at the foresight of these calamities, and it is almost impossible for persons of any humanity to read the relation of them in Josephus without weeping too. That historian might therefore well say, as he doth in the preface to his history, "Our city, of all those which have been subjected to the Romans, was advanced to the highest felicity, and was thrust down again to the extremest misery : for if the misfortunes of all, from the beginning of the world, were compared with those of the Jews, they would appear much inferior upon the comparison:" <sup>18</sup> and again, in another place, he saith, "To speak in brief, no other city ever suffered such things, as no other generation from the beginning of the world was even more fruitful of wickedness." <sup>19</sup> St. Luke expresseth the reason thus, 'For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written maybe fulfilled,' -21. 22. 'These be the days of vengeance,' wherein the calamities foretold by



Moses, Joel, Daniel, and other prophets, as well as those predicted by our Saviour, shall all meet as in one common centre, and be fulfilled with aggravation on this generation. 'These be the days of vengeance,' too, in another sense, as if God's vengeance had certain periods and revolutions, and the same days were fatal to the Jews, and destined to their destruction. "For it is very memorable, and matter of just admiration," according to Josephus, "that the temple was burnt by the Romans in the same month, and on the same day of the month, as it was before by the Babylonians." <sup>20</sup>

Nothing so violent can be of long continuance. These calamities were so severe, that, like fire, they must in time have consumed all, and have left nothing for themselves to prey upon.. 'And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved,' ver. 22. If these wars and desolations were to continue, none of the Jews would escape destruction, they would all be cut off, root and branch. I think Josephus computes the number of those who perished in the siege at eleven hundred thousand, besides those who were slain in other places : <sup>21</sup> and if the Romans had gone on destroying in this manner the whole nation of the Jews would certainly, in a little time, have been extirpated. 'But for the elect's sake,' but for the sake of the Christian Jews, 'those days shall be shortened.' - But for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, the Lord hath shortened the days,' as it is expressed in St. Mark, 13:20. The elect is a well known appellation in scripture and antiquity for the Christians : and the Christian Jews, partly through the fury of the zealots on one hand, and the hatred of the Romans on the other, and partly through the difficulty of subsisting in the mountains without houses or provisions, would in all probability have been almost all destroyed either by the sword or by famine, if the days had not been shortened. But providentially, the days were shortened. "Titus himself was desirous of putting a speedy end to the siege, having Rome, and the riches and the pleasures there, before his eyes." <sup>22</sup> Some of his officers proposed to him to turn the siege into a blockade, and since they could not take the city by storm, to starve it into a surrender : but he thought it not becoming to sit still with so great an army" and he feared lest the length of the time should diminish the glory of his success; every thing indeed may be effected in time, but celerity contributes much to the fame and splendor of actions." <sup>23</sup> The besieged, too, helped to shorten the days, by their divisions and mutual slaughters; <sup>24</sup> by burning their provisions, "which would have sufficed for many years ;" <sup>25</sup> and by fatally deserting their strongest holds, "where they could never have been taken by force, but by famine alone." <sup>26</sup> By these means, 'the days were shortened;' and, indeed. otherwise Jerusalem could never have been taken in so short a time, so well fortified as it was, and so well fitted to sustain a longer siege. The enemy without could hardly ever have prevailed but for the factions and seditions within. Titus himself could not but ascribe his success to God, as he was viewing the fortifications, after the city was taken. His words to his friends were very remarkable: "We have fought," said he, "with God on our aide; and it is God who hath pulled the Jews out of these strong holds; for what could the hands of men or machines avail against these towers ?" <sup>27</sup> God, therefore in the opinion of Titus, as well as of St.

Mark, 'shortened the days.' After the destruction of Jerusalem too, God inclined the heart of Titus to take some pity upon the remnant of the Jews, and to restrain the nations from exercising the cruelty that they would have exercised towards them. At Antioch particularly, where the disciples were first called Christians, the senate and the people earnestly importuned him to expel the Jews out of the city: <sup>28</sup> but he prudently answered, that their country, whither they should return, being laid waste, there was no place that could receive them. Then they requested him to deprive the Jews of their former privileges, but those he permitted them to enjoy as before. Thus, 'for the elect's sake, those 'days of persecution' were shortened!

Our blessed Lord had cautioned his disciples against false Christs and false prophets before, but he giveth a more particular caution against them about the time of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. 'Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ or there, believe it not ; for there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very elect,'-ver. 23 and 24. And in fact many such impostors did arise about that time, as we learn from Josephus, and promised deliverance from God, being suborned by the tyrants or governors to prevent the people and soldiers from deserting to the Romans ; and the lower the Jews were reduced, the more disposed would they be to listen to these deceptions, and the more ready to follow the deceivers. <sup>29</sup> Hegesippus, too, in Eusebius mentions the coming of false Christs and false prophets about the same time.<sup>30</sup> But as it was to little purpose for a man to take upon him the character of the Christ, or even of a prophet, without miracles to vouch his divine mission : so it was the common artifice and pretence of these impostors to show 'signs and wonders,' dhmeia kai terata the very words used by Christ in his prophecy, and by Josephus in his history. <sup>31</sup> Simon Magus performed great wonders according to the account that is given of him in the Acts of the Apostles, 8:9, 10, 11.- There was a certain man called Simon, which before time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one : To whom they all gave heed from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God : And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.' Dositheus likewise was reputed to work wonders according to Origen : <sup>32</sup> Barchoebabas too, who Jerome saith pretended to vomit flames. <sup>33</sup> Such also were the Jews, of whom St. Paul speaketh, 2 Tim. 3:8, 13, comparing them to 'Jannes and Jambres,' famous magicians of Egypt, who 'withstood Moses, as these also resisted the truth, men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith, ponhjoï anqrwpoi kai gohtej wicked men and impostors.' There is a strange propensity in mankind to believe things marvellous and astonishing: and no wonder, that weak and wicked men, Jews and Samaritans, were deceived by such impostors; when, if had been possible, they would have deceived the very elect,' the Christian themselves.

But 'behold,' saith our Saviour, 'I have told you before,' —ver. 25. Behold I have given you sufficient warning. 'Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth; behold he is in the secret chambers, believe it not,'— ver. 26. It is surprising that our Saviour should not only foretel the appearance of these impostors, but also the manner and circumstances of their conduct. For some be mentions as appearing in 'the desert,' and some in 'the secret chambers ;' and the event hath in all points answered to the prediction. Several of the false Christs and false prophets conducted their followers 'into the desert.' Josephus in his Antiquities saith expressly, that "many impostors and cheats persuaded the people to follow them into the desert," where they promised to show manifest wonders and signs done by the providence of God ; and many being persuaded suffered the punishment of their folly; for Felix brought them back, and chastised them." <sup>34</sup> Again in his history of the Jewish war, speaking of the same persons, he saith, that "these impostors, under a pretence of divine inspiration, affecting innovations and changes, persuaded the multitude to grow mad, and led them forth 'into the desert,' as if God would there show them the signs of liberty. Against these Felix, for it seemed to be the foundation of a revolt, sent horse and foot soldiers, and slew a great number of them." <sup>35</sup> The Egyptian false prophets, mentioned by Josephus, and in the Acts of the Apostles, 21:39,— 'led out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers:' but Felix marching with his forces, and "coming to an engagement with him, the Egyptian himself with a few others fled away, and most of those who had been with him were slain or taken prisoners." <sup>36</sup> There was likewise "another impostor" mentioned by Josephus, "who promised salvation to the people, and a cessation of all evils, if they would follow him 'into the desert;'" but Festus sent horse and foot against him, and destroyed the deceiver himself, and those who followed him." <sup>37</sup> These things happened before the destruction of Jerusalem; and, a little after, Jonathan a weaver persuaded not a few indigent fellows to adhere to him, and led them forth 'into the desert,' promising there to show signs and apparitions;" <sup>38</sup> but of his followers most were slain, some were made prisoners, and he himself was afterwards taken, and burnt alive by order of Vespasian. As several of these impostors thus conducted their followers into 'the desert,' so did others into the secret chambers' or places of security : as particularly the pseudo-prophet mentioned by Josephus, who declared to the people in the city, that God commanded them to go up into the temple, and there they should receive the signs of deliverance." <sup>39</sup> A multitude of men, women, and children, went up accordingly; but instead of deliverance, the place was set on fire by the Romans, and six thousand perished miserably in the flames, or by throwing themselves down to escape them.

Our Saviour therefore might well caution his disciples both against the former and the latter sort of these deceivers. 'For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be,' —ver. 27. His coming will not be in this or that particular place, but like the lightning will be sudden and universal. The appearance of the true Christ will be as distinguishable from that of the false Christ, as lightning which shineth all around

the hemisphere is from a blaze of straw, What a learned prelate observes from Josephus is very memorable, that "the Roman army entered into Judea on the east side of it, and carried on their conquest westward, as if not only the extensiveness of the ruin, but the very route, which the army would take, was intended in the comparison of the lightning coming out of the east, and shining even unto the west." <sup>40</sup> 'For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together,' -ver. 28. By the word carcase, as the same excellent prelate justly remarks, is meant the Jewish nation, which was morally and judicially dead, and whose destruction was pronounced in the decree of heaven. <sup>41</sup> Our Saviour, after his usual manner applied a proverbial expression with a particular meaning. For as, according to the old proverb, 'wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together;' so wheresoever the Jews are, there will Christ be taking vengeance upon them by the Romans, who are properly compared to eagles as the fiercest birds of prey, and whose ensign was an eagle, to which also probably our Saviour, in this passage alluded. And as it was said, so was it done ; for the victories of the Romans were not confined to this or that place, but like a flood overran the whole land. Josephus saith that "there was no part of Judea, which did not partake of the calamities of the capital city." <sup>42</sup> At Antioch, the Jews being falsely accused of a design to burn the city, many of them were burnt in the theatre, and others were slain. <sup>43</sup> The Romans pursued, and took, and slew them every where, as particularly at the siege of Machaerus; <sup>44</sup> at the wood Jardes, where the Jews were surrounded, and none of them escaped, but, being not fewer than three thousand, were all slain ; <sup>45</sup> and at Masada, where being closely besieged, and upon the point of being taken, they first murdered their wives and children, and then themselves to the number of nine hundred and sixty, to prevent their falling into the enemies' hands." <sup>46</sup> When Judea was totally subdued, the danger extended to those who dwelt at a distance. <sup>47</sup> Many were slain in Egypt, and their temple there was shut up: <sup>48</sup> and in Cyrene the followers of Jonathan, a weaver, and author of new disturbances, were most of them slain; he himself was taken prisoner, and by his false accusation three thousand of the richest Jews were condemned and put to death ; <sup>49</sup> and with this account Josephus concludes his history of the Jewish war.

There was something so very extraordinary in the conduct of these false Christs and false prophets, and in their appearance at that time particularly, that it may not be improper to bestow some considerations upon this subject, especially as these considerations may tend to confirm and strengthen us in our most holy religion.

1. It is obvious to observe from hence, that, in all probability, there hath been a true prophet, a true Christ, otherwise there would hardly have been so many cheats and counterfeits. Fictions are usually formed upon realities ; and there would be nothing spurious, but for the sake of something true and genuine. There would be no bad money, if there was none current and good. There would be no quacks and empirics, if their were no physicians able to perform real cures. In like manner there should be no pretenders to divine inspiration, were none truly and divinely inspired. There

would not (we may reasonably presume) have been so many false Messiahs, had not a true Messiah been promised by God, and expected by men. And if a Messiah hath come from God, whom can we so properly pitch upon for the person, as the man Christ Jesus ? If there were also some mock prophets in imitation of Mohammed, yet their number was nothing near so considerable, and his success was sufficient to excite and encourage them ; whereas the fate and condition of Jesus would rather have deterred any impostors from following his example.

2. Another natural observation from hence is, that the Messiah was particularly expected about the time of our Saviour, and consequently that the prophets had beforehand marked out that very time for his coming. For we read not of any false Messiahs before the age of our Saviour, nor of so many in any age after; and why did they rise at that time particularly, if the Messiah was not at that time particularly expected ? and why did the Jews expect their Messiah at that time more than at any other, if that was not the time before appointed for his coming? The prophet Daniel in particular had foretold, 9:25, &100. that Messiah the prince should come towards the end of seventy weeks of years, or 490 years, from the going forth of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. Before these weeks of years were, by one account or other, near expiring, history saith nothing of the false Messiahs ; but when the prophetic weeks drew towards a conclusion, then these impostors arose frequent, like so many meteors to dazzle the eyes, and mislead the wandering steps of Jews and Samaritans. Nothing can be a more evident and convincing proof, that the Jews then understood the prophecy in the same sense as the Christians, how ever they may endeavour to evade the force of it now. They pretend that the coming of the Messiah was delayed for the sins of the people, and therefore they still live in expectation of him, though they know neither the time nor the place of his appearing. Strange! that he who was to come for the sins of the people, should delay his coming for their sins: and more strange still! that God should falsify so many of his promises made by the mouths of his holy prophets. Numb. 23:19,— ' God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and would he not do it? or hath he spoken, and would he not make it good?'

3. It may be farther observed from hence, that the Messiah was expected to work miracles. Miracles are the credentials of a messenger from God : and it was foretold particularly of the Messiah, that he should work miracles. There was no pretending therefore to the character of the Messiah without the necessary qualifications. Had not the power of working miracles been esteemed an essential ingredient in the character of the Messiah, these impostors would never have had the assurance to pretend to it, or been so foolish as to hazard their reputation, and venture their whole success upon such an experiment: but all of them to a man drew the people after them with a pretence of working miracles, of showing signs, and wonders, and apparitions. Now the very miracles which the Messiah was to perform, Jesus hath performed, and none other besides Jesus. The prophet Isaiah foretold, that the Messiah should cure the lame and the blind, the deaf and the

dumb; and accordingly these very persons were cured in great numbers by Jesus. The prophet Isaiah foretold likewise, that these miracles should be wrought in the desert; and accordingly in the desert Jesus wrought them: and by the way I suppose this prophecy was one principal reason why most of the false Christs and false prophets led their followers into solitudes and deserts, promising there to show signs and wonders. The prophet Isaiah foretold, 35:1, & 100.-, The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. - They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.-The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped, The lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing! The apostle and evangelist St. Matthew relates, 15:29, & 100. that 'Jesus departed from thence (from the coast of Tyre and Sidon) 'and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee, and went up into a mountain and sat down there. And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet, and he healed them : insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see - and they glorified the God of Israel.' Since then the miracles of the Messiah were wrought by Jesus alone; Jesus alone can have any just claim to be the Messiah; and from his works we may conclude, John 6:14,— 'This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.'

4. Very observable is the difference between the conduct and success of these deceivers and of Jesus Christ: for in him we have all the marks and characters of simplicity and truth, in them fraud and imposture. They were men of debauched lives and vicious principles: he 'did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth,' -1 Pet. 2:22; even Pilate his Judge declared, John 19:6, that he could 'find no fault in him.' They lived by rapine and spoil, by plunder and murder : He, Luke 9:56,— 'came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them ;' He fed the hungry, healed the sick, and went from place to place doing good, Their conduct breathes nothing but ambition and pride, cruelty and revenge his behaviour was all humility and meekness, charity and love, of mankind. They were actuated by worldly motives, and proposed to themselves secular ends and interests : Jesus was the farthest removed from any suspicion of that kind, and when tire people would have taken him, John 6:15,— 'to make him a king,' he withdrew Himself from them,' and departed again into a mountain himself alone.

Their pretensions were accommodated to the carnal expectations of the Jews, and withal were backed by force and violence, and yet could not succeed and prosper : on the contrary, the religion of Jesus was spiritual, disclaimed all force, and took the way (humanly speaking) not to prevail, and yet prevailed against all the power and opposition of the world. Now of these who were the deceivers think you, who was the true Christ ? Had Jesus been an impostor, he would have lived and acted like an impostor. Had his design been any thing like theirs, it would have been discovered and brought to nought. Nothing could make his religion stand, but its coming from God. This is

the reasoning of one who cannot be suspected to favour the cause of Christianity, the learned Gamaliel in the Jewish Sanhedrim ; and to him that great council agreed, - Acts 5:36, &.100.- 'Before these days rose up Theudas boasting himself to be somebody, to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves ; who was slain, and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered and brought to nought. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee, in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him ; he also perished, and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say unto you, refrain from these men, and let them alone ; for if this council or this work be of men, it will come to nought : but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it ; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. And to him they agreed.'

5. But though the truth will at last prevail over error and imposture, yet it is a melancholy proof of the weakness, and superstition, and enthusiasm of mankind, that these false Christs and false prophets should delude such numbers as they did to their destruction. The false Messiahs had for a time many more disciples and followers than the true Messiah. The Christians were once 'a little flock,' — Luke 12:32. 'The number of the names together were about an hundred and twenty,' - Acts 1:15. Whereas these impostors attracted and drew away great multitudes, one of them six thousand,<sup>50</sup> another even thirty thousand.<sup>51</sup> "With a pretence of divine inspiration, they taught the people," as Josephus expresseth it, daimonan, 'to grow enthusiastically mad',<sup>52</sup> "as if they were possessed and actuated by some spirit or demon : and indeed no plague or epidemical distemper is more catching and contagious than enthusiasm. It passeth 'from man to manlike wild-fire. The imagination is soon heated, and there is rarely judgment enough to cool it again. 'The very elect,' even good Christians themselves, if they attend to enthusiasts, will be in danger of taken the infection, and be continually liable to be 'tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine,' — Ephes. 4:14. if they have not (as all have not) a sufficient ballast of discretion to keep them steady. In reality enthusiasts know as little of the revelation given us by Christ, as of the reason given us by God. They are blind leaders of the blind. 'Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, behold his power is experienced in field-preaching, 'go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chambers,' behold his presence is conspicuous in the tabernacles or conventicles, 'believe it not.' He is best sought in his word, and in his works; and he will certainly be found by those, and those alone, who love him, not with fanaticism and enthusiasm, but in truth and soberness, so as to keep his commandments, which is the only infallible proof and legitimate issue of love. For as our Saviour himself saith, John 14:23,— 'If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abide with him.'

6. Once more it is to be observed, that we must not credit every one, who cometh to us with a pretence of working miracles. For the false Christs and false prophets pretended to show great signs and wonders; and yet notwithstanding all their miraculous pretensions, our blessed Lord cautions his disciples not to believe or follow them. But then the question will be naturally asked,

If we must not believe those who work miracles, whom must we believe ? how shall we know whether a person doth or doth not act by commission from heaven ? how shall we distinguish whether the doctrine is of God or of men ? Indeed, if miracles were not possible to be wrought at all, as some have pretended; or could be wrought, only by God, or those who are commissioned by him, as others have argued ; the reply would be obvious and easy: but that miracles are possible to be wrought is a truth agreeable to reason, and that they may be wrought by evil spirits is a supposition agreeable to scripture : and therefore the best answer is, that reason must judge in this case as in every other, and determine of the miracles by the doctrines which they are alleged to confirm. If a doctrine is evil, no miracles can be wrought by a divine power in its behalf ; for God can never set his hand and seal to a lie. If a doctrine is good, then we may be certain, that the miracles vouched for it were not wrought by the power of evil spirits; for at that rate, according to our Saviour's argument, Luke 11:18,— ' Satan would be divided against himself, and his kingdom could not stand.' Good spirits can never confirm and establish what is evil, neither can evil spirits be supposed to promote what is good. Supposing that the miracles pretended in favour of Paganism were all real miracles, yet as they lead men to a corrupt religion and idolatrous worship, no reverence, no regard is to be paid to them, according, to the command of Moses, Deut. 13:1, & 10.— 'If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, let us go after other gods (which thou hast not known) and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams; for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul.' In like manner we must not admit any thing contrary to the doctrines of Christ and his apostles, whatever miracles are boasted to recommend and authorize it. For the doctrines of the Christian religion are not only perfectly agreeable to reason, but moreover God hath confirmed it, amply confirmed it by miracles, and hath enjoined us strictly to adhere to it : and God can never be supposed to work miracles to confirm contradictions: and therefore allowing (what we cannot reasonably allow) that the miracles of Apollonius and other impostors were true and well attested, yet the foundation of Christ standeth firm, and cannot at all be shaken by them. Should any man, or number of men, with ever so great and confident a pretence to infallibility assert — that it is our duty implicitly to believe and obey the church: when Christ commands us, Matt. 23:9,— 'to call no man father upon earth, for one is our father which is in heaven; that the service of God is to be performed in an unknown tongue; when St. Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians hath written a whole chapter, 14, expressly against it - that the sacrament of the Lord's supper is to be administered only in one kind ; when Christ instituted it, Matt. 26:and his apostles ordered it, I Cor. 11:to be celebrated in both - that the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ is to be repeated in the mass; when the divine author of the Epistle to the Hebrews teacheth us, 10:10, that 'the body of Jesus Christ was offered once for all,' and ver. 14, that 'by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,' —that men may arrive at such heights of virtue as to perform works of merit and supererogation ; when our Saviour orders



us, Luke 17:10,—'after we have done all those things which are commanded us, to say, we are unprofitable servants, we have done but that which was our duty to &'- that attrition and confession, together with the absolution of a priest, will put a dying sinner into a state of grace and salvation when the scripture again and again declares, Heb. 12:14, 'that without holiness no man shall see the Lord,' and, I Cor. 6:9 'the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God' -that the souls of men, even of good men. immediately after death pass into purgatory; when St. John is commanded from heaven to write, Rev. 14:13,— 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them,' —that we must worship images, and the relies of the saints; when our Saviour teacheth us, Matt. 4:10,— 'that we must worship the Lord God, and him only we must serve'-that we must invoke and adore saints and angels ; when the apostle chargeth us, Col. 2:18, to 'let no man beguile us of our reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels' - that we must pray to the virgin Mary and all saints to intercede for us; when St. Paul affirms, I Tim. 2:5, that as there is only 'one God,' so there is only 'one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus' - that it is lawful to fill the world with rebellions and treasons, with persecutions and massacres, for the sake of religion and the church; when St. James assures us. 1:20, that 'the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God;' and when Christ maketh universal love and charity the distinguishing mark and badge of his disciples, John 13:35, 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another'- I say, should any man assert these things so directly contrary to reason and to the word of God, and vouch ever so many miracles in confirmation of them, yet we should make no scruple to reject and renounce them all. Nay we are obliged to denounce anathema against the teacher of such doctrines, though he were an apostle, though he were an angel from heaven ; and for this we have the warrant and authority of St. Paul, and to show that he laid particular stress upon it, he repeats it twice with great vehemence, Gal. 1:8, 9,— 'Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any one preach any other gospel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accursed.' Indeed, the miracles alleged in support of these doctrines are such ridiculous, incredible things, that a man must have faith, I do not say to remove mountains, but to swallow mountains, who can receive for truth the legends of the church of Rome. But admitting that any of the Romish miracles were undeniable matters of fact, and were attested by the best and most authentic records of time, yet I know not what the Bishop of Rome would gain by it, but a better title to be thought Antichrist 'For we know that the coming of Antichrist,' as St. Paul declares, 'is after the working of Satan with all power and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness,'— 2 Thess 2:9, 10 : 'and he doeth great wonders in the sight of men,' according to the prophecy of St. John, Rev. 13:13, 14, 'and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he hath power to do.' Nor indeed is anything more congruous and reasonable, than that, 'God should send men strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved,'— 2 Thess. 2:10, 11.

But to return from this digression, though I hope neither an improper nor unedifying digression, to our main subject.

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### Footnotes

1. Advers. Judaeos orat. 5:p 645, vol. 1, edit. Benedict, [Translated in the text.]
2. Joseph. Antiq. lib. 18, cap. 6, sect. 3, edit. Hudson.
3. Signis in templum illatis positisque contra portam orientalem, et illis ibi sacrificarunt.— Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 6, cap. 6, sect. 1, p. 1283, edit. Hudson. [Translated in the text.]
4. antica Jamque multi ex civitate diffugiebant, ac si continue esset expugnanda.—Joseph. de. Bell. Jud. lib. 2, cap. 19, sect. 6, p. 1103. [Translated in the text.]
5. bilium Judaeorum multi, quasi in ea esset navis ut mergeretur, e civitate veluti natando egressi sunt.—Ibid. cap. 20, sect. 1, p. 1105. [Translated in the text.]
6. Ibid. lib 4, cap. 8, sect. 2, p. 1193, edit. Hudson.
7. Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 3, cap. 5, cum notis Valesii. Epiphanium adversus Nazaraeos' lib. 1, tom. 2, sect. 7, vol. 1, edit. Petavii ; idem de Mens. et Pond. sect- 15, vol. 2
8. See Grotius is on the place. and the Miracles of Jesus vindicated by Bishop Pearce, part 4:p. 27, 28.
9. Joseph de Bell. Jud. lib. 4, cap. 9, sect. 1 et 10, edit. Hudson.
10. Matres infantibus cibum ex ipso or rapiebant.-lb. lib. 5, cap. 10, sect. 3, p. 1245. [Translated in the text.]
11. Ac tecta quidem plena erant mulieribus et infantibus fame enectis.—Ib. cap. 12, sect. 3, p. 1252. [Translated in the text.]
12. Ibid. lib. 6, cap. 3, sect. 4. Ibid. lib. 6. cap. 9. Peet 4.
13. Josephus de Bell. Jud. lib. 2, cap. 19. si eadem ilia hora voluisset vi muros perrumpere, a vestigio urbem cepisset, bellumque ab ipso confectum fuisse contigisset.- Sect. 4, p. 1102, edit Hudson [Translated in the text.]

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14. Joseph. *ibid.* lib. 4, cap. 9, sect. 1, 2. &100.
15. Joseph. *ibid.* lib. 5, cap. 12, sect. I et 2
16. Judaeis autem cum egrediendi facultate spes quoque omnis salutis praecisa erat.- Sect. 3, p. 1252, edit. Hudson [Translated in the text.]
17. Isdaiwn, httaşqai pas docai cata sugcrisin. Nam ex omnibus, civitatibus, quae Romanorum jugum subierunt, nostruae sane coutigit ad summum felicitatis pervenisse, ac deinde in extremam culamitatem incidisse, namque omnium A omnis aevi memoria res adversm, A cum iis conferantur qum Judaeis acciderunt, longe A illis superari milii Yidentur.-Joseph' Proem. sect. 4, p. 955. [Translated in the text.]
18. Illud autem breviter dici potest, neque aliam urbem talia perpressam eme, neque hominum genus aliud A omni aevo aceleratius exatitisse.-Lib. 5, cap. 10, sect. 5, p. 1246 [Translated in the text.]
19. Est autem -at mirari quis possait in eo accuratam circumacti temporis rationem: nam eundem, ut dictum est, imensem et diem servavit quo prius templum a Babyloniis exustum fuerat-Lib. 6, cap. 4, sect. 5; sect. 8, p. 1279, edit. Hudson. Translated in the text.)
20. Lib. 6, cap. 9, sect. 3.
21. Hierosolyma considerent, morari videbantur.-Tacit. Hist. lib. 5, p. 217, edit. Lipsii. [Translated in the text.]
22. Ipsi autem Tito cessare quidem prorsus tanto cum exercitu honestum non videbatur. Dediennai
23. Metuendumque ne successus gloriam ipsi dianinuat temporis longitudo : hac enim cuncta quidem effici posse, sed ad gloriam facere celeri tatem. -Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 6, cap. 12, sect. 1, p. 1251, edit. I Hudson [Translated in the text.]
24. *Ibid.* cap. 1, &100.- Back
25. Quod non paucis annis illis suflicere potuisset obsessia.-Sect. 4, p, 1213. [Translated in the text.]
26. In quibus vi, quidem non. quam, sola vero fame expuguari poterant.-Lib. 6, cap. 8, sect. 4, p. 1289. [Translated in the text.)
27. Deo, inquit, favente bellavimus, Deus est, qui Judaeos ex istis munimentia detraxit ; nam humance manus et mwlinse quid contra tales tures valeant ?-*Ibid.* cap, 9, sect. 1, p. 1290 [Translated in the text.]

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28. Joseph Ibid. lib. 7, cap. 5, sect. 2.- Back

29. multi autem tunc a tyrannis subornati erant ad populum prophetse, deunciantes esse auxilium a Deo expectandum, ut populus minus transfugeret, et eon, qui suprimetum erant et custodep, spes retineret. Cito autem in adversis homini persuadetur

[But at that time a number of prophets, suborned by the tyrants, pronounced to the people that help might be expected from God. By this means the people were less inclined to desert, and the expectation of it restrained the guards, and those who were superior to fear. In adversity men are easily persuaded.] Lib. 6, cap. 6, sect. 2, P. MI, edit. Hudson.

30. Euseb. Eccles, Hist. lib. 4, cap. 212.- Back

31. Joseph. Antiq. lib 20, cap. 7, sect. 6, p. 893, edit. Hudson. Vide etiam de Bell. Jud U. 7, cap. 11, sect. 1.

32. Contra Celsum, lib. 6, cap. 11, p. 638, vol. 1, edit. Benedict.

33. Adversus Rufinum. lib. 3, col. 466, vol. 4, edit. Benedict.

34. Se enim ipsis ostensuros dicebant manifestis. prodigia et signa, qua Dri cura et providentia evenirent. Multique, fidem habentes, dementim suae poenas pertulerunt. Eos quippe retractos Felix supplicio affecit. [Translated in the text.] Ant lib. 20, cap. 7, sect. 6, p. 893, edit. Hudson.

35. Nam homines seductores et fallaciis pleni, specie divini afflatus, novis rebus et mutationibus studentes, Vulgo ut insanirent persuadebant, et proficiebant in solitudinem; ac si illic Deus ostensurus esset eis signs libertatis. Contra istos (inde enim videtur oritura ease insurrectio) milites, tam pedites, quam ec uites, misit Felix, magnumque eorum numerum interfecit. [Translated in the text.] Be Bell. Jud. lib. 2, cap. 13, sect. 4, p. 1075.

36. Antiq. lib. 20, cap. 7, sect. 6. Do Bell. Jud. lib. 2, cap. 13, sect. 5. Facto igitur congressu Aegyptius quidem ipse cum paucis evasit; plurimique eorum qui cum eo erant partim trucidati, partim vivi capti bunt. [Translated in the text ] p. 1076.

37. A homine quodam proestigiatore, salutem ipsis pollicente et malorum cessationem, si so usque ad desertum sequi vellent; atque ipsum deceptorem, pariter ac eaB qui ilium comitati sunt, interfecerunt milites A eo missi. [Translated in the text.] Ant. lib. 20. cap. 7, sect. 10, 1). 895.

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38. De Bell. Jud. lib. 7, cap. 11 Pauperuin it indigentium non pancis, ut ipsi ac adjungerent, persuasit, et in desertum eduxit romittens ac signa ipsis et apparitiones ostensurum. [Translated in the text.] sect 1, p. 1337.

39. His causa interitus erat pseudopropheta quidem, qui illo tempore praedicaverat populo in civitate, "jubere Deum eos in templum ascendere, signa salutis accepturos" [The cause of their destruction was a certain false prophet, who at that time declared. &100. as in the text.] Lib. 6, cap. 5, sect. 2, p. 1281.

40. Bishop Pearce's Dissertation on the destruction of Jerusalem inserted in Dr. Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. 1, p. 27

41. Ditto, p. 22.

42. Nulla autem pars Judoeve erat quae simul cum urbe eminentissima non interibat. [Translated 1 in the text. De Bell. Jud. lib. 4, cap. 7, sect. 2, p. 1190, edit. Hudson.

43. Lib. 7, cap. 3, sect. 3.

44. Ibid. cap. 6.

45. Ibid. sect. 5.

46. Ibid. cap 9.

47. Ibid. cap. 10, sect. I

48. Ibid. cap. 10

49. Ibid.chap. 11.

50. Joseph. Do Bell. Jud. lib. 6, cap. 5, sect. I Et plurima multitudo promiscua, ad sex hominum millia. [And a very at mixed multitude, to the amount of six thousand.] p. 1281, edit. Hudson

51. Lib. 2 cap 13, sect B. Usque an trigiuta hominum milli, quos proestigiis suis deceperat, congregavit. [He coleded thirty thousand of those whom he had deceived by his impostures.] p. 1075-6.

52. vutgo w insanirent persuadebant [Translated in the text. 1 Ibid. sect 4, p. 1075

## **Dissertation XX**

### **Part Three**

WE are now come to the last act of this dismal tragedy, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the final desolation of the Jewish polity in church and state, which our Saviour for several reasons might not think fit to declare nakedly and plainly, and therefore chooseth to clothe his discourse in figurative language. "He might possibly do it," as Dr. Jortin conceives, "to perplex the unbelieving persecuting Jews, if his discourses should ever fall into their hands, that they might not learn to avoid the impending evil." <sup>1</sup> 'Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.' Commentators generally understand this, and what follows, of the end of the world, and of Christ's coming to judgment; but the words 'immediately after the tribulation of those days,' show, evidently, that he is not speaking of any distant event, but of something immediately consequent upon the tribulation before mentioned, and that must be the destruction of Jerusalem. It is true, his figures are very strong, but no stronger than are used by the ancient prophets upon similar occasions. The prophet Isaiah speaketh in the same manner of Babylon, 13:9, 10,- 'Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate ; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.' The prophet Ezekiel speaketh in the same manner of Egypt, — 32:7, 8, 'and when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God.' The prophet Daniel speaketh in the same manner of the slaughter of the Jews by the little horn, whether by the little horn be understood Antiochus Epiphanes, or the power of the Romans; 8:10 — 'And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host, and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them :' and the prophet Joel, of this very destruction of Jerusalem, 2:30, 31,- 'And I will shew wonders in the heavens, and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come.' Thus it is, that, in the prophetic language, great commotions and revolutions upon earth are often represented by commotions and changes in the heavens. Our Saviour proceedeth in the same figurative style, ver. 30, — And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.' The plain meaning of it is, that the destruction of Jerusalem will be such a remarkable instance of divine vengeance, such a signal manifestation of Christ's power and glory, that all the Jewish tribes shall mourn, and many will be led from thence to acknowledge Christ and the Christian religion. In the ancient prophets, God is frequently described as coming in the 'clouds,' upon any remarkable

interposition and manifestation of his power ; and the same description is here applied to Christ. The destruction of Jerusalem will be as ample a manifestation of Christ's power and glory, as if he was himself to come visibly in the clouds of heaven.

The same sort of metaphor is carried on in the next verse, ver. 31, And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. This is all in the style and phraseology of the prophets, and stripped of its figures meaneth only, that, after the destruction of Jerusalem, Christ, by his angels or messengers, will gather to himself a glorious church out of all the nations tinder heaven. The Jews shall be 'thrust out,' as he expresseth himself in another place, Luke, 13:28, 29,- 'and they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south; and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. 'No one, ever so little versed in history, needeth to be told, that the Christian religion spread and prevailed mightily after this period ; and hardly any one thing contributed more to the success of gospel than the destruction of Jerusalem, falling out in the very manner, and with the very circumstances, so particularly foretold by our blessed Saviour.

What Dr. Warburton hath written upon the same subject will much illustrate and enforce the foregoing exposition. "The prophecy of Jesus, concerning the approaching destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, is conceived in such high and swelling terms, that not only the modern interpreters, but the ancient likewise, have supposed, that our Lord interweaves into it a direct prediction of his second coming to judgment. Hence arose a current opinion in those times that the consummation of all things was at hand., which hath afforded a handle to an infidel objection in these, insinuating, that Jesus, in order to keep his followers attached to his service, and patient under sufferings flattered them with the near approach of those rewards, which completed all their views and expectations. To which, the defenders of religion have opposed this answer : That the distinction of short and long, in the duration of time, is lost in eternity ; and with the Almighty, 'a thousand years are but as yesterday,' &100.

"But the principle both go upon is false; and if what hath been said be duly weighed, it will appear, that this prophecy doth not respect Christ's second coming to judgment, but his first; in the abolition of the Jewish policy, and the establishment of the Christian : that kingdom of Christ, which commenced on the total ceasing of the theocracy For as God's reign over the Jews entirely ended with the abolition of the temple service, so the reign of Christ, 'in spirit and in truth,' had then its first beginning.

"This was the true establishment of Christianity, not that effected by the donations or conversions of Constantine. Till the Jewish law was abolished, over which the 'Father' presided as

king, the reign of the 'Son' could not take place; because the sovereignty of Christ over mankind, was that very sovereignty of God over the Jews transferred, and more largely extended.

"This therefore being one of the most important eras in the economy of grace, and the most awful revolution in all God's religious dispensations ; we see the elegance and propriety of the terms in question, to denote so great an event, together with the destruction of Jerusalem, by which it was effected : for in the whole prophetic language, the change and fall of principalities and powers, whether spiritual or civil, are signified by the shaking of heaven and earth, the darkening the sun and moon, and the falling of the stars; as the rise and establishment of new ones are by processions in the clouds of heaven, by the sound of trumpets, and the assembling together of hosts and congregations.' <sup>2</sup>

This language, as he observes in another place, was borrowed from the ancient hieroglyphics. "For, as in the hieroglyphic writing, the sun, moon, and stars, were used to represent states and empires, kings, queens, and nobility; their eclipse and extinction, temporary disasters or entire overthrow, &100. so in like manner the holy prophets call kings and empires by the names of the heavenly luminaries; their misfortunes and overthrow are represented by eclipses and extinction; stars falling from the firmament are employed to denote the destruction of the nobility, &100. In a word, the prophetic style seems to be a speaking Hieroglyphic. These observations will not only assist us in the study of the Old and New Testament, but likewise vindicate their character from the illiterate cavils of modern libertines, who have foolishly mistaken that for the peculiar workmanship of the prophet's heated imagination which was the sober established language of their times, and which God and his Son condescended to employ as the properest conveyance of the high mysterious ways of providence in the revelation of themselves to mankind." <sup>3</sup>

To St. Matthew's account St. Luke addeth, 'And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled,' — 21:24. The number of those who 'fell by the edge of the sword,' was indeed very great. "Of those who perished during the whole siege, there were," as Josephus saith, "eleven hundred thousand." <sup>4</sup> Many were also slain at other times and in other places. <sup>5</sup> By the command of Florus, who was the first author of the war, there were slain at Jerusalem three thousand and six hundred: <sup>6</sup> by the inhabitants of Ceasarea above twenty thousand: <sup>7</sup> At Scythopolis above thirteen thousand : <sup>8</sup> At Ascalon two thousand five hundred, and at Ptolemais two thousand: <sup>9</sup> At Alexandria, under Tiberius Alexander, the president, fifty thousand: <sup>10</sup> At Joppa, when it was taken by Cestius Gallus, eight thousand four hundred: <sup>11</sup> In a mountain called Asamon, near Sepphoris, above two thousand : <sup>12</sup> at Damascus ten thousand: <sup>13</sup> In a battle with the Romans at Ascalon ten thousand: <sup>14</sup> In an ambuscade, near the same place, eight thousand: <sup>15</sup> at Japha fifteen thousand. <sup>16</sup> 'Of the Samaritans, upon Mount Garizin, eleven thousand and six



hundred: <sup>17</sup> At Jotapa forty thousand: <sup>18</sup> At Joppa, when taken by Vespasian, four thousand two hundred: <sup>19</sup> At Tarichea six thousand five hundred, <sup>20</sup> and after the city was taken, twelve hundred: At Gamala four thousand slain, besides five thousand who threw themselves down a precipice: <sup>21</sup> Of those who fled with John from Gischala six thousand : <sup>22</sup> Of the Gadarenes fifteen thousand slain, besides an infinite number drowned: <sup>23</sup> In the villages of Idumea above ten thousand slain: <sup>24</sup> at Gerasa a thousand: <sup>25</sup> At Machaerus seventeen hundred : <sup>26</sup> In the wood of Jarden three thousand: <sup>27</sup> In the castle of Massada nine hundred and sixty: <sup>28</sup> In Cyrene, by Catullus, the governor, three thousand. <sup>29</sup> Besides these, many of every age, sex, and condition, were slain in this war, who are not reckoned ; but of these who are reckoned, the number amounts. to above one million, three hundred fifty seven thousand, six hundred and sixty; which would appear almost incredible, if their own historian had not so particularly enumerated them.

But besides the Jews who 'fell by the edge of the sword,' others were also to 'be led away captive into all nations:' and considering the number of the slain, the number of the captives too was very great. There were taken, particularly at Japha, two thousand one hundred and thirty: <sup>30</sup> At Jotapha one thousand two hundred: <sup>31</sup> At Tarichea six thousand chosen young men were sent to Nero, the rest sold, to the number of thirty thousand and four hundred, besides those who were given to Agrippa: <sup>32</sup> Of the Gadarenes two thousand two hundred: <sup>33</sup> In Idumea above a thousand. <sup>34</sup> Many besides these were taken at Jerusalem, so that as Josephus himself informs us, "the number of the captives taken in the whole war amounted to ninety-seven thousand; the tall and handsome young men Titus reserved for his triumph ; of the rest, those above seventeen years of age were sent to the works in Egypt, but most were distributed through the Roman provinces, to be destroyed in their theatres by the sword or by the wild beasts; those under seventeen were sold for slaves." <sup>35</sup> Of these captives, many underwent hard fate. Eleven thousand of them perished for want. <sup>36</sup> Titus exhibited all sorts of shows and spectacles at Caesarea, and many of the captives were there destroyed, some being exposed to the wild beasts, and others compelled to fight in. troops against one another. <sup>37</sup> At Caesarea, too, in honour of his brother's birthday, two thousand five hundred Jews were slain; and a great number likewise at Berytus, in honour of his father's. <sup>38</sup> The like was done in other cities of Syria. <sup>39</sup> Those whom he reserved for his triumph were Simon and John, the generals of the captives, and seven hundred others of remarkable stature and beauty. <sup>40</sup> Thus were the Jews miserably tormented, and distributed over the Roman provinces ; are they not still distressed, and dispersed over all the nations of the earth ?

As the Jews were 'to be led away captive into all nations,' so Jerusalem was to be 'trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.' And accordingly Jerusalem has never since been in the possession of the Jews, but hath constantly been in subjection to some other nation, as first to the Romans, and afterwards to the Saracens, and then to the Franks, and then to the Mamalucs, and now to the Turks.

Titus, as it was related before, commanded all the city as well as the temple to be destroyed; <sup>41</sup> only three towers were left standing for monuments to posterity of the strength of the city, and so much of the wall encompassed the city on the west, for barracks for the soldiers who were left as a garrison. All the rest of the city was so totally demolished, that there was no likelihood of its ever being inhabited again. The soldiers who were left there, were the tenth legion, with some troops of horse and companies of foot, <sup>42</sup> under the command of Terentius Rufus. <sup>43</sup> When Titus came again to Jerusalem in his way from Syria to Egypt, and beheld the sad devastation of the city, and called to mind its former splendour and beauty, he could not help lamenting over it, and cursing the authors of the rebellion, who had compelled him to the cruel necessity of destroying so fine a city. <sup>44</sup> Vespasian ordered all the lands of the Jews to be sold for his own use; and all the Jews, wheresoever they dwelt, to pay each man every year the same sum to the capitol of Rome, that they had before paid to the temple at Jerusalem. <sup>45</sup> The desolation was so complete, that Eleazar said to his countrymen : "What is become of our city, which was believed to be inhabited by God ? It is rooted up from the very foundations, and the only monument of it that is left, is the camp of those who destroyed it, still pitched upon its remains. Some unhappy old men sit over the ashes of the temple, and a few women reserved by the enemy for the basest of injuries." <sup>46</sup>

The first who rebuilt Jerusalem, though not all exactly on the same spot, was the Roman emperor AElus Adrian., and he called it after his own name AElia, and placed in it a Roman colony, and dedicated a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus in the room of the temple of the true God. <sup>47</sup> While he was visiting the eastern parts of the empire, he came to Jerusalem, as Epiphanius informs us, <sup>48</sup> forty seven years after its destruction by Titus, and found the city all levelled with the ground, and the temple of God trodden under foot, except a few houses: and he then formed the resolution of rebuilding it, but his design was not put into execution till towards the latter end of his reign. The Jews, naturally of a seditious spirit, were inflamed upon this occasion into open rebellion, to recover their native city and country out of the hands of heathen violators and oppressors: <sup>49</sup> and they were healed by a man called Barchochab, <sup>50</sup> a vile robber and murderer, whose name signifying the 'son of a star,' he confidently pretended that he was the person prophesied of by Balaam in those words, Numb. 24:17, -'There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel.' They were successful in their first enterprises through the neglect of the Romans; <sup>51</sup> and it is probable, as the rebellion was raised for this purpose, that they made themselves masters of AElia, or the new Jerusalem, and massacred or chased from thence the heathen inhabitants, and the Romans besieged and took it again ; for we read in several authors, in Eusebius, <sup>52</sup> in Jerome, <sup>53</sup> in Chrysostom, <sup>54</sup> and in Appian <sup>55</sup> who lived at that time, that Jerusalem was again besieged by the Romans under Adrian, and was entirely burnt and consumed. However that be, the Jews were at length subdued with most terrible slaughter ; fifty of their strongest castles, and nine hundred and eighty-five of their best towns were sacked and demolished ; <sup>56</sup> five hundred and eighty

thousand men fell by the sword in battle, besides an infinite multitude who perished by famine, and sickness, and fire, so that Judea was almost all desolated. The Jewish writers themselves reckon, that doubly more Jews were slain in this war, than came out of Egypt; and that their sufferings under Nebuchadnezzar and Titus were not so great as what they endured under the emperor Adrian.<sup>57</sup> Of the Jews who survived this second ruin of their nation, an incredible number of every age and sex were sold like horses, and dispersed over the face of the earth.<sup>58</sup> The emperor completed his design, rebuilt the city, re-established the colony, ordered the statue of a hog in marble to be set up over the gate that opened towards Bethlehem,<sup>59</sup> and published an edict strictly forbidding any Jew upon pain of death to enter the city, or so much as to look upon it at a distance.

<sup>60</sup>

In this state Jerusalem continued, being better known by the name of AElia, till the reign of the first Christian emperor, Constantine the Great. The name of Jerusalem had grown into such disuse, and was so little remembered or known, especially among the Heathens, that when one of the martyrs of Palestine, who suffered in the persecution under Maximin, was examined of what country he was, and answered of Jerusalem, neither the governor of the province, nor any of his assistants could comprehend what city it was, or where situated.<sup>61</sup> But in Constantine's time it began to resume its ancient name; and this emperor enlarged and beautified it with so many stately edifices and churches, that Eusebius said move like a courtier than a bishop, that this "perhaps was the new Jerusalem, which was foretold by the prophets."<sup>62</sup> The Jews, who hated and abhorred the Christian religion as much or more than the heathen, assembled again, as we learn from St. Chrysostom, to recover their city, and to rebuild their temple:<sup>63</sup> but the emperor with his soldiers repressed their vain attempt ; and having caused their ears to be cut off, and their bodies to be marked for rebels, he dispersed them over all the provinces of his empire, as so many fugitives and slaves.

The laws of Constantine, and of his son and successor Constantius, were likewise in other respects very severe against the Jews: But Julian called the Apostate, the nephew of Constantine, and successor of Constantius, was more favourably inclined towards them ; not that he really liked the Jews, but disliked the Christians. and out of prejudice and hatred to the Christian religion resolved to reestablish the Jewish worship and ceremonies. Our Saviour had said that 'Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles;' and he would defeat the prophecy, and restore the Jews. For this purpose he wrote kindly to the whole body or "community of the Jews."<sup>64</sup> expressing his concern for their former ill treatment, and assuring them of his protection from future oppression : and concluding with a promise, that "if he was successful in the Persian war, he would rebuild the holy city Jerusalem, restore them to their habitations, live with them there. and join with them in worshipping the great God of the universe."<sup>65</sup> His zeal even exceeded his promise; for before he set out from Antioch on his Persian expedition, "he proposed to begin with rebuilding the temple

at Jerusalem with the greatest magnificence." <sup>66</sup> He assigned immense sums for the building. He gave it in charge to Alypius of Antioch who had formerly been lieutenant in Britain, to superintend and hasten the work. Alypius set about it vigorously. The governor of the province assisted him in it. But horrible balls of fire bursting forth near the foundations, with frequent assaults, rendered the place inaccessible to the workmen, who were burnt several times: and in this manner the fiery element obstinately repelling them, the enterprise was laid aside." What a signal providence was it, that this no more than the former attempts should succeed and prosper; and that rather than the prophecies should be defeated, a prodigy was wrought even by the testimony of a faithful heathen historian ? The interposition certainly was as providential, as the attempt was impious : and the account here given is nothing more than what Julian himself and his own historian have testified. There are indeed many witnesses to the truth of the fact, whom an able critic hath well drawn together, and ranged in this order: "Ammianus Marcellinus a Heathen, Zemus a Jew, who confesseth that Julian was divinitus impeditus, hindered by God in this attempt : Nazianzen and Chrysostom among the Greeks, St. Ambrose and Ruffinus among the Latins, who flourished at the very time when this was done: Theodoret and Sozomen orthodox historians, Philostorgius an Arian, Socrates a favourer of the Novatians, who wrote the story within the space of fifty years after the thing was done, and whilst the eye-witnesses of the fact were yet surviving." <sup>67</sup> But the public hath lately been obliged with the best and fullest account of this whole transaction in Dr. Warburton's Julian, where the evidence for the miracle is set in the strongest light, and all objections are clearly refuted, to the triumph of faith and the confusion of infidelity.

Julian was the last of the Heathen emperors. His successor Jovian made it the business of his short reign, to undo as much as was possible, all that Julian had done : and the succeeding emperors were generally for repressing Judaism, in the same proportion as they were zealous for promoting Christianity. Adrian's edict was revived, which prohibited all Jews from entering into Jerusalem, or coming near the city ; and guards were posted to enforce the execution of it. <sup>68</sup> This was a very lucrative station to the soldiers : for the Jews used to give money for permission to come and see the ruins of their city and temple, and to weep over them, especially on the day whereon Jerusalem had been taken and destroyed by the Romans, <sup>69</sup> It doth not appear that the Jews had ever the liberty of approaching the city, unless by stealth or by purchase, as long as it continued in subjection to the Greek emperors. It continued in subjection to the Greek emperors till this as well as the neighbouring cities and countries, fell under the dominion of the Saracens. Only in the former part of the seventh century after Christ, and in the beginning of the reign of the emperor Heraclius it was taken and plundered by Chosroes king of Persia, and the greatest cruelties were exercised on the inhabitants. <sup>70</sup> Ninety thousand Christians are said to have been sold and sacrificed to the malice and revenge of the Jews. But Heraclius soon repelled and routed the Persians, rescued Jerusalem out of their hands, and banished all Jews, forbidding them, under the severest penalties, to come within three miles of the city.

Jerusalem was hardly recovered from the depredations of the Persians, before it was exposed to a worse evil by the conquering arms of the Saracens. It was in the beginning of the same seventh century, that Mohammed himself began to preach and propagate his new religion: and this little cloud which was at first no bigger than a man's hand soon overspread and darkened the whole hemisphere. Mohammed himself conquered some parts of Arabia. His successor, Abubeker, broke into Palestine and Syria. Omar, the next caliph, was one of the most rapid conquerors who ever spread desolation upon the face of the earth. His reign was of no longer duration than ten years and a half; and in that time he subdued all Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, and Egypt. His army invested Jerusalem.<sup>71</sup> He came thither in person; and the Christians after a long siege being reduced to the greatest extremities, in the year of the city capitulation. He granted them honorable conditions; he would not allow any of their churches to be taken from them; but only demanded of the Patriarch, with great modesty, a place where he might build a mosque. The Patriarch showed him Jacob's stone, and the place where the temple of Solomon had been built, which the Christians had filled with ordure in hatred to the Jews. Omar began himself to cleanse the place followed in this act of piety by the principal officers of his army; and it was in this place that the first mosque was erected at Jerusalem. Sophronius, the Patriarch, said, upon Omar's taking possession of the city, 'This is of a truth the abomination nation of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing in the holy place.'<sup>72</sup> Omar the conqueror of Jerusalem is by some authors said also to have died there, being stabbed by a slave at morning prayers in the mosque which he had erected. Abdolmelik the son of Merwan, the twelfth caliph, enlarged the mosque at Jerusalem, and ordered the people to go thither on pilgrimage, instead of Mecca, which was then in the hands of the rebe Abdollah;<sup>73</sup> and afterwards when the pilgrimage to Mecca was by any accident interrupted, the Mussulmen used to repair to Jerusalem for the same purposes of devotion.<sup>74</sup>

In this manner the holy city was transferred from the possession of the Greek Christians into the dominion of the Arabian Mussulmen, and continued in subjection to the caliphs till the latter part of the eleventh century, that is, above 400 years. At that time the Turks of the Selzuccian race had made themselves masters of Persia, had usurped the government, but submitted to the religion of the country; and being firmly seated there, they extended their conquests as far as Jerusalem, and farther.<sup>75</sup> They drove out the Arabians, and also despoiled the caliphs of their power over it; and they kept possession of it, till being weakened by divisions among themselves, they were ejected by the caliph of Egypt. The caliph of Egypt, perceiving the divisions and weakness of the Turks, advanced to Jerusalem with an army; and the Turks expecting no succour, presently surrendered it to him. But though it thus changed masters, and passed from the Arabians to the Turks, and from the Turks to the Egyptians, yet the religion professed there was still the same, the Mohammedan being authorized and established, and the Christian only tolerated upon payment of tribute.

The Egyptians enjoyed their conquests but a little while; for, in the same year that they took possession of it, they were dispossessed again by the Franks, as they are generally denominated, or the Latin Christians. <sup>76</sup> Peter, the hermit of Amiens in France, went on a pilgrimage to Palestine, and there having seen and shared in the distresses and miseries of the Christians, he represented them at his return in such pathetic terms, that by his preaching and instigation, and by the authority of pope Urban II, and the Council of Clermont, the west was stirred up against the east, Europe against Asia, the Christians against the Mussulmen, for the retaking of Jerusalem, and for the recovery of the holy land out of the hands of the infidels. It was the epidemic madness of the time ; and old and young, men and women, priests and soldiers, monks and merchants, peasants and mechanics, all were eager to assume the cross, and to set out for what they thought the holy wars. Some assert that the number of those who went out on this expedition amounted to above a million. They who make the lowest computation affirm, that there were at least three hundred thousand fighting men. After some losses and some victories the army sat down before Jerusalem, and after a siege of five weeks took it by storm, on the fifteenth of July in the year of Christ 1099; and all, who were not Christians, they put to the sword. They massacred above seventy thousand Musselmen; and hit the Jews in the place they gathered and burnt together; and the spoil that they found in the mosques was of inestimable value. Godfrey of Boulogne, the general, was chosen king; and there reigned nine kings in succession; and the kingdom subsisted eighty-eight years, till the year of Christ 1187, when the Mussulmen regained their former dominion, and with scarce any interruption have retained it ever since.

At that time the famous Saladin, having subverted the government of the caliph , had caused himself to be proclaimed sultan of Egypt. Having also "subdued Syria and Arabia, he formed the design of besieging Jerusalem, and of putting an end to that kingdom. <sup>77</sup> He marched against it with a powerful and victorious army and took it by capitulation on Friday the 2d of October, after a siege of fourteen days. He compelled the Christians to redeem their lives at the price of ten pieces of gold for a man, five for a woman, and two for a boy or girl. He restored to the oriental Christians the church of the holy sepulchre ; but forced the Franks or western Christians to depart to Tyre or other places, which were in the possession of their countrymen. But though the in the hands of the Mussulmen, yet the Christians had still their nominal king of Jerusalem : and for some time Richard I of England, who was one of the most renowned crusaders, and had eminently distinguished himself in the holy wars, gloried in the empty title. The city however did not remain so assured to the family of Saladin : <sup>78</sup> but thirty years after his nephew Al Moadham, sultan of Damascus, was obliged to demolish the walls, not being able to keep it himself, and fearing lest the Franks, who were then again become formidable in those parts, should establish themselves again in a place of such strength. Afterwards, in the year 1228, another of Saladin's family, <sup>79</sup> Al Kamel, the sultan of Egypt, who after the death of his kinsman Al Moadham enjoyed part of his

estates, to secure his own kingdom, made a treaty with the Franks, and yielded up Jerusalem to the emperor Frederic II, upon condition that he should not rebuild the walls, and that the mosques should be reserved for the devotions of the Mussulmen. Frederic was accordingly crowned king there, but soon returned into Europe. Not many years intervened, before the Christians broke the truce: <sup>80</sup> and Melecsalah, sultan of Egypt, being greatly offended, marched directly towards Jerusalem, put all the Franks therein to the sword, demolished the castle which they had built, sacked and raised the city, not even sparing the sepulchre of our Saviour' which till that time had never been violated or defiled ; and before the end of the same century, the crusaders or European Christians were totally extirpated out of the holy land having lost in their eastern expeditions, according to some accounts, above two millions of persons. <sup>81</sup> Before this time the Manialucs or the foreign slaves to the Egyptian sultans had usurped the government from their masters : and soon after this Kazan the chan of the Mogul-Tartars made an irruption into Syria, routed Al Naser the Sultan of Egypt, had Damascus surrendered to him, and ordered Jerusalem to be repaired and fortified. [<sup>82</sup> But being recalled by great troubles in Persia, he was obliged to quit his new conquests, and the Mainaluc sultan of Egypt soon took possession of them again. In like manner, when the great Timur or Tamerlane, like a mighty torrent, overwhelmed Asia, and vanquished both the Turkish and Egyptian sultans, he went twice in passing and repassing to visit the holy city, gave many presents to the religious persons, and freed the inhabitants from subsidies and garrisons. <sup>83</sup> But the ebb was almost as sudden as the flood. He died within a few years, and his sons and grandsons quarrelling about the succession, his vast empire in a little time mouldered away; and Jerusalem with the neighbouring countries reverted to the obedience of the Mamalucs again. It was indeed in a ruined and desolate state, as Chalcocondylas describes it, <sup>84</sup> and the Christians paid large tribute to the sultans of Egypt for access to the sepulchre of Jesus. And in the same state it continued, with little variation, under the dominion of the Mamalucs, for the space of above 260 years, till at length this with the other territories of the Mamalucs fell a prey to the arms of the Turks of the Othman race.

It was about the year 1516, that Selim, the ninth emperor of the Turks, turned his arms against Egypt ; <sup>85</sup> and having conquered one sultan, and hanged another, he annexed Syria, Egypt, and all the dominions of the Mamalucs, to the Othman empire. In his way to Egypt, he did as Kazan and Tamerlane had done before him; he went to visit the holy city, the seat of so many prophets, and the scene of so many miracles. <sup>86</sup> It lay at that time miserable deformed and ruined, according to the account of a contemporary historian, not inhabited by the Jews, who were banished into all the world, but by a few Christians, who paid large tribute to the Egyptian sultans for the possession of the holy sepulchre. <sup>87</sup> Selim offered up his devotions at the monuments of the old prophets, and presented the Christian priests with as much money as was sufficient to buy them provisions for six months ; and having stayed there one night, he went to join his army at Gaza. From that time to this, the "Othman emperors have possessed it under the title of Hami, that is, of protectors, and

not of masters :"<sup>88</sup> though they are, more properly, tyrants and oppressors. Turks, Arabians. and Christians of various sects and nations, dwell there out of reverence to the place; but very few Jews; and of those, the greatest part, as Basnage says, are beggars, and live upon alms.<sup>89</sup> The Jews say, that when the Messiah shall come, the city will undergo a conflagration, and inundation, in order to be purified from the defilements, which the Christian and Mohammedan have committed in it; and therefore they choose not to settle there. But the writer, just mentioned, assigns two more probable and natural reasons. "One is, that the Mohammedans look upon Jerusalem as a holy place: and therefore there are a great many Santons and devout Mussulmen, who have taken up their abode there, who are persecutors of the Jews, as well as of the Christians, so that they have less tranquillity and liberty in Jerusalem than in other places: and as there is very little trade, there is not much to be got ; and this want of gain drives them away."

By thus tracing the history of Jerusalem, from the destruction by Titus to the present time, it appears, evidently, that as the Jews have been 'led away captive into all nations,' so Jerusalem hath been 'trodden down of the Gentiles.' There are now almost 1700 years , in which the Jewish nation have been a standing monument of the truth of Christ's predictions, themselves dispersed over the face of the whole earth, and groaning under the yoke of foreign lords and conquerors : and at this day there is no reason to doubt but they will continue in the same state, nor ever recover their native country, 'until the tines of the Gentiles be fulfilled.' Our Saviour's words are very memorable, 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.' It is still trodden down by the Gentiles, and consequently the times of the Gentiles are not yet fulfilled. When 'the times of the Gentiles' shall be "fulfilled," then the expression implies, that the Jews shall be restored : and for what reason, can we believe, that though they are dispersed among all nations, yet, by a constant miracle, they are kept distinct from all, but for the farther manifestation of God's purposes towards them? The prophecies have been accomplished, to the greatest exactness, in the destruction of their city, and its continuing still subject to strangers ; in the dispersion of their people, and their living still separate from all people: and why should not the remaining parts of the same prophecies be as fully accomplished too, in their restoration, at the proper season, when 'the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled ?' The times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled when the times of 'the four great kingdoms' of the Gentiles, according to Daniel's prophecies, shall be expired, and 'the fifth kingdom,' or the kingdom of Christ, shall be set up in their place, and 'the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.' Jerusalem, as it has hitherto remained, so probably will remain in subjection to the Gentiles, 'until these times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;' or, as St. Paul expresseth it, Rom. 11:25, 26,— 'until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in: and so all Israel shall be saved,' and become again the people of God. 'The fulness of the Jews' will come in, as well as 'the fulness of the Gentiles.' For, ver. 12, &100. 'if the fall of them be the riches of the world,' and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness ?' For I would not,



brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in: and so all Israel shall be saved.

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**Footnotes**

1. Dr. Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiast. History vol. 1, p. 75.
2. Warburton's Julian, book 1, chap. 1, p. 21, &100. 2nd edit.
3. Divine Legation, vol. 2, book 4, sect. 4.
4. Totius autem obsidionis tempore undecies centena hominum millia perierunt. - De bel. Jan. ib. 6, cap. 9, sect. 3, p. 1291, edit. Hudson. [Translated in the text.]
5. Just. Lipsius de Constantia, lib. 2 cap. 21. Usher's Annals, in the conclusion. Ronnage's Hist. of the Jews. book 1. chap. 8. sect. 19.
6. Joseph. ib. lib. 2. cap. 14. sect. 9
7. Ibid. cap. 18, sect, 1.
8. Ibid. sect. 3.
9. Ibid. sect 5.
10. Ibid. sect. 8.
11. Ibid. sec. 10.
12. Ibid. sect. 11.
13. Ibid. cap. 20, sect. 2.
14. Lib. 3, cap. 2, sect. I
15. Ibid. sect 3.
16. Ibid. cap. 7, sect. 21.

## Our Saviour's Prophecies Relating to the Destruction of Jerusalem

17. Ibid. sect. 32.

18. Ibid. sect. 36.

19. Ibid. cap. 8. sect. 3.

20. Ibid. cap. 9, wet. 9, 10

21. Lib. 4, cap. 1, sect. 10.

22. Ibid. cap. 2, sect. 5.

23. Ibid. cap. 7, sect. 5.

24. Ibid. cap, 8, sect. .1.

25. Ibid, cap. 9, sect. 1.

26. Lib. 7, cap. 6, sect. 4.

27. Ibid. sect. 6.

28. Ibid. cap. 9, sect. I

29. Ibid. cap. It, sect. 2,

30. Lib. 3. cap. 7, sect. 31

31. Ibid. sect. 36.

32. Ibid. cap. 9, sect. 10.

33. Lib. 4, cap. 7, sect. 5.

34. Ibid. cap. 8, sect. 1.

35. Lib. 6, cap. 9, sect. 2 et 3, p. 1291. [Translated in the text.] .-Tom,p.123.

## Our Saviour's Prophecies Relating to the Destruction of Jerusalem

36. Ibid. sect. 2.

37. Lib. 7, cap. 2, sect 1.

38. Ibid. cap. 3, sect. 1.

39. Ibid. cap. 5, sect 1.

40. Ibid, sect. 3.

41. Joseph. de Bell, Jud. lib. 7. cap. 1, sect. 1. edit. Hudson.

42. Ibid. sect. 2.

43. Ibid. cap. 2.

44. Ibid. cap. 5. sect. 2,

45. Ibid. cap. 6, sect. 6.

46. Quid de ea factum est, quam Deum habitasse credidimus? Radicitus ex fundamentis evulaa est, et id solum ejus monumentum relictum, castra scilicet illorum a quibus exciBa est jam reliquiis ejus imposita. Senes vero infelices templi cineribus assident, et paucEe mulieres ad turpissimam pudoris injuriam ab hostibus reservatm. [Translated in the text.] Ibid. cap. 8 sect. 7, p. 1329.

47. Dionis Casa. Hist. lib. 69, p. 793, edit. Leunclay. Hanov. 1606.

48. Epiphan. de Mena. et Pond. cap. 14, p. 170, vol. 2, edit. Petavii

49. Dionis Hist. ibid.

50. Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 4, cap. 6. Vide etiam Scaligeri Animadvers, in Eusebii Cl,ron. p. 216.

51. Dionis. Hist. ibid.

52. Euseb. 'Demons. Evang. lib. 2, cap. \$8, p. 71, lib, 6, cap. 18, p. 286, edit. P" 1628.

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53. Hieron. in Jerem. 31:col. 679; in Ezek. Y. col. 726; in Dan. 9:col. 1117. in loel 1:col 1340 vol. 3, edit Benedict.
54. Orat. 5:advers. Judaeos, vol, 1, p. 645, edit. Benedict.
55. Appian. De Bell. Syr. p. 119, edit. Steph.; p. 191, edit. Tollii.
56. Dionis Hist ibid. 111. 794.
57. Author libri Juchasin scribit Hadrianum, duplo plures Judaeos in hoc bello trucidasse quam egressi sint ex Aegypto. Alius libro qui incipitur [Hebrew] quem Drusius laudat in Praeteritis, Non sic afflixisse eos Nebuchadnezzarem neque Titum, sicut Hadrianus imperator. [The author of the book Juchazin, narrates that Adrian put to death in this war, more than twice as many Jews as came out of Egypt. Another, in a book entitled Malche-Rome, which.. Drusius commends in his Annals, saith that neither Nebuchadnezzar nor Titus afflicted them so much as the emperor Adrian.] Mede's Works, b. 3, p. 443.
58. Hieron. in Jerem. 31:col. 679; in Zach. 11:col. 1744, vol. 3, edit. Benedict. Chron. Alex. p. 596.
59. Euseb. et Hieron. Chron. Ann. 187.
60. Euseb. Hist. lib. 4, cap. 6. Hieron. in U. 6:col. 65, vol. 3, edit. Benedict. Justin. Mart. Apol. Prim. p. 84, edit. Par. p. 71, Thirlbi.
61. Euseb de Mart. Palaest. cap 11
62. Atque fuerit recens ilia ac nova Hierusalem. prophetarum vaticiniis praedicata. [Translated in the text.] Euseb. de Vit. Const. lib. 3 cap. 33.
63. Chrysostom. Orat. 5:advers. Jud Sect. 11. p. 645. Orat. Ti. sect. 2, p. 651, 8:1. edit. Benedict.
64. Juliani Epist. 25. h8awy rw xwyw. [Translated in the text.] p. 396, edit. Spanhe. Inii.
65. Quo et ipse Persico halln ex animi sententia gesto, sanctara urbem Hierusalem, quam multos jam annos habitatam videre desideratia, meis laboribus refectam incolam, et una vobiscum in ea optimo, Deo gratiasagam. [Translated in the text.] Ibid. p. 398.
66. Ambitiosum quondam apud Hierosolimam teinpluin, quod post multa et interneciva certamina obsidente Vespasiano posteaque Tito wgre est expugnatum, instaurare sumptibus cogitabat immodicis: negotiuniquematurandum Alypio dederat Antiochensi, qv olim Britannias curaverat pro praefectis. Cum il—ie. rei 0-li fertiter

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instaret Alypius, juraveretque provinciae rector, metuendi globi flaminarum prope fundamenta crebris ac sultibus erumpentes, fecere locum exustis aliquoties operantibus inaccessum: hocque ku'. do elemento destinatus repellente, cessavit inceptum. [He purposed at an enormous expence, to rebuild the magnificent temple at Jerusalem, which had been with difficulty destroyed after many bloody battles in the siege which was commenced by Vespasian and continued by Titus. He gave it in charge to Alypius, &100. as in the text.] Amm. Marcell. lib. 23, cap. 1, p 350 edit. Valesii. 1681.

67. Whitby's General Preface, P. 28.

68. Augustini. Serm. 5, sect. 5, inna. 5 p. 23, edit. Benedict Antwerp. Sulpicii Severi Ifist. lib 2, p. 99. edit. F'Izevir, 1656. -

69. Hieron. in Sophon. 1:col. 1655. vol. 3, edit Benedict.

70. Theoph. ad Heracl. p, 252, &100. edit. Paris.; p. 200, &100. edit. VeneL Cedren. ad Heracl. p. 408, edit Paris; p. 322, &100. edit. Venet. Basnage's Hist of the Jews, b. 6 chap. 18, wet. 7.

71. Elmacini Hist. Saracen. lih. 1, p. 22 & 28, edit, Urpenii. Herbelot. Biblioth. OrienLile, p. 687. Basnage's Hist. of the Jews, b. 6, chap 19. sect. t Ockley's Hist of the Sarur.ens,vol. 1, p. 243, &100.

72. Theophanes, p. 281, edit. Paris.; p. 224. edit VeneL Bagnage, ibid. Ockley, 210.

73. Elmacin. Hist. Sar. lib. 1. p. 58. Ockley, vol. 2, p. 299.

74. Herbelot Bib. Orient. p. 270.

75. Elmacini Hist Sar. lib. 3, p. 267-287 Abut.Pbaraji; Hist Dyn. 9. p 243 Vern Pecockii. Herbelot. Bib. Orient. p. 969

76. Abul-Pharajii Hist. Dyn. 9, p. 243. Vera. Pocockii. Elmacini Hist: Saracen. lib. 3, p. 293. Herhelot. Bib. Orient. p. 269. Savage's Abridg of Knolleff and Ricaut. vol. 1, p. 1% &100. Voltaire's fliat. of Europe, of the Crusades, Bla'ir's Chronol. Tables.

77. Elmacin. ibid. p. 293. Abul-Pharaj. ibid. p. 273, 274. Herbelot, ibid. p. 269 et 743. Knolles and Savage, p. 54. Voltaire, ibid. Blair's Chronological Tables.

78. Herbelot, ibid. p. 269. Knolles and Savage. p. 74. Voltaire, ibid.

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79. Abul-Pharajii *ibid.* p. 305. Iferbelot. *ibid.* 1). 269 et 745. Knolles and Savage, p 81. Voltaire, *ibid.* and *Annals of the Empire.* Ann. 1229.

80. Herbelot, *ibid.* p. 269. Knolles and Savage, p. 83.

81. Knolles and Savage, 11. 95. Voltaire, *ibid.*

82. Putockii *Supplem. ad Abul-Pharaj.* p. 2. Knolles and Savage, p. 91

83. Chalcocondylas *de rebus Turc. lib. & Herbelot,* p. 877, &t. Knolles and Sange, P. 138, &100.

84. *Sepulchrum Jesu sub potestate istius regis in Palsentina situm est, unde plurimum lacri ei accedit.-Siturn in urbe Hierusalem, quw devastata est cum maritimis regionibul* [The sepulchre of Jesus was situated in Palestine, which was under the dominion of this king, from which he derived much gain.-It was situated in the city of Jerusalem, which with the maritime countries was laid waste.] Chalcocond. *ibid.* p. 75, edit. Paris.; p. 59. edit. VeneL

85. Pocockii *Supplem. ad Abul-Pharaj.* p. 29, 80, 49. Herbelot. *Bib. OrieuL* p. 802. Knolles and Savage, p. 240, &100. Prince Cantemir's *Hist. of the Othman empire,* in *Selern* 1.

86. Pauli Jovii *Hist. lib. 17.* Herbeloti *ibid.* Knolles and Savage, p. 243. Prince Cantemir, *ibid.* Sect. 21, p. 163.

87. Paulus Jovius, *ibid.* Ea tune miserabili sacrartun ruinarum deformitate inculca atque deserts; non a Judmis veteribus incolis, qui tune toto orbe extorres in admissi oceleris poenam, nee sedern nee patriam habent. sed a paucia Christiania incolebstur. 1; cum ignominia. et gravi admoduin coutumelia, Christiani nominis, ob conces" M wenerandi sepulchi possessionem, grave tributtun Ngyptiis regibus persolvunt, &100.

[It was at the time neglected and deserted on account of the miserable state of its sacred ruins, being inhabited by a few Christians only, and not by the Jews, it's former possessors; who, as a punishment for their crimes, were then exiles in every part of the world having no fixed residence or country they could call their own. Loaded with the ignominy and reproach attached to the name of Christians, they pay to, the kings of Egypt heavy tribute for the possession of the holy sepulchre.]

88. Et sea succesbeurs Vont possedie jusqu'a present sous le titre de Hami. 100'est, dire, de protecteurs, et non pan de maitres, (Translated in the text.) flerbelm P. 270.

89. Basuage's *Hist. of the Jews,* book 7. chap. 21, ried. its.

## **Dissertation XXI**

### **Part Four**

WHEN we first entered on an explanation of our Saviour's prophecies, relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, comprised chiefly in this 24th chapter of St. Matthew, it was observed, that the disciples in their question propose two things to our Saviour; first, when should be the 'time' of his coming, or the destruction of Jerusalem; and secondly, what should be the 'signs' of it, ver. 3,— 'Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the conclusion of the age.' The latter part of the question our Saviour answereth first, and treateth at large of the 'signs' of the destruction of Jerusalem from the 4th verse of the chapter to the 31st inclusive. He toucheth upon the most material passages and incidents, not only of those which were to forerun this great event, but likewise of those which were to attend, and immediately to follow upon it : and having thus answered the latter part of the question, he proceeds now in verse 32nd to answer the former part of the question, as to the 'time' of his coming, and the destruction of Jerusalem.

He begins with observing that the signs which he had given, would be as certain an indication of the time of his coming, as the fig-tree's putting forth its leaves is of the approach of summer; ver. 32, 33, — 'Now learn a parable of the fig-tree : when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near,' or he is near, 'even at the doors.' He proceeds to declare that the time of his coming was at no very great distance, and to show that he hath been speaking all this while of the destruction of Jerusalem, he affirms with his usual affirmation, ver 34, 'Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.' It is to me a wonder how any man can refer part of the foregoing discourse to the destruction of Jerusalem, and part to the end of the world, or any other distant event, when it is said so positively here in the conclusion, 'All these things shall be fulfilled in this generation.' It seemeth as if our 'Saviour had been aware of some such misapplication of his words, by adding yet greater force and emphasis to his affirmation, ver. 35, — 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.' It is a common figure of speech in the oriental languages, to say of two things that the one shall be and the other shall not be, when the meaning is only that the one shall happen sooner or more easily than the other. As in this instance of our Saviour, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away,' the meaning is, Heaven and earth shall sooner or more easily pass away than my words shall pass away; the frame of the universe shall sooner or more easily be dissolved than my words shall not be fulfilled : And thus it is expressed by St. Luke upon a like occasion, 16:17, — 'It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fall.' In another place he says, Matt. 16:28,- - 'There are some standing here, who shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom:' intimating that it would not succeed immediately, and yet not at such a

distance of time, but that some then living should be spectators of the calamities coming upon the nation. In like manner he says to the women, who bewailed and lamented him as he was going to be crucified, Luke 23:28, — Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children:' which sufficiently implied, that the days of distress and misery were coming, and would fall on them and their children. But at that time there was not any appearance of such immediate ruin. The wisest politician could not have inferred it from the then present state of affairs. Nothing less than divine prescience could have certainly foreseen and foretold it.

But still the exact time of this judgment was unknown to all creatures, ver. 36, — 'But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.' The word *wra* is of larger signification than 'hour ;'<sup>1</sup> and besides it seemeth somewhat improper to say, 'Of that day and hour knoweth no man;' for if the 'day' was not known, certainly the 'hour' was not, and it was superfluous to make such an addition. I conceive therefore that the passage should be rendered, not 'Of that day and hour knoweth no man,' but 'Of that day and season knoweth no man,' as the word is frequently used in the best authors both sacred and profane. It is true our Saviour declares, 'All these things shall be fulfilled in this generation;' it is true the prophet Daniel hath given some intimation of the time in his famous prophecy of the seventy weeks : but though this great revolution was to happen in that generation; though it was to happen towards the conclusion of seventy weeks or 490 years, to be computed from a certain date that is not easy to be fixed ; yet the particular 'day,' the particular 'season' in which it was to happen, might still remain a secret to men and angels: and our Saviour had before, ver. 20, advised his disciples to pray, that their 'flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath-day;' the 'day' not being known, they might pray that their flight be not on the 'sabbath-day;' the 'season' not being known, they might pray that their flight be not in the 'winter.' As it was in the days of Noah, saith our Saviour, ver. 37, 38, 39. so shall it be now. As then, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, till they were surprised by the flood, notwithstanding the frequent warnings and admonitions of that preacher of righteousness : so now they shall be engaged in the business and pleasures of the world, little expecting little thinking of this universal ruin, till it come upon them, notwithstanding the express predictions and declarations of Christ and his apostles. 'Then shalt two be in the field, the one shall be taken and the other left: Two women shall be grinding at the mill.' Dr. Shaw, in his travels, making some observations upon the kingdoms of Algiers and Tunis, says in p. 297, that "women alone are employed to grind their corn, and that when the uppermost mill-stone is large, or expedition is required, then only, a second woman is called in to assist." This observation I owe to Bishop Pearce.- "Two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken and the other left.— ver. 40, 41. That is, Providence will then make a distinction between such as are not at all distinguished now. Some shall be rescued from the destruction of Jerusalem, like Lot out of the burning of Sodom; while others, no ways' perhaps different in outward circumstances, shall be left to perish in it.



The matter is carried somewhat farther in the parallel place of St. Mark ; and it is said not only that the angels were excluded from, the knowledge of the particular time, but that the Son himself was also ignorant of it. The 13th chapter of that evangelist answers to the 24th of St. Matthew. Our Saviour treateth there of the signs and circumstances of his coming, and the destruction of Jerusalem, from the 5th to the 27th verse inclusive; and then at verse the 28th he proceeds to treat of the time of his coming and the destruction of Jerusalem. The text in St. Matthew is, 'of that day and season knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. The text in St. Mark is, 'Of that day and season knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son but the Father.' It is true the words 'jde o ouoj,' neither the 'Son,' were omitted in some copies of St. Mark, as they are inserted in some copies of St. Matthew: but there is no sufficient authority for the omission in St. Mark, any more than for the insertion in St. Matthew. Erasmus and some of the moderns are of opinion, that the words were omitted in the text of St. Matthew lest they should afford a handle to the Arians for proving the Son to be inferior to the Father:" <sup>2</sup> but it was to little purpose to erase them out of St. Matthew, and to leave them standing in St. Mark. On the contrary, St. Ambrose and Rome of the ancients assert, <sup>3</sup> that they were inserted in the text of St. Mark by the Arians; but there is as little foundation or pretence for this assertion, as there is for the other. It is much more probable, that they were omitted in some copies of St. Mark by some indiscreet orthodox, who thought them to bear too hard upon our Saviour's divinity. For all the most ancient copies and translations extant retain them; the most ancient fathers quote them, and comment upon them; and certainly it is easier for words to be omitted in a copy, so as that the omission should not generally prevail afterwards, than it is for words to be inserted in a copy, so as that the insertion should generally prevail afterwards. Admit the words therefore as the genuine words of St. Mark we must, and we may without any prejudice to our Saviour's divinity. For Christ may be considered in two respects, in his human and his divine nature; and what is said with regard only to the former, doth not at all affect the latter. As he was the great teacher and revealer of his Father's will, he might know more than the angels, and yet he might not know all things. It is said in St. Luke 2:52, that 'Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.' He 'increased in wisdom,' and consequently in his human nature he was not omniscient. In his human nature he was the 'son' of David; in his divine nature he was the 'Lord' of David. In his human nature he was upon earth; in his divine nature he was in heaven, John 3:13, even while upon earth. In like manner it may be said, that though as God he might know all things, yet he might be ignorant of some things, as man. And of this particular the Messiah might be ignorant, because it was no part of his office or commission to reveal it. 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power,' as our Saviour said, Acts 1:7, when a like question was proposed to him. It might be proper for the disciples, and for the Jews too by their means, to know the signs and circumstances of our Saviour's coming, and the

destruction of Jerusalem; but upon many accounts it might be unfit for them both, to know the precise time.

Hitherto we have explained this 24th chapter of St. Matthew, as relating to the destruction of Jerusalem; and, without doubt, as relating to the destruction of Jerusalem it is primarily to be understood. But though it is to be understood of this primarily, yet it is not to be understood of this only; for there is no question that our Saviour had a farther view and meaning in it. It is usual with the prophets to frame and express their prophecies so, as that they shall comprehend more than one event, and have their several periods of completion. This every one must have observed, who hath been ever so little conversant in the writings of the ancient prophets: and this I conceive to be the case here ; and the destruction of Jerusalem to be typical of the end of the world. The destruction of a great city is a lively type and image of the end of the world; and we may observe, that our Saviour no sooner begins to speak of the destruction of Jerusalem, than his figures are raised, his language is swelled, and he expresseth himself in such terms, as in a lower sense indeed, are applicable to the destruction of Jerusalem, but describe something higher in their proper and genuine signification. 'The sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, the stars shall fall from heaven, the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, the Son of Man shall come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' These passages, in a figurative sense, as we have seen, May be understood of the destruction of Jerusalem; but in their literal sense can be meant only of the end of the world. In like manner, that text, 'Of that day and season knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only; ' the consistence and connection of the discourse oblige us to understand it as spoken of the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, but in a higher sense it may be true also of the time of the end of the world, and the general judgment. All the subsequent discourse too, we may observe, doth not relate so properly to the destruction of Jerusalem, as to the end of the world and the general judgment. Our Saviour loseth sight, as it were, of his former subject, and adapts his discourse more to the latter. And the end of the Jewish state was, in a manner, the end of the world to many of the Jews.

The remaining part of the chapter is so clear and easy as to need no comment or explanation. It will be more proper to conclude with some useful reflections upon the whole.

It appears next to impossible, that any man should duly consider these prophecies, and the exact completion of them, and if he is a believer, not to be confirmed in the faith; or if he is an infidel, not to be converted. Can any stronger proof be given of a divine revelation than the spirit of prophecy; and can any stronger proof be given of the spirit of prophecy, than the examples now before us, in which so many contingencies, and I might say, improbabilities, which human wisdom

or prudence could never foresee, are so particularly foretold, and so punctually accomplished! At the time when Christ pronounced these prophecies, the Roman governor, resided at Jerusalem, and had a force sufficient to keep the people in obedience: and could human prudence foresee that the city, as well as the country, would revolt and rebel against the Romans? Could human prudence foresee 'famines,' and 'pestilences,' and 'earthquakes,' in divers places? Could human prudence foresee the speedy propagation of the gospel so contrary to all human probability? Could human prudence foresee such an utter destruction of Jerusalem, with all the circumstances preceding and following it? It was never the custom of the Romans absolutely to ruin any of their provinces. It was improbable, therefore, that such a thing should happen to all, and still more improbable that it should happen under the humane and generous Titus, who was indeed, as he was called, "the love and delight of mankind." <sup>4</sup>

What is usually objected to the other predictions of holy writ, cannot, with any pretence, be objected to these prophecies of our Saviour, that they are figurative and obscure; for nothing can be conveyed in plainer simpler terms, except where he affected some obscurity, as it hath been shown, for particular reasons. It is allowed, indeed, that some of these prophecies are taken from Moses and Daniel. Our Saviour, prophesying of the same events, hath borrowed and applied some of the same images and expressions. But this is a commendation rather than any discredit to his predictions. He hath built upon the foundations of the inspired writers before him; but what a superstructure hath he raised! He hath acted in this case as in every other, like one who came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them. He hath manifested himself to be a true prophet, by his exact interpretation and application of other prophets. He is also much more particular and circumstantial than either Moses or Daniel. In several instances his prophecies are entirely new, and properly his own: and, besides, he uses greater precision in fixing and confining the time to that very generation.

For the completion of these prophecies. the persons seem to have been wonderfully raised up and preserved by divine Providence. Vespasian was promoted from obscurity; and though feared and hated by Nero, yet was preferred by him, and singled out as the only general among the Romans who was equal to such a war: "God perhaps," as Josephus intimates, "so disposing and ordering affairs." <sup>5</sup> He had subdued the greatest part of Judea, when he was advanced to the empire; and he was happy in putting an end to the civil wars, and to the other troubles and calamities of the state, or otherwise he would hardly have been at leisure to prosecute the war with the Jews. Titus was wonderfully preserved in the most critical articles of danger. While he was taking a view of the city, he was surrounded by the enemy, and nothing less was expected than that he should be slain, or made prisoner: but he resolutely broke through the midst of them, and though unarmed, yet arrived unhurt at his own camp; upon which Josephus maketh this reflection: that "from hence it is obvious to understand, that the turns of war, and the dangers of princes, are under the peculiar

care of God." <sup>6</sup> Josephus himself was also no less wonderfully preserved than Titus; the one to destroy the city, and the other to record its destruction. He marvellously escaped from the snares which were laid for him by John of Gischala, <sup>7</sup> and by Jesus, the chief of the robbers: <sup>8</sup> and when his companions were determined to kill him and themselves rather than surrender to the Romans, he prevailed with them to draw lots who should be killed, the one after the other; and at last he was left with only one other, whom he persuaded to submit with him to the Romans. <sup>9</sup> Thus was he saved from the most imminent destruction ; and he himself esteemed it, as it certainly was, a singular instance of divine providence.

As Vespasian and Titus seem to have been raised up and preserved for the completion of these prophecies, so might Josephus for the illustration of their completion. For the particular passages and transactions, by which we prove the completion of these prophecies, we derive not so much from Christian writers, who might be suspected of a design to parallel the events with the predictions, as from Heathen authors, and chiefly from Josephus the Jewish historian, who though very exact and minute in other relations, yet avoids as much as, ever he can the mention of Christ and the Christian religion. He doth not so much as once mention the name of false Christs,' though he hath frequent occasions to speak largely of 'false prophets;' so cautious was he touching upon any thing, that might lead him to the acknowledgement of the true Christ. His silence here is as remarkable, as his copiousness upon other subjects. It is indeed very providential, that a more particular detail, a more exact history is preserved of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of all the circumstances relating to it, than of any other matter whatsoever transacted so long ago : and it is an additional advantage to our cause, that these accounts are transmitted to us by a Jew, and by a Jew who was himself an eye-witness to most of the things which he relates. As a general in the wars he must have had an exact knowledge of all transactions, and as a Jewish priest he would not relate them with any favour or partiality to the Christian cause. His history was approved by Vespasian and Titus (who ordered it to be published) and by king Agrippa and many others, both Jews and Romans, who were present in those wars. <sup>10</sup> He had likewise many enemies, who would readily have convicted him of any justification, if he had been guilty of any. He designed nothing less, and yet as if he had designed nothing more, his history of the Jewish wars may serve as a larger comment on our Saviour's prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem. "If any one would compare our Saviour's words with that writer's history of the whole war," as Eusebius very well observes, "he could not but admire and acknowledge our Saviour's prescience and prediction to be wonderful above nature, and truly divine." <sup>11</sup>

The predictions are the clearest as the calamities were the greatest which the world ever saw; and what heinous sin was it, that could bring down such heavy judgments on the Jewish church and nation! Can any other with half so much probability be assigned, as what the scripture assigns, their crucifying the Lord of Glory ? As St. Paul expresseth it, I Thess. 2:15, 16,— ' They both

killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and persecuted the apostles,'— and so 'filled up their sins, and wrath came upon them to the uttermost.' This is always objected as the most capital sin of the nation: and upon reflection, we shall find really some correspondence between their crime and their punishment. They put Jesus to death, when the nation was assembled to celebrate the passover : when the nation was assembled too to celebrate the passover Titus shut them up within the walls of Jerusalem. <sup>12</sup> The rejection of the true Messiah was their crime; and the following of false Messiahs to their destruction was their punishment. They sold and bought Jesus as a slave; and they themselves were afterwards sold and bought as slaves at the lowest prices. They preferred a robber and murderer to Jesus, whom they crucified between two thieves ; and they themselves were afterwards infested with bands of thieves and robbers. <sup>13</sup> They put Jesus to death, lest the Romans should come and take away their place and nation; and the Romans did come and take away their place and nation. They crucified Jesus before the walls of Jerusalem; and before the walls of Jerusalem they themselves were crucified in such numbers, that it is said "room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses for the bodies." <sup>14</sup> I should think it hardly possible for any man to lay these things together, and not conclude the Jews' own imprecation to be remarkably fulfilled upon them, Matt. 27:25,— ' His blood be on us and on our children.'

We Christians cannot indeed be guilty of the very same offence in crucifying the lord of glory ; but it behooves us to consider, whether we may not be guilty in the same kind, and by our sins and iniquities, Heb. 6:6,— ' crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame;' and therefore whether being like them in their crime, we may not also resemble them in their punishment. They rejected the Messiah, and we indeed have received him: but have our lives been at all agreeable to our holy profession, or rather, as we have had opportunities of knowing Christ more, have we not obeyed him less than other Christians, and, Heb. 10:29,— ' trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith we are sanctified, an unholy thing, and done despite unto the spirit of grace?' The flagrant crimes of the Jews, and the principal sources of their calamities, in the opinion of Josephus, were "their trampling upon all human laws, deriding divine things. and making a jest of the oracles of the prophets as so many dreams and fables:" and how hath the same Spirit of licentiousness and infidelity prevailed likewise among us! How have the laws and lawful authority been insulted with equal insolence and impunity! How have the holy scriptures, those treasures of divine wisdom, not only been neglected, but despised, derided, and abused to the worst purposes! How have the principal articles of our faith been denied, the prophecies and miracles of Moses and the prophets, of Christ and his apostles, been ridiculed, and impiety and blasphemy not only been whispered in the ear, but proclaimed from the press 'How hath all public worship and religion, and the administration of the sacraments been slighted and condemned, and the Sabbath profaned by those chiefly who ought to set a better example, to whom much is given, and of whom therefore much will be required' And if for their sins and provocations, Rom. 11:20, 21,— 'God spared not the natural branches take heed lest he also spare

not the tree. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear.' God bore long with the Jews: and hath he not borne long with us too? But he cut them off, when the measure of their iniquities was full; and let us beware lest our measure be not also well-nigh full, and we be not growing ripe for excision. What was said to the church of Ephesus, is very applicable to us and our own case, Rev. 2:5,—'Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.'

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### Footnotes

1. Oran hie non diei particulam sed latius sumpti temporis ambiturn intelligo, &100. [consider wra here not as a part of a day ; but a portion of time, taken in a larger sense. Grotius in locum.]

2. Proinde suspicor hoc a nonnullis subtracturn, ne Arianis esset ansa confirmandi Filium esse Patre minorem &100, Erasm. in loc. [Translated in the text.]

3. Ambros. de Fide. lib. 6, cap. & Veteres Graeci codices non habent, 'Quod non filius scit;' sed non mirum est, si et hoc falsarunt, qui scripturas interpolare solent. 'The ancient Greek copies have not these words, 'knoweth neither the Son,' but it is not to be wondered at, that those who have interpolated the holy scriptures, should have falsified them here also.]

4. Amor ac deliciae humani generis. [Translated in the text.] Suet. in Tito. sect. 1.

5. Taca te cai weri twm dlwn hoh rv qen. Forsan et Dec aliquid deo univertis, praeordinante. [Translated in the text.] Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 3, cap. 1. p 1118, edit. Hudson.

6. Enqa dh malija wareja noein, oti cai wolwmwn dopai cai basilewn cindunoi melontai rto qeu Hinc sane maxime licet intelligere, Deo curae esse et belli momenta et regum pericula [Translated in the text.] ib. lib. 5, cap. 2, sect. % p. 1216

7. Josephi Vita, sect 17, &100.

8. Ibid. sect. 22

9. De Bell. Jud. lib. 3. cap. 7

10. Josephi Vita, sect 65 Contra Apion. A. 1, sect. 9

## Our Saviour's Prophecies Relating to the Destruction of Jerusalem

11. Sugcrinaj as Tic Tar To awthroj hmwn lexeij Tour loipaij -To dullraqewj ijoriaij taij Wye IN wantoj wolemj, wwj uc an apoqumaseien, zein Apr alhqwj cai ucerquwj waradoxen thn -To To Quod si quis servatoris postri verba cum iia comparet, quea ab eodem scriptore de universo bello commemorsta sunt, fieri non potest quin admiretur praescientiam ac praedictionem servatoris nostri, eamque vere diviuam at supra modum stupendam esse fateatur. [Translated in the text.] Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 3 cap. 7.

12. Joseph. del Bell. Jud. lib- 6, cap. 9, sect. 8 et 4. Euseb. Hist. lib. 3, cap.5

13. Joseph. ibid. lib. 2 cap. 4 st 13 ; lib. 3, cap. 8; lib. 4, cap. 3; lib. 7, cap. So &100.

14. Los Isa To wlhqoj cwra te eneleipeto -rest jaupoiij, cai jauroi toij swmasio. Et proplar multitudinem spatium crucibas deerat, at corponbus cruces. [Translated in the text. bid. lib. 5, cap. 2, sect. 1, p. 1247.