

PAST FULFILMENT
OF PROPHECY
A GUIDE TO FUTURE

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“Let no man deceive you by any means : for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.”—2 THESS. ii. 3.

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PAST FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY.

It is impossible to read the records of what inspired writers declare to be “fulfilled prophecy” without being struck with its *literal* accomplishment. All things are done “that the Scripture might be fulfilled,” (John xix. 28,) even to the minutest detail.

As an example of the truth of this remark, we may take the predictions regarding that greatest of all events the Crucifixion of our Lord:—the price of Him that was valued—the field by name bought with it—the place where that price was cast—the guide and friend to betray—the gall and vinegar to drink—the parting the garments and casting lots for the vesture—the piercing the hands and the feet—not a bone to be broken—the numbering with the transgressors and making his grave with

the rich were all accomplished as predicted, literally and to the uttermost.

In contrast, it is equally impossible not to be struck with the laboured efforts of interpreters in these days to fill up the dates and events left unfulfilled at the close of the Sacred Canon, and in which we, on whom the ends of the world are come, have so deep an interest. History has been ransacked, believer and unbeliever, pagan and christian, papist and protestant, alike summoned to give testimony, whilst scarcely two interpreters of the evidence they do give agree as to its precise meaning, or the events upon which it really bears. The unlearned are puzzled and perplexed by the learned on either side ; inscriptions in known and unknown languages, coins, banners, symbols are all made to contribute to the view each takes of his subject ; and whilst no one professes to be altogether satisfied, each is half afraid to be thought altogether sceptical.

That the “times of the end” are upon us is felt intensely by most, and the natural anxiety from such a conviction is not allayed by the uncertainty in which each honest enquirer feels himself in reality to be, inasmuch as there is

manifestly in Scripture itself an *express encouragement* given him to search into these things, which yet he cannot understand. The perplexity becomes still more painful, as from time to time, he cannot help noticing one landmark or other to which he had been invited to look, less confidently spoken of than it was:—the Papacy and increasing greatness of the Pope of Rome were long pointed to as objects of special attention, and with many still are; whilst *his* present position (so unlike the detailed triumphant career of the Antichrist) is, to say the least of it, beginning to create doubts. The drying up of the Euphrates too (meaning, as is declared the Turkish Empire), has been another object of anxious watching as a supposed index of the period at which our history has arrived, and now with the most credulous doubts are arising as to this being a landmark at all.

Where are we then? is the question asked by each; and how is it that with all the intelligence and light of these days around us, we are still so far from feeling any satisfaction, or being able to trace in the events stated as fulfilling prophecy *subsequent* to the taking of Jerusalem and dispersion of the Jews, even a resemblance

to *previous* accomplishments, so simple and satisfying. Is it not possible that the desire to carry out theories and views of our own, and to support the preconceived notions devised by our own fancy or that of others, may have been misleading us all greatly, and that a little more regard to the literal fulfilment of *words* even in the past, might yet be the means of conducting to a more correct appreciation now of the system on which we have been following one another with little or no comfort or profit.

The wayfaring man, though a fool, is not to err ; but few intellects in present circumstances are able to cope with or comprehend the long dates and inferences drawn from the pages of the learned. The erudition displayed by such a laborious writer as Mr. Elliott for instance, excites wonder in many ; but it is a sealed book still, and the enquirer fearful of hazarding an opinion on what his intellect or opportunity of research cannot grasp, hands it to his neighbour, saying, “ Read this, I pray thee ; and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed.” (Is. xxix. 11.)

It cannot be thought out of place here to name that author, seeing he has devoted so long a period and such application to his subject ; and when

so many are endeavouring to satisfy themselves, and get rid of responsibility by leaving the matter as laid down by him. For, when pressed on the subject, do you find one of them who is really satisfied in his *own mind* that the true interpretation has been arrived at?—that, for instance, his lengthened explanation of the prophecy regarding the two witnesses, recorded in Rev. xi.—of their having borne their testimony in the dark three years and a half preceding Luther's Reformation—their power during the days of their prophecy—their dead bodies laying in the street of the great city “where our Lord was crucified”—their alleged revival and ascent into heaven then,—is there one to be met with, who is really satisfied in his own mind, when looking back wistfully to the simple and literal accomplishments of ancient prophecy in the past, that any resemblance of such a fulfilment has been seen by us here?

Is it asked, what is the object of such remarks, and why try to unsettle what many have agreed to think settled?—why, in such days as these, when “men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking for the things which are coming to pass,” cast speculation adrift again

from the moorings it had taken?—Is not this what multitudes are saying, even whilst dissatisfied themselves with the stability of what they are clinging to?—Alas ! this is not a condition of safety, or one in which any thinking mind can really repose, try it as it may. Forced interpretations to support a wrong position will not carry home conviction ; and this will be felt in its full power when alleged fulfilments (such as those already cited regarding the Pope, the two witnesses, &c.,) are placed, in their metaphorical details, side by side with the literal and satisfactory Scripture accomplishments of all predictions regarding an event like the Crucifixion as also already referred to. May we not ask why the one should be less markedly accomplished (if really accomplished) than the other ; and if confessedly it has not been so, is there anything unreasonable in the doubt of the interpretation being true? Against over-confidence in deciding, there is surely ample warning for the most credulous ; the whole way by which modern prophetic expositors have come is strewn with abandoned assertions, and is it wise to hurry on in the same career, still chasing the same preconceived opinions, and overleaping

all obstacles, in the effort to reach them more successfully by some other road?

What seems to be the grand position taken up throughout by Mr. Elliott and those who follow him, is that the Pope is "The Antichrist;" and such a position has rendered necessary, (and indeed obtained,) the concession of many others of the most startling magnitude:—such, for instance, as the translation of days into years to take in at all the period it is manifest he has already been in existence; and further the division of one-half instead of the whole of the ancient Roman Empire into ten supposed kingdoms, to answer the condition that the Antichrist, when he does come is to arise out from among these kingdoms; a condition which cannot hold good in regard to the Papacy, unless they can be shown to have arisen *previous* to its exaltation.

Having advanced so far, the pouring out of the vials, &c. on that kingdom of the Beast or Antichrist, next occupied their ingenuity, and every effort has been strained to trace the supposed effects of each as it fell. It is scarcely credible were it not all before us, the eagerness with which the faintest resemblances of what might have been expected have

been laid hold of, or the puerile and childish fancies which have been brought forward.—The mark was *set up*, and the race has been to reach it at every cost, and over every obstacle.

But not to pursue this further : is there no greater evil than we have yet spoken of in taking (as all of us have been doing too much) such things for granted ? The progress and manifestation of “ the Antichrist ” is what the Church of Christ has been warned to expect and be prepared to witness, as the grand work of Satan, in which he is ultimately to develop his power and hatred against Him, by whose coming he and those who worship him are to be consumed. If then, we are by Satan’s device (and in what direction is he more likely to try than in this ?) led away from looking in the *right* direction, may we not be losing sight of our true danger in the many antichrists around us, rapidly now concentrating into one fearful development, which no Pope will, either in the description or the event, be found to have at all realized ? That he is in the number of the false prophets and antichrists foretold by our Lord himself as existing even in his day, there can be no doubt among us who have our Bibles left us, inasmuch

as by his inventions and vain traditions he has spread darkness and not truth, to the ruin of many and the grief of Christ's Church and people, in his assumed position as God's Vicar on earth ; but that he is "the Antichrist" can never be, for his mark is distinct and clear that he shall do far more than any Pope (and on their own showing his limit even of 1260 "years" is all but run) has ever done or attempted to do—inasmuch as "the Antichrist" will deny both the Father and the Son, whereas the Pope has ever distinctly acknowledged both, claiming even from them the place and authority he assumes for his own unhallowed ends. The cunningly devised fable of the Papacy *cannot* be said to deny the Father and the Son, inasmuch as it professedly holds the doctrine of the Trinity, and rules on the assumption of being the vicegerent of Christ, whilst the Antichrist shall deny as expressly all that is called God, or is worshipped. The Papacy, moreover, though loaded with corruption and false doctrine, can surely not be said to make all within its unhappy pale in a state of hopeless reprobation, as we are told the followers of the Antichrist shall be ; for whoever receives the mark of *his* name is *not forgiven*,

but is to have the wrath of God without mixture poured into his cup, and be tormented for ever and ever. (Rev. xiv. 9.)

These are solemn thoughts, and not lightly to be passed over by those who apply that name of "the Antichrist" in his development, to the Pope, and so pronounce a fearful doom on all who follow him. God forbid we should speak smooth words of that fatal and blighting apostacy, or the marked leaning towards it unhappily seen in our days, and in our own land. It may even be admitted to be a foreshowing in its tyrannical and persecuting spirit, of what is yet to be revealed, as we learn there are many antichrists already. But it is not "the Antichrist,"—the Prince which is to come—the lawless one, who is "to be consumed with the brightness of His coming,"—the Beast which, with the false prophet who wrought miracles before him, is to be cast alive into a lake of fire.

No doubt if there be truth in this, the learning of many a weary hour may be found to be in a measure useless, but are *we* really to be the worse for this? The answer may be safely in the negative, if leaving man's wisdom and erudition we are led to own that Scripture

alone is profitable for our learning, and so returning to it with humbled hearts instead of calling each other hard names, endeavour more to confess our common sins and infirmities, tending as they have done, to break “the unity of the spirit” and hinder the light from coming down upon us all. (1 Cor. i. 10 to 13.) The Lord acknowledges none of the names we give one another or ourselves. Unquestionably there is much for us to be thankful for as Protestants, inasmuch as our Churches of the Reformation protest against the fatal errors of Romanism—its intercessory power of the Virgin—its Purgatory—its Transubstantiation—its Justification by Works, and many other such “doctrines of devils,” and those who in our day and in our land are cavilling at their distinction as “Protestants,” are half way back to Rome. Yet it well becomes us who still prize the name, to beware how we trust in it, and think ourselves safe in an abhorrence of the Papacy—forgetting, or rather not seeing the antichrists among ourselves, and the contributions we are making to swell the ranks of “*that Antichrist*,” who will swallow up the names we give each other, as well as that of the Papacy we condemn.

Again, is it said if these things be so will not many a wearied spirit be disheartened? Are the 1260 “years” yet to run their long round before the dawning upon us of that blessed period, when “the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ,” and this worn-out and sinful earth be refreshed and renewed with the gladness of a reign of righteousness? Is the Church of Christ yet only in the early stages of her loneliness and desertion ; and is the grave still to be the “long home” of many a coming generation? Thank God ! in our Bibles, if searched more humbly and submissively than of late, will be found better proof than man’s assertion or laboured interpretation to meet his own fancy, that the “night is indeed far spent, and the day is at hand,” when He who cometh will come and not tarry ; but that day shall not come except there come “the apostacy” (*ἡ ἀποστασία*) first, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the Son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

Before proceeding it may be well to say one

word more as to the danger we all incur in not receiving in a literal sense what is written *unless* the context clearly points out the expression to be figurative. Prophecy in the past, as declared fulfilled by the inspired writers, has, as already remarked, been literally fulfilled. In all cases the word spoken came literally to pass. Yet the Jewish nation, with all they must have had before their eyes of this fact, had, nevertheless, like many in our day, fancied notions of their own regarding their Messiah; and having, to follow them, rejected the literal signs which were to announce His first advent, are set before us for an example and warning how we follow them in rejecting the predictions regarding the signs of His second. God had among many others declared as one mark of recognition, “out of Egypt have I called my Son;” and that this might be fulfilled to the letter, and not, as we would now have had it, all figuratively, we are told that, for fear of Herod, “Joseph took the child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt.” By such signs, too, “devout men dwelling at Jerusalem Jews out of every nation under heaven,” recognized Him who was to come; and whilst, by literally receiving what

had been written for their guidance, they were made glad, the Jews as a nation were blinded and fell.

May not then *some* doubts be entertained among us, in the strange uncertainty and differences of opinion as to details, whether the leading positions so confidently assumed by expositors in our day on what is avowedly a figurative interpretation of plain words, are not after all, open to question. Rome is broadly declared by nearly all, (as the seat of “their” antichrist the Pope) to be “Babylon,” and the judgments pronounced on the latter are unscrupulously transferred to the former. Babylon’s doom is declared to be past long since with all concerning it; whilst Rome now is looked to as its substitute for all the judgments yet to be poured out on that name. In vain, in prophecies to have their accomplishments “in the day of the Lord,” and therefore *future*, is Babylon, spoken of as “the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency,” to fall as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. (Isa. xiii.) Babylon, “in the land of the Chaldeans,” is the marked designation given to that great city which is called in the 51st of

Jeremiah, (and what is very remarkable,) in the very language used in the Apocalypse, “a golden cup in the Lord’s hand that made all the earth drunken with her wine.” Yet this also is transferred and applied to Rome.

It may be asked here, Is not Babylon now in ruins? True; but in reply, can any one assert that the first destruction of “Babylon, in the land of Chaldea,” ever filled up the description given in prophecy regarding it? “Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed,” (Jer. li. 8,) “in one hour is it brought to nought.”—“Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and found no more at all.” (Rev. xviii.)—“At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.” (Jer. li. 46.) Does this accord with the facts of what took place at its overthrow? Hear what Daniel says (chap. v.): “In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain, and Darius the Median took the kingdom.” There was no sudden or utter desolation at which the whole earth could wonder. On the contrary, Babylon, for hundreds of years after this, continued a mighty

city ; so flourishing, indeed, that Alexander the Great, who died there, wished to make it the seat of his empire.*

Babylon by name means it is true, “the city of confusion,” and metaphorically may signify with propriety the growing principles in which the strength of the Antichrist, its future king, is to stand ;—principles developing themselves daily more and more in Protestant as well as Papal communities ; but literally, “that Scripture may be fulfilled,” “Babylon in the land of Chaldea,” shall yet exalt itself with its Antichrist king, and perish in a destruction at which the whole earth shall tremble.

Again, we are told that the twelve hundred and sixty days mean twelve hundred and sixty years—each day for a year. But is there really any warrant for such a violation of a plain term, which is nowhere else so understood in the Scripture. Ezekiel was commanded to lie on

* It may be further noticed that when Babylon falls, as prophecy declares it shall, “no man is to dwell there neither is it to be inhabited for ever.” &c.—Jer. l. Instead of this, within its bounds and amidst its very ruins, stands at this day, according to the best oriental geographers, the town of Hillah, begun in the 11th century, and containing nearly 15,000 inhabitants.—*See Rennell's Geography, Vol. I, and Authorities.*

his side forty days for the years of Israel's iniquity; and it was declared, "I have appointed thee each day for a year." Could language express more plainly than it does here, that a day meant literally a day, and a year a year? In Numb. xiv. a similar use has been attempted to be made of the forty days there, each day for a year in which "ye searched the land." Here again, forty literal days of search were the sign of forty literal years of banishment, "till their carcases should be consumed in the wilderness." In these instances, and everywhere else, a year is a year, and a day a day. Yet the assumption that a "prophetical" day means a literal year, as something beyond question although actually resting principally on these two passages, is the foundation of an argument (and a principal one too) that the Papal Roman kingdom, and none else, must be meant in the prophecies regarding Anti-christ, inasmuch "as no other empire was continued during the whole of the long period of 1260 years." (See Habershon's Papal Nations, &c.)

But more than all this, there is we affirm in the prophetical writings themselves, from which

they profess to argue, the most conclusive proof that a *day does not mean a year*. For example, when the ark was finished, God directed Noah to enter therein with his family, and the male and female of each animal, prophesying to him that “yet seven days and I will cause it to rain forty days and forty nights” to destroy every living thing ; and it is added, “Noah did as the Lord commanded ;” and well it was for him that the command was taken literally for days instead of years. Again ; at God’s command, Jonah entered into Nineveh a day’s journey, and prophesied saying, “Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” On the repentance of its people, we are told God repented of the evil that he said he would bring upon it, and did it not. Will it be contended that the forty days here meant forty years ; or that Jonah, “when he made him a booth that he might see what would become of the city,” imagined that the prophecy was for forty years ? The decay of his gourd, and the answer of God to his angry complaint with every circumstance connected with the prophecy, show distinctly that the days were literal days in this instance as in all others. When our Lord said, “Destroy

this temple, and I will raise it in three days," we are told "he spake of the temple of his body;" and so again we are made to see the days were literal. In every single instance where there is a Scripture declaration of a prophecy *having been fulfilled*, the day is a literal day and the year a literal year; and it has only been to prop a forced system of interpretation in latter times that there has been any perversion of such plain words.

Once more; as the Antichrist was to rise out of the ten kingdoms of the Roman earth, the assumption that the Papacy was meant rendered it necessary to show that these kingdoms were in actual existence at his rise. To deal at all on such a supposition with the *Eastern* half of that Empire, (including, as it did, the Holy Land, Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Greece, &c.,) was at once seen to be impossible, and so the division into the "ten toes" was imagined on one foot of the image in Daniel, or the western half only of the Empire, whilst the other was left out altogether. Now, strange as such an arrangement may seem, yet so thoroughly has it been acquiesced in, that it is necessary here to offer something more than this anomaly to dispute the

fact of such a division fulfilling the condition of the ten toes or ten horns, both typifying the ten kingdoms. That the division of the half can never be said to be the division of anything in the semblance of a whole, has been already adverted to ; and here this is the more obvious where kingdoms are spoken of as existing at “the end” in the limits of the Roman earth, which only now or lately are rising or have risen into existence. (See, for instance, Zech. ix. 13.) It would not be unfair surely in such circumstances to ask proof, if any exist from prophecy, that the Roman earth was to be so divided into ten kingdoms *at so early a period* as it is now alleged to have been. That it was to be so without such proof is mere assumption, and that assumption is against probability. For as to the ten toes of the image of “iron and miry clay,” (implying certainly less apparent power of duration than the other portions, which have by general consent passed their day,) their very position shows that their development was to be at its very extremity, (figuring the extremity of its existence,) or before it should be destroyed without hands.

Now the Babylonish empire lasted 78 years,

dating from the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar; the Persian 200; the Grecian 300: in all about 578 years. These were succeeded by the Roman on the remnant of Alexander's broken empire merging into it by the victory over Cleopatra, and this last reached its height under Augustus. If the toes then have been existing from *before* the rise of the Papacy (about A.D. 560), their duration has been out of all natural proportion to the rest, and by the conditions of the prophecies, must still be prolonged until their destruction by "the Stone" which is to fill the whole earth.

So much for the harmony in the parts of the image, whilst the interpretation given by Daniel himself goes still further in confirmation. When brought before Nebuchadnezzar, (chap. ii. 28,) we hear him declare expressly that God was by the vision, making known "what shall be in the latter days."—When explaining therefore the fourth kingdom which extended into them certainly as the last of the four, he says, "thou sawest till that a stone smote the image on his feet." The legs of iron, meaning the Eastern and Western Roman empire, have long passed away. "Thou sawest till" as clearly implies a

waiting for what was to follow in regard to the feet, no less than for the Stone cut out without hands which was to destroy them. There is at least nothing to warrant the assumption of so early a formation of them and of the kingdoms they typified ; but on the contrary, as fair a presumption at least against it, aided by what follows of description in reference to their distinguishing character, when they should be seen, so different from all that had gone before (v. 43,) as “mingled with the seed of men ;”—that is, obviously, the kingly power first resting on the “head of gold,” and descending through gradually baser metals till mingled with the people’s : a feature as *inapplicable* to the kingdoms in the supposed era of 560 as it is *applicable* to the present day with its rage for popular institutions.—Again, in Rev. xvii., where the same kingdoms are described under the emblem of *ten horns*, it is said “these are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet, but receive power as kings one hour with the Beast.” This is surely contrary to all assumption of so lengthened a duration for them. Their power, begin when it may, is to continue to the *end*, for “they have one mind and give

their power and strength to the Beast.” Has this had its fulfilment if we take the Papacy for the Beast? undoubtedly not: for, at least, there is not *in our days* (if ever there was, which is doubted) one mind among them to give their power to the Papacy, till together with it they are overthrown by the Lamb—the Stone cut out without hands—the King who is to reign on their ruins “in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.”

But this theory of so ancient a formation of the ten kingdoms is not only an unwarrantable but dangerous assumption, seeing how very important it must be for us in our prophetic researches, to look well to those remarkable kingdoms which are to give their power to the Antichrist who also rises out of them, and which are, for retribution, to share his destruction. The limits of the Roman Empire are sufficiently known, and there is no fulfilment in any division of it which shall not include the whole. Are there, it may be asked, no signs abroad to waken our attention now to the strange heavings of the Roman earth from one end to the other? Have we not already seen *Greece* unexpectedly emerge as a kingdom *within* its

limits, and mentioned in the “times of the end?” (Zech. ix. 11 ; Ezek. xxix.) Egypt too, taking a place—Turkey assimilating itself to the institutions of the West—Holland, *not* in the Roman Empire, separated from Belgium, which is—the Austrian dominions, part of which are within its limits and part without, altered in its ancient stability—and, what is still more remarkable, the African portion of the Roman earth, apparently so separated from it, now brought again by French conquest within it. The times and the seasons we cannot fix, but the signs of the times all favour the expectation that the national re-establishment of Jerusalem and the formation of the ten kingdoms, probably contemporaneous events, are very near. Countries in the East, denounced in the word of God and on which incipient judgments have long rested, are beginning to revive, and the schemes of men to go in with the prophecies of God ; for the destinies of Egypt, Idumea, Tyre, and Babylon as read there, are not always to stand as they are now.

But to proceed. It is after the establishment of these ten kingdoms and not before, that the “little horn” is to arise and gather into one

manifestation, that is, into himself, all the false glory and perfection that is in them. His symbol is “a horn having eyes,”—strength with intelligence. His course, unlike the Pope’s, is to be rapid and triumphant; for he comes in “like a flood,” and prospers. He is “to plant the tabernacle of his palace (in mockery of God’s tabernacle) “between the seas in the glorious holy mountain,” (a name given in Scripture only to Mount Zion,) and having shown himself there as God, shall come to his end and none to help him.” It is there, too, in Jerusalem, that the consuming brightness of His coming is to be seen—“that same Jesus,” the King of David’s line, who is to bring in a reign of righteousness, and execute judgment on the earth. In His days shall it be sung in literal meaning, “In Judah is God known, his name is great in Israel. In Salem is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion: *there* brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, the sword, and the battle.” (Ps. lxxvi.)

Accordingly we find in perfect accordance with this, that the recorded facts of prophecy have Jerusalem always for their centre; and connected now as Jerusalem is with the Gen-

tiles by their adoption, it shall yet be literally the joy of the whole earth. It is true that those who suffer for Christ there, at the closing period, are spoken of as in Jewish circumstances ; and many from this would infer that Jews alone are to be understood, forgetting that a Christian in Jewish circumstances, is a Christian still, the middle wall of partition between them having been broken down. (See Eph. ii.)

There seems, however, to be the strangest unwillingness to admit that literal Jerusalem, which witnessed the crucifixion and suffering of our Lord, is also to witness His triumphant manifestation. Some think in the imagination of their heart, it would be a degradation that the Son of God should again manifest Himself there, leaving the glory He has with the Father. But do not such forget that He, who was "equal with God," has already assumed the form of a servant and suffered for our redemption the penalty of a law we had broken ? The degradation, then, is past ; for God, we are told, has highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. Do they forget His own promise of coming again ? not figuratively, but literally ; for the angel who stood by when he

was taken up, after being visibly and tangibly with his disciples and as the cloud received him out of their sight, said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." That this was taken literally by the disciples and early Church is no matter of doubt; for in the loneliness and desolation that followed, the hope of "his coming" is always that to which the Church is directed by all the New Testament writers. And ancient prophecy, too, in strongest language, has gone along with this hope, directing us in words which nothing but wilfulness can misunderstand, still to His literal return to Jerusalem as the expectation to be cherished, followed as it shall be by a reign of righteousness. "His feet in that day shall stand upon the Mount of Olives;"—"He shall sit on the throne of his father David; and the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." Yet these, and many equally striking names and details, are still declared among us to

be figurative and such as cannot be literally expected ; and so whilst Satan is preparing his Antichrist, (who is also in equally strong language declared to be coming,) as a counterfeit deliverer, power seems given to blind Christians to the truth of who and what *their* deliverer is to be in the trouble which is coming upon the earth. Oh ! that they would understand His own gracious promise literally as it shall literally be fulfilled, “ I will come again, and receive you unto myself.” (John xiv.) “ Jerusalem shall be a praise in the earth ” and this she has never yet been ; for the day of her “ merciful visitation ” passed from her in unbelief, and her house has been left to her desolate. Yet as the threatening came literally to pass, so shall the future promise too. Her inhabitants are yet to look upon Him whom they pierced, (Zech. xii. 10,) and mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son. “ In that day the Lord shall be King over all the earth, and its families shall come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts.”

Without much digression, an interesting point may here be just touched upon regarding the Jews, and their treatment at present by those

who have themselves received the promises they rejected. Many seem to mistake their present position altogether, and incline to take them into friendship and fellowship. But surely this cannot be a correct position for us to stand in, or one which could be expected to find favour with Him whom they still persist in rejecting. Were an indulgent father on earth, after long contending with the waywardness and actual rebellion of a son, compelled at last to expel him from his home and shelter, surely, whilst on the one hand, he would look with displeasure on any who could aggravate that son's trial and disgrace, under any pretence whatever, he would look with no less displeasure on those, calling themselves friends, who should welcome that rebellious child into their homes, and treat him as if the sentence on him had been unreasonable and severe. On either supposition the father would feel dishonoured: the only interference which could afford him satisfaction would be that of any of his professed friends who tried to *shew his child* the guilt and ingratitude of such conduct, and persuade him like the prodigal, to return and acknowledge it. And so with the Jews:—as a nation we know they shall not be

converted until “they look upon Him whom they pierced,” and now ere long to come in the clouds of heaven. But as from among the Gentiles, so from among them God is gathering “a remnant according to the election of grace,” (Rom. xi. 5,) it is for us who have received the Gospel message through the fall of the Jew, to labour and pray for their conversion *individually*, so as to secure for them a share in our own high privileges—privileges to which they are strangers only as separated through their own unbelief from their own olive tree. As a nation, with all the earthly promises which pertain to it, the Jews are at present a fearful warning to all, and not as some sentimentally call them—an “interesting people.” The blood of their Saviour and ours is yet upon them and upon their children, and yet there are future passages to be accomplished in their strange history characterizing them still as the “stiff-necked and rebellious people.”—But the veil shall yet be removed, their land given into their possession, and Jerusalem made a praise and blessing to the earth.

It may be asked, if former interpretations are to be abandoned of what has been passing since

Israel's dispersion, how are we to measure the "times of the Gentiles," or know how near we are to their close? What was the mark given by our Lord Himself when telling his disciples "the end was not yet?" It surely merits all our attention; "this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." In places the most remote and inaccessible, within the last few years, how rapidly have the blanks been filling up, and what people, now even, have not had the Scriptures translated for them into their own language! In our neglect of literal meaning, we have been looking for the conversion actually of nations by our Missions, instead of their serving principally to carry this Gospel *for a witness*. The times of the Gentiles therefore must be near a close, and during them only, it should be borne in mind, was Jerusalem to be trodden down. (Luke xxi. 24.) Here then, are marks full of accuracy and meaning, shewing us, not the day or the year, as has been presumptuously fancied by many on assumptions of their own, but how much more we should watch and be ready as we see these signs coming to pass. Well may we begin to look to Jeru-

saalem as its days of being trodden down are so surely drawing to an end, for *there* again once more, is the scene about to open, that what is written may be fulfilled. God has declared that He will gather the house of Israel into the midst of it again ; not, as we have been taking it for granted, in favour, but in anger. “As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, so will I gather you in my fury, and I will leave you there and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof.” (Ezek. xxii. 20, 21.)

How fearful will these times be, and who shall live when God doeth this ?—Israel still in unbelief and gathered in wrath ; looking for a Messiah as formerly, but still rejecting Him who was sent and whom they crucified ; and now for their stubborn rejection of the truth about to be given over to a strong delusion to believe the lie of the Antichrist, who will *there* exalt himself before them “with all deceivableness of unrighteousness” as the Saviour for whom they have long looked in vain. What strange meaning is there in the declaration of

our Lord when so taken; "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in *his own name*, him will ye receive." (John v. 43.) And this Antichrist will do, for as a king "He shall do according to his will, and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every God, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done." (Dan. xi. 36.)

Be assured "the mystery of iniquity," which has been now so long working, (even since the days of Judas,) is neither altogether the Papacy, nor as Papists say Protestantism, but the evil characteristics legible in both as we may see them in terrible array in 2 Tim. iii., 2 Pet. ii., Jude, &c. Some of these may be more discernible in the one than in the other, and this may be said without in the least undervaluing true Protestant principles, or being forgetful of the mercy of God in reviving them against the falsehoods and abominations of the Papacy. For instance, it may be in the one the forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, &c.; and headiness, false accusation, impatience of authority in the other:—as hatred and variance

are seen in all, Churchmen and Dissenters alike. And then in the world around, how rife are the signs of the latter days ! Socialism, Chartism, avowed Infidelity, Communism. What fearful things have risen into sight during the Continental revolutions of the past eventful year, and with a rapidity which shews how silently but deeply, the leaven of iniquity has been doing its fatal work among us. *Such as these* are the components and characteristics of "The Antichrist," in whom as a head, their development shall be—the "lawless one" about to arise with the strength and power of the ten kingdoms, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of His coming. Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the truth that they might be saved." (2 Thess. ii.)

Throughout the "times of the Gentiles," now as we have seen so nearly fulfilled, God has been gathering in every age and from every race, an election according to grace, whose names are written in the Lamb's book of

life. These constitute the true Church, part of them now in heaven and part filling up still the sufferings of Christ upon earth. (Col. i. 24.) Is it asked, Are we to understand that no prophetic history for that Church's guidance was given as applicable to its days? surely something must have been laid down to mark its path through so long a period. Yes; but it is *very* brief though *very* expressive; "nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in divers places:" and as to its members "they shall deliver you up to be afflicted and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another: and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." This is the prophetic description given of the "times of the Gentiles," and the narrative of God's people in them whilst the election is gathered out. Is there any stretch of intellect or imagination required to see how this has in all respects been literally true, accompanied throughout as it has been by the no less literally fulfilled predictions regarding Israel in the cotemporaneous

period of her dispersion ; still dwelling alone and not mingled among the nations in whose lands her sons are sojourning ; for ages oppressed, and yet existing everywhere ; deaf to their own prophets, and not seeing, amidst the light around them, their own Messiah's *first* advent, "blindness in part having happened to them until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (Rom. xi. 25.)

It may doubtless be little agreeable to the pride of Gentile nations, that the notice of their particular history during that dispersion should have been so brief, but it is in strictest accordance with the character of prophecy in the old times, which, as it regarded other nations, we cannot help seeing was uttered *only* in subordination to the connection they held for the time with Israel, and the influence they were permitted, as God's instruments, to exercise over her. They were advanced to punish Israel when Israel's sins brought down chastisement, and diminished again when Israel's repentance brought back the forgiveness of Israel's God. Israel *alone* was God's chosen people, as it is written, "Thee only have I known of all the nations on the earth ;" and it is added, "therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities."

(Amos iii. 2.) Daniel, whose vision extended so distinctly into the minuteness of the future, was expressly told it was given him “to make known what should befall **HIS** people in the latter days.” And accordingly we trace in it (if studied without prejudice) a history, in minute detail, up to the establishment of the fourth kingdom or Roman empire, under which shortly after its consolidation, the dispersion of *his* people as a nation occurred, and the interruption of their nationality in consequence until the “times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” In proportion to the nearness at which we are arrived then to their close, (the sign of “the gospel having been preached for a *witness* to all nations” guiding us,) are we also to Israel’s restoration, although in unbelief, once more as a nation in their own land, when again the interrupted chain of events shall be resumed and what remains to be accomplished, fulfilled. As heralding in this “latter time,” we are told by our Saviour Himself there shall, among other signs, be “distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth.” And it seems as if we were already

beginning to see something of this in the strange events happening already around us.

Daniel (viii.) in telling his vision, has in it a declaration made to him that at “the time of the end” shall be the vision—that is, its accomplishment. Again, it is repeated, (ver. 19,) “at the time appointed the end shall be.” If then, we are really (as has been attempted to be proved) near that time of the end, we must be near also (according to the 23rd verse of that chapter) to the manifestation of that “King of the dark countenance” who is to stand up against the Prince of princes, and be broken without hand. It may be noticed in speaking of his rise, that it is to be out from amongst the four divisions of Alexander’s empire parted among his four generals, (all long since passed away,) and “in the latter time when the transgressors are come to the full.”

Again, as we have already seen, the Roman empire, embracing in its bounds what was Alexander’s, is to be divided into ten kingdoms; they are called in one place ten horns, and also the ten toes of Daniel’s image—that is, they occupy a place at its *very extremity*. When it is said the same “little horn” rises out from

among the four as well as from among the ten kingdoms, there is not the slightest confusion, inasmuch as the latter comprehends the territory once occupied by the former. The Antichrist therefore, (for it can mean no other,) shall rise out of the Grecian portion of the Roman earth “in the latter time, when the transgressors are come to the full.”

In accordance with this, it has been also shown that hitherto the Roman earth can never, as a whole, be said to have been divided into ten kingdoms, the entire eastern portion having been left out which contained the territory of the four kingdoms out of which, as well as out of the ten, the “little horn” was to come. And strange indeed is it when we might be expecting it, to witness the shaking now of the Roman earth throughout *both* its great divisions; the approaching close of the “times of the Gentiles” also warranting the belief that Israel is about to return to its place among them. The prophetic history of particular events, broken off at its dispersion, will *then* be resumed in what remains of its accomplishment on the gathering of the Jews in their own land preparatory to the mighty events to

be enacted there, and the manifestation of the “abomination that maketh desolate”—“the king of the dark countenance”—“the little horn”—“the wicked one,” Antichrist, who is to be destroyed with the brightness of His coming.

There seems to have been a strange confusion regarding the warnings given in the 24th chapter of St. Matthew, and those in the 21st of St. Luke, as to Jerusalem, and the signs to be attended to there. They appear almost to be looked upon as referring to the same events, whereas in St. Luke the slightest inspection will show that, having been forewarned of the coming destruction of the *temple* to which they had been pointing with admiration, the disciples were asking a sign of “when these things should come to pass,” and in answer are told to flee when they “see Jerusalem compassed with armies,” which history tells us the Christians literally did on the approach of Titus, and in Pella escaped in consequence the calamities of that destruction.

But in the 24th of Matthew the disciples will be observed to have asked “*the sign of Christ’s coming, and of the end of the world ;*” and, in answer, are told to flee to the moun-

tains when they “saw the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place.” In the usual disregard to literal meaning, this has long been supposed to describe the Turkish power in possession of the holy place. But can this be so?—when the warning is to flee *instantly* when the signal was seen—no delay, not even to return to “take anything out of the house”—for so urgent is the danger and the crisis so fearful, that it is said unless these days were shortened no flesh should be saved. Can one word of this be supposed to apply here, when now for hundreds of years, the Turks have held it in quiet possession, becoming latterly so tolerant as to allow Christians Papists, Greeks and Protestants, to have each their respective places of worship with no one to make them afraid?

What then was this “abomination of desolation” to be? Is there anything to guide us as to its meaning, and what the Jews themselves were likely to understand by it? Was it a term, in short, which they had ever heard before? Yes; the prediction of Daniel is held by their own historian Josephus, to have been *accomplished* by Antiochus Epiphanes, who we are told, profaned the temple, sacrificed a swine,

and set up an idol there. This is also recorded in the uninspired book of the Maccabees 1st chapter, with which, as an historical book of good repute, the Jews themselves were perfectly familiar. In the chapter of that book referred to, the setting up the idol and profanation of the temple is called by precisely the same term, “the abomination of desolation ;” and by a device of Satan to turn attention from the true accomplishment of Daniel’s vision, (at that time far remote,) so flagrant a sacrilege was thought to have fulfilled the prediction. But in Matthew our Lord, who lived one hundred and fifty years *after* Antiochus, declares the event predicted by Daniel still *future* ; whilst enough had been shown to make them, on hearing a familiar term used, form some idea of what its accomplishment would be. It was also declared “the end is not yet,” giving them a further intimation to look for it in the end when the Gospel of the kingdom had been “preached *first* to all nations for a witness.” It was *after* this that the “abomination” is to be looked for ; and we are further instructed as to *where* it should be by the warning given to “them

which be in *Judea*” to flee to the mountains when they see it.

All this is in perfect accordance with the words of Daniel who uttered the prediction referred to by our Lord. He tells of the Prince that shall come and destroy the city and the sanctuary, and make the oblation to cease; and (as more correctly and intelligibly translated in the margin,) “upon the battlements shall be the idols of the Desolator until the consummation and that determined, shall be poured upon the desolator.” (Dan. ix. 27.) In the 11th chapter this same prince is described as speaking marvellous things against the God of gods, and prospering “till the indignation be accomplished,”—that is, as formerly, until the consummation determined be poured upon the desolator. That all this shall be “in Judea” as shewn in Matthew, accords here with what is said of his planting the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, (the Dead and Mediterranean,) “in the glorious holy mountain,” a name given to none other than “God’s holy hill of Zion in Jerusalem,” where he is to come to his end and none to help him; or, as elsewhere

declared, “be consumed by the brightness of His coming.” This is what the Antichrist will do, and this is his destruction—the false deliverer overthrown by the True ;—the time not far distant now as has been shewn, and the locality marked if words are allowed to retain their meaning.

Well then may we be watching now in the length and breadth of the Roman earth, the development of the *principles* of the “many antichrists” which have been at work there for ages. The ten kingdoms which are to give their power in these principles are developing themselves as rapidly as are the principles themselves. The tide of observation is setting in towards the Holy Land, *in connection again with the Jews* ; whilst on all sides the mystery of iniquity works more and more visibly, (only there is at present one that withholdeth,) and will continue to work until it “becomes developed out of the midst,” (ἐκ μέσου γένηται,) and *then* we are told shall that wicked (or more properly, “lawless one”) be revealed ; even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. (2 Thess. ii. 7.)

In this deceivableness of unrighteousness (as is said in Daniel ix. 27) when he has come in like a flood, “he shall confirm the covenant with many *for one week*.” The term “week” is not, like “days,” a definite term—for it means either a “week of days,” that is from one Sabbath to another; or a week of years, from one Sabbatical year to another that is seven years, (as in Levit. xxv. 8.) Guided by the context it is clear that the latter period is indicated here *i. e.* seven years; but in the midst of them, and when fairly established in his power having come in “by flatteries,” he shall set up his own desolation or idol, as described in the 13th of Revelation.

And here with regard to the well known prophecy in the ninth chapter of Daniel;—being permitted to take the seventy weeks as weeks of years according to what has just been quoted from Levit.—we learn (v. 25) “that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince” should be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks, or together sixty-nine weeks. Nehemiah,—for it was he and not Ezra who was commissioned to

return to and build *Jerusalem*,—received that permission from Artaxerxes Longimanus, King of Persia, in the twentieth year of his reign. (Nehem. ii. 1.) Adopting Usher's authority, we place the commencement of that reign in the year 474 B. C., and this gives for the date of the “commandment” 454 B. C. Now, adding to this the 33 years of our Saviour's life, and deducting 4 years as the allowed difference between the received and the true year of His birth, we reach the month Nisan of the year 483 as the terminus of the 69 weeks “from the going forth of the commandment,” and find that *at that precise period* (the crucifixion taking place, as we are told, in the beginning of the Passover) Messiah *was* “cut off” as declared.

Had the Jews received Him that was promised, the glorious prediction in the twenty-fourth verse (of which that in the twenty-fifth is only a part) would not have been delayed as it has been during the long sorrowful period of the last 1800 years;—but their rejection and crucifixion of Him who was to deliver them, obstructed God's purposed blessing, and brought upon themselves according to distinct warning,

dispersion and banishment, although this too has been overruled for good (as man's evil has *ever* been by God's long-suffering kindness) in the Gospel message having thereby been given to us Gentiles. Still as has been shewn, what was predicted as to happen in the *sixty-nine* weeks has been all literally fulfilled, whilst the remaining week or seven years (torn off as it has been so strangely from the rest) yet lacks its accomplishment, and must continue to do so until the restoration of Israel as a *nation* once more, restores the broken link in the chain of its events.

In these humble pages it has been attempted to draw attention to the final struggle for supremacy (rapidly approaching) by Antichrist, "the Prince that shall come," in the last remaining week of this wondrous prophecy, as foretold at the conclusion of the chapter. It is the fearful closing scene of this dispensation of mercy and sorrow, ending as it shall do in the overthrow of evil, and the fulfilment of all the glorious things spoken of in the twenty-fourth verse, (which takes in the period of the *whole* prediction) by "the coming" of that divine

Deliverer in the hour of our utmost need, “to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reḱonciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy,”—the true King of David’s line, the seed of the woman bruising the serpent’s head, and He in whom *all* prophecy is sealed up and fulfilled.

The duration of antichrist’s oppression seems limited to the remaining half of the seven years—the three years and a half—“time,* times, and a half,”—the “forty-two months,”—“the twelve hundred and sixty days,”—all distinctly specifying the *same* period. Although this may have been denied by *modern* interpreters, it is very remarkable that this duration of the Antichrist’s

* It was interpreted to Nebuchadnezzar by Daniel that he was to be driven from among men “till seven times had passed over him ;” and Josephus tells us he was in the desert seven years. If, in accordance with this and the general admission “time” does mean a year, it must be a literal year of three hundred and sixty or three hundred and sixty-five literal days—for, on any other supposition, to fulfil the prediction *he must be there still*, instead of having been restored to his kingdom, as we are expressly told he was, “at the end of the *days*.” (Dan. iv. 34.)

supremacy was the *ancient* belief in it may be less learned days than these, when Scripture words were taken, as far as the context allowed, literally. Irenæus for instance, (b. v., ch. 30,) holds “that Antichrist’s reign shall be for three and a half years, when he should be destroyed by the Lord from heaven, and the kingdom of the Just One be established.” The same was the belief of others of the Fathers also, as Cyril, &c. It is a fearful supremacy as we are told, for “power is given him over all kindreds, nations, and tongues.” (Rev. xii. 7.) Yet still during this period God’s protection is not withdrawn from His Church against which the gates of hell are not to prevail. Under the image of “the woman with the moon under her feet” (Rev. xii.) we find accordingly “a place is prepared for her of God in the wilderness,” to shelter her during these same twelve hundred and sixty days from the persecution of the dragon, that is as elsewhere explained (chap. xx. 2,) “the devil,” who in that evil time is worshipped as giving power to the Antichrist. (xiii. 4.)

But although the Church is withdrawn into the wilderness for shelter, God true in this also to His word, (Acts xiv. 17,) does not even then

“leave himself without a witness ;” for in the 11th chapter of Revelation, we find a very remarkable prophecy of power being “given to my two witnesses,” (at the mouth of two witnesses shall the thing be confirmed,) who are to prophecy or bear their testimony during the *same* period of Antichrist’s power and the woman’s hiding in the wilderness, namely twelve hundred and sixty days. It is not for us to try beyond what is written to discover who these witnesses shall be. But very remarkable power is given them by which “during their testimony” they shall be preserved alive. By the terms used we are reminded in the fifth verse of Elijah in the days of Ahab and his testimony then—“I have been very jealous for the Lord of hosts”—“I, even I only am left, and they seek my life ;” (1 Kings xix.) the fire of heaven too, coming down and consuming the captains with their fifties sent to take him, and his ascent also afterwards into heaven. In the following verse, the power given was similar to what Moses had when alive, witnessing before the oppressing king of Egypt, and afterwards the devil disputing about his body. (Jude 9.) It is further remarkable that Moses and Elias are the two

seen with our Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration, when they witnessed to the decease He should accomplish at Jerusalem; and that in the last verses of the Old Testament prophets, these two names are again seen with a promise which cannot fail to arrest attention. In the 17th of Matthew where this promise is referred to, our Lord speaks (after coming down from the mount) of Elias* having already come and having been rejected as He himself was about to be. There is to be a *second* coming of our Lord however which is called "the great and dreadful day of the Lord." (Mal. iv. 5.)

But into the mystery of who these witnesses are to be we can go no further: to conjecture would be idle and presumptuous. Their protection is to last twelve hundred and sixty days,

* A difficulty has been found by some as to the words of our Lord here referred to; but surely it must not be forgotten that our Lord also says, "Elias truly shall come and restore all things." Can John the Baptist be said to have restored all things? Moreover, when John himself was asked "Art thou Elias?" he answered, No. How then can these statements be reconciled in any other way than on the plain and very obvious principle that John the Baptist, though not Elias, did come in the spirit and power of Elias, as seems implied also in his being spoken of as "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

being “the time of their prophecy,” after which they are slain by the beast (the Antichrist,) and the last testimony for God ceasing, the inhabitants of the earth who were tormented by them, rejoice over their dead bodies which lay in the streets of the city “where our Lord was crucified,” (Jerusalem,) and which having now cast off the testimony of God, is called by the epithets of wickedness—“Sodom and Egypt.” These two places are *figurative* expressions evidently, from their separate localities designating no “great city” as the word *spiritually* further makes apparent.

The dead in Christ with those of His people who are alive and remain, are to be caught up to meet Him in the air. This may be along with the two witnesses reanimated and ascending in a cloud :—for now the earth and the Antichrist king are left to the terrors of the wrath of the Lamb whilst His own are safe with Himself, “And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war against him and his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet which wrought miracles before him and deceived them that had received his mark. These

both were cast into a lake of fire and brimstone, and the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat on the horse.” (Rev. xix. 20.)

There is much in the detail of all prophecy which the event alone will explain, and in speaking of what is future it must be in the deep consciousness of the danger of suffering ourselves to be carried away from the “word written” by our own foolish fancies. Yet from what has been said, a difficulty may be felt, if Christ’s people, quick as well those who were in the graves are to be taken out of the earth and the remnant of Antichrist slain, who, in that day when Jerusalem is to be made a cup of trembling, shall *they be* upon whom God is to “pour a spirit of grace and supplication,” and who are to look on Him whom they pierced and mourn? (Zech. xii.) Not certainly Israel as a whole nation; but a remnant only of them, or as expressed—“the small and poor remnant according to grace,” (Zech. xiii. 8, 9,) whom God has kept from worshipping the Antichrist and the destruction with him, but who not being Christ’s people by faith and covenant with Him, are left amidst the judgments on the earth when His people are taken out of it, and so “saved as

by fire.” (Ezek. xiv. 22. Zech. xiii. 9. Is. i. 9. Ezra ix.) This is *the remnant* “who give glory to the God of heaven”—the remnant who are to be converted by looking on Him whom they pierced ; and owning at last, after ages of stubborn rejection and wearied with him who had come in his *own name*, “Blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord.” These are Abraham’s seed according to the promise, to whom all the good that has been spoken shall yet be fully accomplished, and to whom in their fullest sense shall be applied the cheering words, “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.” (Is. xl.)

And not only shall they be blessed themselves, but shall then be a blessing to all nations who remain on the earth ; “for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks : nation shall not lift up

sword against nation, neither shall they learn the art of war any more." (Isa. ii.) Such will be the millennium which man's sinful efforts have sought in vain to establish, for they sought it not in God's strength nor for God's honour, but their own.

Whilst Jerusalem is thus to be exalted, as markedly shall Babylon, we are told, be brought low. Its presumptuous king in the latter day, whose description none can fail to identify with what is said in Scripture of "the Antichrist," is to set up a throne in opposition to His whose right it is, and to say, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God ; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, (Mount Zion,) in the sides of the north. I will ascend upon the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High." (Isa. xiv. 13, 14.) This agrees literally with what is elsewhere said of Babylon and its king, with an identity which incorporates (so to speak) Antichrist with him. And it is vain to attempt the explanation of this 14th chapter, or of the 50th and 51st of Jeremiah, on any supposition but that it is yet all to be accomplished. Israel has never yet taken up its proverb against the king of Babylon, nor will it do so *until*

“the whole earth is at rest” after the storm that has past over it. “How art thou fallen, O Lucifer ! son of the morning ; how art thou cast down which didst weaken the nations. Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, and did shake the kingdoms,” &c.

God has promised to build up Jerusalem, and the Antichrist in his day will build up his capital too. It is yet to be the golden city over which the merchants of the earth are to weep, saying, “Alas ! that great Babylon, that mighty city, for in one hour is thy judgment come !” The king of Babylon is yet to be God’s instrument to punish, before he himself is punished. Egypt with other lands, is yet to be given into his hand and he is to have it for “a reward because he wrought God’s will upon it.” (Ezek. xxii. 19, 20.) He is said to be the “hammer of the whole earth,” which Babylon as yet has never been. “At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.” In multiplied prophecies regarding it, (see especially Jeremiah) all evidently *yet to be accomplished*, Babylon is still *literally Babylon associated with the land of Chaldea and the inhabitants thereof*,

as well as with the Euphrates, on whose banks it stands.

The stumbling is as to its waste places being set up again and the riches that are to be found in it at the end. But aided visibly as the Anti-christ its king will be by Satan the “prince of this world,” (John xiv. 30,) who, it will be remembered, tempted our Lord with the kingdoms of the world and all their glory, saying, “That is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it,” (Luke iv. 6,)—an assertion, it will likewise be remarked, not disputed; and also with the power given him by the ten kingdoms in a country once the richest on the face of the earth and still possessed of every local advantage—it is *unbelief* alone in literal fulfilment which hinders our doubting whether the figurative meaning so long given to Babylon be the true meaning or no. There is a remarkable prophecy in the 5th of Zechariah which must have some meaning and that future, regarding an *ephah* (a measure and emblem of merchandise,) being lifted up by two women, evidently from their description figurative, “with the wind in their wings,” to carry it to the land of Shinar, (Babylon,) “where it shall be established, and

set there upon its own base." May this not have a reference to that spirit of gain and Mammon, (one of the antichrists of the day,) which, from the emblem of "wickedness" seen in the ephah, is to find its true base with all other forms of evil under the Antichrist there? It is vain for us to say what shall not be in these days of rapid changes, which are stunning the wisest. The wildest spirit of money making (the root of all evil,) is markedly abroad, and the place of its full development may be found in yet more genial soil and under more favouring encouragement even than it has unhappily found among ourselves. We have had lately a *warning* which it would be well for us to "consider," and humble ourselves for our covetousness and for the fearful disasters and distress we have brought upon us.

Besides, it is not mere conjecture to say that the king of Babylon will enrich himself and his capital with the plunder of other nations; for we have already heard Ezekiel foretelling that for one, Egypt is to be given to him "that he may take his spoil for wages." (Ezek. xxix. 19.) Under his other name, too, do we find in full accordance with this, (Dan.

xi. 41,) that “he shall enter into the glorious land, and many nations shall be overthrown: the land of Egypt shall not escape, but he shall have power over her treasures of gold and silver, and over its precious things: the Lybians and Ethiopians also shall be at his steps.” With such predictions and such help, who but the disbeliever of prophecy altogether will conclude that the description of Babylon, *at its final overthrow*, (Rev. xviii.) shall not be fully accomplished literally and locally and at no distant date.

Babylon’s king is to be destroyed in his utmost prosperity, as Babylon appears to be taken in his absence; for it is said (in Jer. li. 31,) “One post shall run to meet another and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end;” agreeing with what is elsewhere declared, (Dan. xi. 44,) apparently at he seems returning from his conquests, that “tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him, therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly make away many: and he shall plant the tabernacle of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain, (Jerusalem,)

yet he shall come to his end, and none to help him ;” for his measure is *now full*, and his Destroyer “coming in the clouds of heaven.”

With regard to the Millennial period of a thousand years, it is sufficient for us to know that they who have part in the first resurrection shall “become kings and priests to God and of Christ and shall reign with him.” (Rev. xx. 6.) They are spoken of as reigning in heavenly places, as the Jews are said more particularly to reign upon the earth. But be this as it may, who can tell the wondrous intercourse there may be in those happy times, between the heaven and the earth. Do we believe that our first parents heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day ? —that Angels talked with Abraham and Jacob, with Lot and Hagar, with Moses also and David in all the early ages, and yet disbelieve that what was may yet be again ? Alas ! our habit of spiritualizing *every thing* has made even heaven itself rather a fair vision than a reality.

The reign of Christ we are told, shall be a reign of righteousness, in contrast to that of Antichrist which preceded and now shall have come to an end ; and Satan too, bound with a

chain, shall deceive the nations no more “till the thousand years be fulfilled.” After that, we are told, he must be loosed for a little season, (but it is only for “a little season,”) before he, too, with death and hell, are cast for ever into the lake of fire.

The concluding glance given us in the two last chapters of the Apocalypse of the “new heaven and the new earth—the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, with his glory to lighten it and the Lamb the light thereof—no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, but all things new and glorious, may well make us feel as Bunyan did in his vision and wish ourselves there. “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” And “He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”

O Salem, city of the saint!—

To mix with “men made perfect,” we
Pant for thy gates—our spirits faint
Thy glorious golden streets to see!
To share the rapture that inspires
The anthem of redeeming grace;
To listen to the seraph’s lyres—
To meet the angels face to face!

Father in heaven ! we turn not back,
Though thorns perplex and choke our way,
Rather the tortures of the rack,
Than faithless in this evil day :—
Let thunders crash—let torrents shower
And whirlwinds churn the howling sea,
What is the turmoil of an hour
To an eternal calm with Thee !

A very few remarks may not unprofitably be added as a conclusion to what has now been written. As the times in which we live are times of excitement and energy, there is need of the greatest caution to keep us all from running into extremes, more especially on such a subject as the present. With not a few “the sure word of Prophecy” is strangely avoided as something almost forbidden to be looked into, whilst with a more numerous class now, its study has been carried beyond its proper limits withdrawing to that extent attention from what, as equally important, ought to be taken along with it. Christ crucified and we with Him is still to be our daily theme, whilst for our comfort amidst the darkness and distresses around us in a world of sin and misery, the “light shining in a dark place” is hung out to us if we will but give

heed to it, till the day dawn on the overthrow of evil and the deliverance of Christ's people from it. We are called to be "sober" in all that we do, and whilst to neglect that light, as many are doing from one motive or on one pretence or another is to our loss and damage, so to give to the study of the prophetic portions of Scripture an undue prominence, is to run an equal risk of neglecting much of what is practically important to our present condition.

In the foregoing pages it has been attempted to help in undoing what seems to be prejudice, arising amongst us in great measure, from our following each other in taking for granted premises, which in fact are not only *not* proved, but which, upon even a slight inspection, will be seen not to bear proof. Allusion has been already made to the discrepancies and disputes of recent prophetic expositors proceeding on such premises; but this is *not* the argument on which it has been attempted to shew that so much of what is spoken of by them as fulfilled is yet to be accomplished. The argument used is rather the impossibility of supposing fulfilled prophecy *could be the subject of such discrepancies*, particularly when we look at the simple

and literal fulfilment of the past. If we are indeed as they allege living under the iron rule of Antichrist, is it credible that we should not know it beyond the possibility of a doubt? If the "Man of Sin" is "sitting in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God," is it possible to believe that the fact should admit of any dispute?—to suppose a fulfilled prophecy open to such a question, is inconsistent with the very design of all prophecy. It would be, in fact, to render the Apocalypse useless to those who lived before, as it does to those who live during its accomplishment; and not only to deprive us now living of the comfort and certainty of what is therein written, but to give cause to the infidel and the worldling to sneer and mock at our inconsistencies and disappointments.

Nor is it as is sometimes said, upon *inferior* matters of detail that these differences of modern interpreters have arisen as will be sufficiently evident to any one who betakes himself, honestly and impartially, to compare the different expositions given; and yet so unpopular does dissent from them *as a body* appear to be that the byeword of futurists is ap-

plied to all who try to direct attention to evident inconsistencies, and invite attention in however humble a manner, to the positions taken by them and the possibility of error. There is surely in all this a want of ordinary fairness, as there is in laying the brand of Tractarianism upon all who doubt that the Pope is Antichrist, even although many of them be mourning over the grievous errors of nominal protestants who (for their own purposes) also maintain that he is not, and with a leaning towards him not to be mistaken, continue *unfairly* in a Church which has pronounced his doctrines to be heresy. That such insinuations, tending as they do to mislead, are subsidizing is matter of thankfulness, for it is of the utmost importance at such a crisis of opinion as the present, that no such advantage should be afforded to the great Enemy of all truth, in the evident attempt he is making in our day, to lead men in perplexity to ask with Pilate, "What is truth?" without caring to wait for an answer to their question.

Whilst the "coming of Christ" is to be the great hope and expectation of His people, let us not neglect the signs of that coming, and of what nature they are to be. Scripture is not

silent upon the subject, nor are we safe in not attending to them : else why so much said in vain, if indeed it be in vain. There is no superfluity *there* nor pointless warning—the signs and lying wonders of the last times (spoken of as likely even to deceive the very elect) are not spoken of to no purpose ; whilst those who are looking for them in a wrong quarter, are in a position nearly if not quite as dangerous as those who are not looking for them at all. They tell us of tropical hurricanes whose approach is not with but against the wind, and woe to the mariner who, misled by deceptive prognostics in other quarters, turns his back upon the real danger from not knowing, as he should have learned to do, in what direction its coming was to be sought. And then too, besides the risk to us of all such misapprehensions, how much are we in the meanwhile losing of the warning and comfort of Scripture, by cleaving so determinately and in spite of so many failures to the misleading system still prevailing. How perceptible in various portions of the Book of Psalms for instance, are the traces of a deeper intensity of prophetic meaning than either Rome or the Papacy can fill up—if these are

still to stand in room of “the Antichrist” of Satan, invested as he is to be not only with “all deceivableness of unrighteousness,” but attended even by actual “signs and lying wonders,” fitted to deceive even those who are prepared to expect them.

In the lxxvi. Psalm an illustration of this may be seen where the destruction of the Antichrist is so plainly spoken of, with mention even of the locality (certainly not Rome which is never mentioned in prophetic Scripture at all,) where that destruction is to be ; whilst the Reign of Righteousness by which he is to be succeeded, is no less vividly portrayed in another, the lxxii., the closing verse of which declares “the prayers of David the son of Jesse to be ended”—*all* the promises to him as enumerated and confirmed in Jerem. xxiii. being then seen as *fully accomplished*—his Seed reigning upon his throne, and all the nations of the Earth serving Him.

Let it not be thought a presumptuous attempt on the part of the writer to draw attention to so rich and interesting a field of enquiry :—he has done so in the desire that more may be led to spend their labour upon it, and he now leaves the effort with Him who gave all Scripture at

first for our learning, and who has promised His Spirit to be the guide of His Church and people in all ages, even to the end of the world.

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