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**From the Talmud
and Hebraica**



John Lightfoot



From the Talmud and Hebraica

Author(s): Lightfoot, John (1602-1675)

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Description: The Talmud is the main text of Judaism (other than the Old Testament). It contains rabbinical teachings on the Bible and Jewish law, philosophy, history, ethics, customs, and tradition. John Lightfoot began the task of relating the Talmud to the text of the New Testament. He hoped to help modern New Testament readers better understand the Jewish historical and cultural background behind the text. By commenting on the Jewish traits of first century culture, Lightfoot is able to bring new context to readers. Lightfoot passed away before he could finish this monumental task, but he completed large volumes of verse-by-verse commentary on the Gospels. *From the Talmud and Hebraica* (Hebraica refers to the Hebrew language) is a beneficial source for new perspectives on the New Testament.

Abby Zwart
CCEL Staff Writer

Subjects: The Bible
New Testament
Works about the New Testament

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**From The Talmud And Hebraica
By John Lightfoot
Matthew**

To
His Dear Friends,
the
Students of Catharine-Hall,
Health.

Those very arguments which, first and chiefly, moved me to turn over the Talmudical writings, moved me also to this present work: so that, from the same reasons whence that reading first proceeded, from them proceed also this fruit and benefit of it.

For, first, when all the books of the New Testament were written by Jews, and among Jews, and unto them; and when all the discourses made there, were made in like manner by Jews, and to Jews, and among them; I was always fully persuaded, as of a thing past all doubting, that that Testament could not but everywhere taste of and retain the Jews' style, idiom, form, and rule of speaking.

And hence, in the second place, I concluded as assuredly that, in the obscurer places of that Testament (which are very many), the best and most natural method of searching out the sense is, to inquire how, and in what sense, those phrases and manners of speech were understood, according to the vulgar and common dialect and opinion of that nation; and how they took them, by whom they were spoken, and by whom they were heard. For it is no matter what we can beat out concerning those manners of speech on the anvil of our own conceit, but what they signified among them, in their ordinary sense and speech. And since this could be found out no other way than by consulting Talmudic authors, who both speak in the vulgar dialect of the Jews, and also handle and reveal all Jewish matters; being induced by these reasons, I applied myself chiefly to the reading these books. I knew, indeed, well enough, that I must certainly wrestle with infinite difficulties, and such as were hardly to be overcome; yet I undervalued them all, and armed myself with a firm purpose, that, if it were possible, I might arrive to a fuller and more deep knowledge and understanding of the style and dialect of the New Testament.

The ill report of those authors, whom all do so very much speak against, may, at first, discourage him that sets upon the reading of their books. The Jews themselves stink in Marcellinus, and their writings stink as much amongst all; and they labour under this I know not what singular misfortune, that, being not read, they displease; and that they are sufficiently reproached by those that have read them, but undergo much more infamy by those that have not.

The almost unconquerable difficulty of the style, the frightful roughness of the language, and the amazing emptiness and sophistry of the matters handled, do torture, vex, and tire him that reads them. They do everywhere abound with trifles in that manner, as though they had no mind to be read; with obscurities and difficulties, as though they had no mind

to be understood: so that the reader hath need of patience all along, to enable him to bear both trifling in sense and roughness in expression.

I, indeed, propounded three things to myself while I turned them over, that I might, as much as I could, either under-value those vexations of reading, or soften them, or recreate myself with them, and that I might reap and enjoy fruit from them, if I could, and as much as I could.

I. I resolved with myself to observe those things which seemed to yield some light to the holy Scriptures, but especially either to the phrases, or sentences, or history of the New Testament.

II. To set down such things in my note-books, which carried some mention of certain places in the land of Israel, or afforded some light into the chorography of that land.

III. To note those things which referred to the history of the Jews, whether ecclesiastical, or scholastic, or civil; or which referred to the Christian history, or the history of the rest of the world.

And now, after having viewed and observed the nature, art, matter, and marrow of these authors with as much intention as we could, I cannot paint out, in little, a true and lively character of them better than in these paradoxes and riddles: There are no authors do more affright and vex the reader; and yet there are none who do more entice and delight him. In no writers is greater or equal trifling; and yet in none is greater or so great benefit. The doctrine of the gospel hath no more bitter enemies than they; and yet the text of the gospel hath no more plain interpreters. To say all in a word, to the Jews, their countrymen, they recommend nothing but toys, and destruction, and poison; but Christians, by their skill and industry, may render them most usefully serviceable to their studies, and most eminently tending to the interpretation of the New Testament.

We here offer some specimen of this our reading and our choice, for the reader's sake, if so it may find acceptance with the reader. We know how exposed to suspicion it is to produce new things; how exposed to hatred the Talmudic writings are; how exposed to both, and to sharp censure also, to produce them in holy things. Therefore, this our more unusual manner of explaining Scripture cannot, upon that very account, but look for a more unusual censure, and become subject to a severer examination. But when the lot is cast, it is too late at this time to desire to avoid the sequel of it; and too much in vain in this place to attempt a defence. If the work and book itself does not carry something with it which may plead its cause, and obtain the reader's pardon and favour; our oration, or begging Epistle, will little avail to do it. The present work, therefore, is to be exposed and delivered over to its fate and fortune, whatsoever it be. Some there are, we hope, who will give it a milder and more gentle reception; for this very thing, dealing favourably and kindly with us, that we have been intent upon our studies; that we have been intent upon the gospel; and that we have endeavoured after truth: they will show us favour that we followed after it, and, if we have not attained

it, they will pity us. But as for the wrinkled forehead, and the stern brow, we are prepared to bear them with all patience, being armed and satisfied with this inward patronage, that "we have endeavoured to profit."

But this work, whatever it be, and whatever fortune it is like to meet with, we would dedicate to you, my very dear Catharine-Hall men, both as a debt, and as a desire. For by this most close bond and tie wherewith we are united, to you is due all that we study, all that we can do; if so be that *all* is any thing at all. And when we desire to profit all (if we could) which becomes both a student and a Christian to do; by that bond and your own merits, you are the very centre and rest of those desires and wishes. We are sufficiently conscious to ourselves how little or nothing we can do either for the public benefit, or for yours; yet we would make a public profession, before all the world, of our desire and study; and, before you, of our inward and cordial affection.

Let this pledge, therefore, of our love and endearment be laid up by you; and, while we endeavour to give others an account of our hours, let this give you an assurance of our affections. And may it last in Catharine-Hall, even to future ages, as a testimony of service, a monument of love, and a memorial both of me and you!

From my Study,
The Calends of June, 1658.

1:1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

[*The book of the generation of Jesus Christ.*] *Ten stocks came out of Babylon:* 1. *Priests.* 2. *Levites.* 3. *Israelites.* 4. *Common persons*, as to the priesthood: such whose fathers, indeed, were sprung from priests, but their mothers unfit to be admitted to the priests' marriage-bed. 5. *Proselytes.* 6. *Liberti*, or *servants set free.* 7. *Nothi*: such as were born in wedlock; but that which was unlawful. 8. *Nethinims.* 9. *Bastards*: such as came of a certain mother, but of an uncertain father. 10. Such as were *gathered up* out of the streets, whose fathers and mothers were uncertain.

A defiled generation indeed! and, therefore, brought up out of Babylon in this common sink, according to the opinion of the Hebrews, that the whole Jewish seed still remaining there might not be polluted by it. *For Ezra went not up out of Babylon, until he had rendered it pure as flour.* They are the words of the Babylonian Gemara, which the Gloss explains thus; "He left not any there that were illegitimate in any respect, but the priests and Levites only, and Israelites of a pure and undefiled stock. Therefore, he brought up with him these ten kinds of pedigrees, that these might not be mingled with those, when there remained now no more a Sanhedrim there, which might take care of that matter. Therefore he brought them to Jerusalem, where care might be taken by the Sanhedrim fixed there, that the legitimate might not marry with the illegitimate."

Let us think of these things a little while we are upon our entrance into the Gospel-history:

I. How great a cloud of obscurity could not but arise to the people concerning the original of Christ, even from the very return out of Babylon, when they either certainly saw, or certainly believed that they saw, a purer spring of Jewish blood there than in the land of Israel itself!

II. How great a care ought there to be in the families of pure blood, to preserve themselves untouched and clean from this impure sink; and to lay up among themselves genealogical scrolls from generation to generation as faithful witnesses and lasting monuments of their legitimate stock and free blood!

Hear a complaint and a story in this case: "R. Jochanan said, By the Temple, it is in our hand to discover who are not of pure blood in the land of Israel: but what shall I do, when the chief men of this generation lie hid?" (that is, when they are not of pure blood, and yet we must not declare so much openly concerning them). "He was of the same opinion with R. Isaac, who said, *A family* (of the polluted blood) *that lies hid, let it lie hid.* Abai also saith, We have learned this also by tradition, That there was a certain family called the family of Beth-zeripha, beyond Jordan, and a son of Zion removed it away." (The Gloss is, Some eminent man, by a public proclamation, declared it impure.) "But he caused another which

was such" [that is, impure] "to come near. and there was another which the wise men would not manifest."

III. When it especially lay upon the Sanhedrim, settled at Jerusalem to preserve pure families, as much as in them lay, pure still; and when they prescribed canons of preserving the legitimation of the people (which you may see in those things that follow at the place alleged), there was some necessity to lay up public records of pedigrees with them: whence it might be known what family was pure, and what defiled. Hence that of Simon Ben Azzai deserves our notice: "I saw (saith he) a genealogical scroll in Jerusalem, in which it was thus written; 'N., a bastard of a strange wife.'" Observe, that even a bastard was written in their public books of genealogy, that he might be known to be a bastard, and that the purer families might take heed of the defilement of his seed. Let that also be noted: "They found a book of genealogy at Jerusalem, in which it was thus written; 'Hillel was sprung from David. Ben Jatsaph from Asaph. Ben Tsitsith Hacceseth from Abner. Ben Cobisin from Achab,'" &c. And the records of the genealogies smell of those things which are mentioned in the text of the Misna concerning 'wood-carrying': "The priests' and people's times of wood-carrying were nine: on the first day of the month Nisan, for the sons of Erach, the sons of Judah: the twentieth day of Tammuz, for the sons of David, the son of Judah: the fifth day of Ab, for the sons of Parosh, the son of Judah: the seventh of the same month for the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab: the tenth of the same for the sons of Senaah, the son of Benjamin," &c.

It is, therefore, easy to guess whence Matthew took the last fourteen generations of this genealogy, and Luke the first forty names of his; namely, from the genealogical scrolls at that time well enough known, and laid up in the public repositories, and in the private also. And it was necessary, indeed, in so noble and sublime a subject, and a thing that would be so much inquired into by the Jewish people as the lineage of the Messiah would be, that the evangelists should deliver a truth, not only that could not be gainsaid, but also that might be proved and established from certain and undoubted rolls of ancestors.

[*Of Jesus Christ.*] That the name of *Jesus* is so often added to the name of *Christ* in the New Testament, is not only that thereby Christ might be pointed out for the *Saviour*, which the name *Jesus* signifies; but also, that Jesus might be pointed out for true *Christ*: against the unbelief of the Jews, who though they acknowledged a certain *Messiah*, or *Christ*, yet they stiffly denied that *Jesus* of Nazareth was he. This observation takes place in numberless places of the New Testament; [Acts 2:36](#), [8:35](#); [1 Corinthians 16:22](#); [1 John 2:22](#), [4:15](#), &c.

[*The Son of David.*] That is, "the true Messias." For by no more ordinary and more proper name did the Jewish nation point out the Messiah than by *The Son of David*. See [Matthew 12:23](#), [21:9](#), [22:42](#); [Luke 18:38](#); and everywhere in the Talmudic writings, but especially in Bab. Sanhedrim: where it is also discussed, What kind of times those should be when *the Son of David* should come.

The things which are devised by the Jews concerning Messiah Ben Joseph (which the Targum upon [Canticles 4:5](#) calls 'Messiah Ben Ephraim') are therefore devised, to comply with their giddiness and loss of judgment in their opinion of the Messiah. For, since they despised the true Messiah, who came in the time fore-allotted by the prophets, and crucified him; they still expect I know not what chimerical one, concerning whom they have no certain opinion: whether he shall be one, or two; whether he shall arise from among the living, or from the dead; whether he shall come in the clouds of heaven, or sitting upon an ass, &c.: they expect a *Son of David*; but they know not whom, they know not when.

2. Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;

[*Judas.*] In Hebrew, *Jehudah*. Which word not only the Greeks, for want of the letter "h" in the middle of a word, but the Jews themselves, do contract into *Judah*: which occurs infinite times in the Jerusalem Talmud. The same person who is called *R. Jose Bi R. Jehudah*, in the next line is called *R. Jose Bi R. Judah*...

5. And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

[*Booz of Rachab.*] So far the Jewish writers agree with Matthew, that they confess Rachab was married to some prince of Israel, but mistaking concerning the person: whether they do this out of ignorance, or wilfully, let themselves look to that. Concerning this matter, the Babylonian Gemara hath these words: "Eight prophets and those priests sprung from Rachab, and they are these, Neriah, Baruch, Seraiah, Maaseiah, Jeremiah, Hilkiyah, Hanameel, and Shallum. R. Judah saith, Huldah also was of the posterity of Rachab." And a little after, "There is a tradition, that she, being made a proselytess, was married to Joshua": which Kimchi also produceth in [Joshua 6](#). Here the Gloss casts in a scruple: "It sounds somewhat harshly (saith it), that Joshua married one that was made a proselyte, when it was not lawful to contract marriage with the Canaanites, though they became proselytes. Therefore we must say that she was not of the seven nations of the Canaanites, but of some other nation, and sojourned there. But others say that that prohibition took not place before the entrance into the promised land," &c.

8. And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;

[*And Joram begat Ozias.*] The names of Ahazias, Joash, and Amazias, are struck out. See the history in the books of the Kings, and [1 Chronicles 3:11, 12](#).

I. The promise that "the throne of David should not be empty," passed over, after a manner, for some time into the family of Jehu, the overthrower of Joram's family. For when he had razed the house of Ahab, and had slain Ahaziah, sprung, on the mother's side, of the family of Ahab, the Lord promiseth him that his sons should reign unto the fourth generation,

[2 Kings 10:30](#). Therefore however the mean time the throne of David was not empty, and that Joash and Amazias sat during the space between, yet their names are not unfitly omitted by our evangelist, both because they were sometimes not very unlike Joram in their manners; and because their kingdom was very much eclipsed by the kingdom of Israel, when Ahazias was slain by Jehu, and his cousin Amazias taken and basely subdued by his cousin Joash, [2 Chronicles 25:23](#).

II. "The seed of the wicked shall be cut off," [Psalm 37:28](#). Let the studious reader observe that, in the original, in this very place, the letter Ain, which is the last letter of *wicked*, and of *seed*, is cut off, and is not expressed; when, by the rule of acrostic verse (according to which this Psalm is composed), that letter ought to begin the next following verse.

III. "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, &c. For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation," ([Exodus 20:5](#)).

Joram walked in the idolatrous ways of the kings of Israel, according to the manner of the family of Ahab, [2 Kings 8:18](#). Which horrid violation of the second command God visits upon his posterity, according to the threatening of that command; and therefore the names of his sons are dashed out unto the fourth generation.

IV. The Old Testament also stigmatizeth that idolatry of Joram in a way not unlike this of the New; and shows that family unworthy to be numbered among David's progeny, [2 Chronicles 22:2](#): *Ahazias, the son of two and forty years*: that is, not of his age (for he was not above two-and-twenty, [2 Kings 8:26](#)), but of the duration of the family of Omri, of which stock Ahazias was, on the mother's side; as will sufficiently appear to him that computes the years. A fatal thing surely! that the years of a king of Judah should be reckoned by the account of the house of Omri.

V. Let a genealogical style not much different be observed, [1 Chronicles 4:1](#); where Shobal, born in the fifth or sixth generation from Judah, is reckoned as if he were an immediate son of Judah. Compare chapter 2:50.

In the like manner, [Ezra 7](#), in the genealogy of Ezra, five or six generations are erased.

[Please see *Genealogies of the Bible: A Neglected Subject* etc. at the Arthur Custance, Doorway Papers Library site regarding these lists and the "missing" names.]

11. And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon:

[*And Josias begat Jechonias.*] The sons of Josias were these: the first-born, Jochanan; the second, Joachim; the third, Zedekiah; the fourth, Shallum, [1 Chronicles 3:15](#). Who this Shallum was, the Jerusalem Talmudists do dispute: "R. Jochanan saith, Jochanan and Jehoachaz were the same. And when it is written, *Jochanan the first-born*, it means this; that

he was the first-born to the kingdom: that is, he first reigned. And R. Jochanan saith, Shallum and Zedekias are the same. And when it is written, Zedekias the third Shallum the fourth; he was the third in birth, but he reigned fourth." The same things are produced in the tract Sotah. But R. Kimchi much more correctly: "Shallum (saith he) is Jechonias, who had two names, and was reckoned for the son of Josias, when he was his grandchild" (or the son of his son); "For the sons of sons are reputed for sons." Compare [Jeremiah 22:11](#) with 24; and the thing itself speaks it. And that which the Gemarists now quoted say, Zedekiah was also called *Shallum*, because in his days 'Shalmah,' 'an end was put to' the kingdom of the family of David: this also agrees very fitly to Jechonias, [Jeremiah 22:28-30](#).

12. And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel;

[*Jechonias begat Salathiel.*] That is, "a son of the kingdom," or successor in that dignity of the house of David, whatsoever it was, which was altogether withered in the rest of the sons of Josiah, but did somewhat flourish again in him, [2 Kings 25:27](#). And hence it is, that of all the posterity of Josiah, Jechonias only is named by St. Matthew.

Jechonias, in truth, was *without children*, [Jeremiah 22:30](#); and Salathiel, properly speaking, was the son of Neri, [Luke 3:27](#): but yet Jechonias is said to beget him; not that he was truly his father, but that the other was his successor; not, indeed, in his kingly dignity, for that was now perished, but in that which now was the chief dignity among the Jews. [So 1 Chronicles 3:16](#), Zedekias is called the son, either of Jehoiakim, whose brother indeed he was, or of Jechonias, whose uncle he was; because he succeeded him in the kingly dignity.

The Lord had declared, and that not without an oath, that Jechonias should be *without children*. The Talmudists do so interpret "R. Judah saith, All they of whom it is said, *These shall be without children*; they shall have no children. And those of whom it is said, *They shall die without children*; they bury their children." [[Lev 20:20-21](#).]

So Kimchi also upon the place; "The word (saith he) means this; That his sons shall die in his life, if he shall now have sons: but if he shall not now have sons, he never shall. But our Rabbins of blessed memory say, That he repented in prison. And they say moreover, Oh! how much doth repentance avail, which evacuates a penal edict! for it is said, 'Write ye this man childless': but, he repenting, this edict turned to his good," &c. "R. Jochanan saith, His carrying away expiated. For when it is said, 'Write this man childless,' after the carrying away it is said, 'The sons of Coniah, Assir his son, Shealtiel his son.'" These things are in Babyl. Sanhedrim, where these words are added, "Assir his son, because his mother conceived him in prison."

But the words in the original ([1 Chron 3:17](#)) are these...*Now the sons of Jechonias bound [or imprisoned] were Shealtiel his son.* Which version both the accents and the order of the words confirm...

16. And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

[*And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary.*] *The mother's family is not to be called a family.* Hence the reason may very easily be given, why Matthew brings down the generation to Joseph, Mary's husband; but Luke to Eli, Mary's father. These two frame the genealogy two ways, according to the double notion of the promise of Christ. For he is promised, as the 'seed of the woman,' and as the 'Son of David'; that, as a man, this, as a king. It was therefore needful, in setting down his genealogy, that satisfaction should be given concerning both. Therefore Luke declareth him the promised seed of the woman, deducing his mother's stock, from whence man was born, from Adam; Matthew exhibits his royal original, deriving his pedigree along through the royal family of David to Joseph, his (reputed) father.

17. So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

[*Fourteen generations.*] Although all things do not square exactly in this threefold number of *fourteen generations*, yet there is no reason why this should be charged as a fault upon Matthew, when in the Jewish schools themselves it obtained for a custom, yea, almost for an axiom, to reduce things and numbers to the very same, when they were near alike. The thing will be plain by an example or two, when a hundred almost might be produced.

Five calamitous things are ascribed to the same day, that is, to the ninth day of the month Ab. "For that day (say they) it was decreed, That the people should not go into the promised land: the same day, the first Temple was laid waste, and the second also: the city Bitter was destroyed, and the city Jerusalem ploughed up." Not that they believed all these things fell out precisely the same day of the month; but, as the Babylonian Gemara notes upon it, *That they might reduce a fortunate thing to a holy day, and an unfortunate to an unlucky day.*

The Jerusalem Gemara, in the same tract, examines the reason why the daily prayers consist of the number of eighteen, and among other things hath these words; "The daily prayers are eighteen, according to the number of the eighteen Psalms, from the beginning of the Book of Psalms to that Psalm whose beginning is, 'The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble,'" [which Psalm, indeed, is the twentieth Psalm]. "But if any object, that nineteen Psalms reach thither, you may answer, The Psalm which begins, 'Why did the heathen rage,' is not of them," a distinct Psalm. Behold, with what liberty they fit numbers to their own case.

Inquiry is made, whence the number of the thirty-nine more principal servile works, to be avoided on the sabbath-day, may be proved. Among other, we meet with these words; "R. Chaninah of Zippor saith, in the name of R. Abhu, *Aleph* denotes one, *Lamed* thirty, *He* five, *Dabar* one, *Debarim* two. Hence are the forty works, save one, concerning which it is written in the law. The Rabbins of Caesarea say, Not any thing is wanting out of his place:

Aleph one, Lamed thirty, Cheth eight: our profound doctors do not distinguish between He and Cheth": that they may fit number to their case...

"R. Joshua Ben Levi saith, In all my whole life I have not looked into the [*mystical*] book of Agada but once; and then I looked into it, and found it thus written, A hundred and seventy-five sections of the law; where it is written, *He spake, he said, he commanded*, they are for the number of the years of our father Abraham." And a little after; "A hundred and forty and seven Psalms, which are written in the Book of the Psalms [*note this number*], are for the number of the years of our father Jacob. Whence this is hinted, that all the praises wherewith the Israelites praise God are according to the years of Jacob. Those hundred and twenty and three times, wherein the Israelites answer Hallelujah, are according to the number of the years of Aaron," &c.

They do so very much delight in such kind of conceits, that they oftentimes screw up the strings beyond the due measure, and stretch them till they crack. So that if a Jew carps at thee, O divine Matthew, for the unevenness of thy fourteens, out of their own schools and writings thou hast that, not only whereby thou mayest defend thyself, but retort upon them.

18. Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

[*When as his mother was espoused*] No woman of Israel was married, unless she had been first espoused. "Before the giving of the law (saith Maimonides), if the man and the woman had agreed about marriage, he brought her into his house, and privately married her. But after the giving of the law, the Israelites were commanded, that, if any were minded to take a woman for his wife, he should receive her, first, before witnesses; and thenceforth let her be to him a wife, as it is written, *If any one take a wife*. This *taking* is one of the affirmative precepts of the law, and is called *espousing*." Of the manner and form of espousing, you may read till you are weary, in that tractate, and in the Talmudic tract, Kiddushin.

[*Before they came together.*] "In many places the man espouseth the woman; but doth not bring her home to him, but after some space of time." So the Gloss upon Maimonides.

Distinction is made by the Jewish canons, and that justly and openly, between *private society* or *discourse* between the espouser and the espoused, and *the bringing* of the espoused into the husband's house. Of either of the two may those words be understood, *before they came together*, or, rather, of them both. He had not only not brought her home to him, but he had no manner of society with her alone, beyond the canonical limits of discourse, that were allowed to unmarried persons; and yet she was found with child.

[*She was found with child.*] Namely, after the space of three months from her conception, when she was now returned home from her cousin Elizabeth. See [Luke 1:56](#), and compare [Genesis 38:24](#).

The masters of the traditions assign this space to discover a thing of that nature. "A woman (say they) who is either put away from her husband, or become a widow, neither marrieth, nor is espoused, but after ninety days: namely, that it may be known, whether she be big with child or no; and that distinction may be made between the offspring of the first husband and of the second. In like manner, a husband and wife, being made proselytes, are parted from one another for ninety days, that judgment may be made between children begotten in holiness," (that is, within the true religion; see [1 Cor 7:14](#)) "And children begotten out of holiness."

19. Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

[*But Joseph, being a just man, &c.*] There is no need to rack the word *just*, to fetch out thence the sense of *gentleness* or *mercy*, which many do; for, construing the clauses of the verse separately, the sense will appear clear and soft enough, *Joseph, being a just man*, could not, would not, endure an adulteress: *but yet not willing to make her a public example*, being a merciful man, and loving his wife, *was minded to put her away privily*.

[*To make her a public example.*] This doth not imply death, but rather public disgrace, *to make her public*. For it may, not without reason, be inquired, whether she would have been brought to capital punishment, if it had been true that she had conceived by adultery. For although there was a law promulged of punishing adultery with death, [Leviticus 10:10](#), [Deuteronomy 22:22](#), and, in this case, she that was espoused, would be dealt withal after the same manner as it was with her who was become a wife; yet so far was that law modified, that I say not weakened, by the law of giving a bill of divorce, [Deuteronomy 24:1](#), &c., that the husband might not only pardon his adulterous wife, and not compel her to appear before the Sanhedrim, but scarcely could, if he would, put her to death. For why otherwise was the bill of divorce indulged?

Joseph, therefore, endeavours to do nothing here, but what he might, with the full consent both of the law and nation. The adulteress might be put away; she that was espoused could not be put away without a bill of divorce; concerning which thus the Jewish laws: "A woman is espoused three ways; by money, or by a writing, or by being lain with. And being thus espoused, though she were not yet married, nor conducted into the man's house, yet she is his wife. And if any shall lie with her beside him, he is to be punished with death by the Sanhedrim. And if he himself will put her away, he must have a bill of divorce."

[*Put her away privily.*] Let the Talmudic tract 'Gittin' be looked upon, where they are treating of the manner of delivering a bill of divorce to a wife to be put away: among other things, it might be given privately, if the husband so pleased, either into the woman's hand or bosom, two witnesses only present.

23. Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

[*Behold, a virgin shall be with child.*] That the word virgin, in the prophet, denotes an *untouched virgin*, sufficiently appears from the sense of the place, [Isaiah 7:14](#). King Ahaz there was afraid, lest the enemies that were now upon him might destroy Jerusalem, and utterly consume the house of David. The Lord meets this fear by a signal and most remarkable promise, namely, 'that sooner should a pure virgin bring forth a child, than the family of David perish.' And the promise yields a double comfort: namely, of Christ hereafter to be born of a *virgin*; and of their security from the imminent danger of the city and house of David. So that, although that prophecy, of a *virgin's* bringing forth a son, should not be fulfilled till many hundreds of years after, yet, at that present time, when the prophecy was made, Ahaz had a certain and notable sign, that the house of David should be safe and secure from the danger that hung over it. As much as if the prophet had said, "Be no so troubled, O Ahaz; does it not seem an impossible thing to thee, and that never will happen, that a *pure virgin* should become a mother? But I tell thee, a *pure virgin* shall bring forth a son, before the house of David perish."

Hear this, O unbelieving Jew! and shew us now some remainders of the house of David: or confess this prophecy fulfilled in *the Virgin's* bringing forth: or deny that a sign was given, when a sign is given.

In what language Matthew wrote his Gospel.

[*Which is, being interpreted.*] I. All confess that the Syriac language was the mother-tongue to the Jewish nation dwelling in Judea; and that the Hebrew was not at all understood by the common people may especially appear from two things:

1. That, in the synagogues, when the law and the prophets were read in the original Hebrew, an interpreter was always present to the reader, who rendered into the mother-tongue that which was read, that it might be understood by the common people. Hence those rules of the office of an interpreter, and of some places which were not to be rendered into the mother-tongue.

2. That Jonathan the son of Uzziel, a scholar of Hillel, about the time of Christ's birth, rendered all the prophets (that is, as the Jews number them, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, the Books of the Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve lesser prophets) into the Chaldee language; that is, into a language much more known to the people than the Hebrew, and more acceptable than the mother-tongue. For if it be asked why he translated them at all, and why he translated not rather into the mother-tongue, which was known to all? and if it be objected concerning St. Matthew and St. Paul, that, writing to the Jews, one his Gospel, the other his Epistle (to the Hebrews), they must have written in the Syriac tongue (if so be they wrote not in Hebrew), that they might be understood by all:--we answer,

First, It was not without reason that the paraphrast Jonathan translated out of the Hebrew original into the Chaldee tongue, because this tongue was much more known and familiar to all the people than the Hebrew. The holy text had need of an interpreter into a more known tongue, because it was now in a tongue not known at all to the vulgar. For none knew the Hebrew but such as learned it by study. However, therefore, all the Jews inhabiting the land of Canaan, did not so readily understand the Chaldee language as the Syriac, which was their mother-language, yet they much more readily understood that than the Hebrew, which, to the unlearned, was not known at all. Hence it was not without necessity that the prophets were turned into the Chaldee language by Jonathan, and the law, not much after, by Onkelos, that they might a little be understood by the common people, by whom the Hebrew original was not understood at all. We read also that the Book of Job had its Targum in the time of Gamaliel the Elder; that is, Paul's master.

Secondly, it is no impertinent question, Why Jonathan and Onkelos did not rather translate into the Syriac language, which was the mother-language to all the people, when both they themselves were in Judea, while they were employed about this work, and laboured in it for the use of the Jews that dwelt there? To which we give this double answer; 1. That, by turning it into the Chaldee language, they did a thing that might be of use to both them that dwelt in Judea, and in Babylon also. 2. The Syriac language was not so grateful unto the Jews, who used it for their mother-tongue, as the Chaldee was; as being a language more neat and polite, and the mother-tongue to the brethren in Babylon, and which they that came up out of Babylon, carried thence with them into Judea. You may wonder, reader, when you hear that canon which permits a single man "to say his prayers in any language, when he asks those things that are needful for him, except only the Syriac: *While he asketh necessities for himself, let him use any language but the Syriac.*" But you will laugh when you hear the reason: "Therefore, by all means, because the angels do not understand the Syriac language."

Whether they distinguish the Syriac language here from the pure Chaldee, is not of great moment solicitously to inquire: we shall only produce these things of the Glosser upon Beracoth, which make to our purpose:--"There are some (saith he) who say, that that prayer which begins 'sermon,' is therefore to be made in the Syriac language, because it is a noble prayer, and that deserves the highest praise; and therefore it is framed in the Targumistical language, that the angels may not understand it, and envy it to us," &c. And a little after; "It was the custom to recite that prayer *after sermon*: and the common people were there present, who understood not the Hebrew language at all; and therefore they appointed it to be framed in the Targumistical language, that it might be understood by all; for this is their tongue."

Mark, the Hebrew was altogether unknown to the common people: no wonder, therefore, if the evangelists and apostles wrote not in Hebrew when there were none who understood things so written, but learned men only.

That also must not be passed over, which, at first sight, seems to hint that the Syriac language was not understood even by learned men. "Samuel the Little, at the point of death, said, *Simeon and Ismael to the sword; and all the other people to the spoil: and there shall be very great calamities.*" And because he spoke these things in the Syriac language, they understood not what he had said. This story you have repeated in the Babylonian Gemara, where the words of the dying man are thus related; Let the Glosser upon the place be the interpreter: "*Simeon and Ismael to the sword* [that is, Rabban Simeon the prince, and R. Ismael Ben Elisha the high-priest, were slain with the sword], *and his fellows to slaughter* [that is, R. Akibah and R. Chananiah Ben Teradion were slain by other deaths; namely R. Akibah by iron teeth, and R. Chananiah by burning alive before idols]; *and the other people for a prey: and very many calamities shall fall upon the world.*"

Now where it is said that, "They understood not what he said, because he spake in the Syrian tongue," we also do not easily understand. What! for the Jerusalem doctors not to understand the Chaldee language! For Samuel the Little died before the destruction of the city; and he spake of the death of Rabban Simeon, who perished in the siege of the city; and he spake these things when some of the learnedest Rabbins were by: and yet that they understood not these words, which even a smatterer in the oriental tongues would very easily understand!

Therefore, perhaps, you may beat out the sense of the matter from the words of the author of Juchasin, who saith, *He prophesied in the Syriac language*, But now, when prophecies were spoken only in the Hebrew language, however they understood the sense of the words, yet they reputed it not for a prophecy, because it was not uttered in the language that was proper for prophetic predictions. But we tarry not here. That which we would have is this, that Matthew wrote not in Hebrew (which is proved sufficiently by what is spoken before), if so be we suppose him to have written in a language vulgarly known and understood; which, certainly, we ought to suppose: not that he, or the other writers of the New Testament, wrote in the Syriac language, unless we suppose them to have written in the ungrateful language of an ungrateful nation, which, certainly, we ought not to suppose. For when the Jewish people were now to be cast off, and to be doomed to eternal cursing, it was very improper, certainly, to extol their language, whether it were the Syriac mother-tongue, or the Chaldee, its cousin language, unto that degree of honour; that it should be the original language of the New Testament. Improper, certainly, it was, to write the Gospel in their tongue, who, above all the inhabitants of the world, most despised and opposed it.

II. Since, therefore, the Gentiles were to be called to the faith, and to embrace the Gospel by the preaching of it, the New Testament was written very congruously in the Gentile language, and in that which, among the Gentile languages, was the most noble; viz. the Greek. Let us see what the Jews say of this language, envious enough against all languages besides their own.

"Rabban Simeon Ben Gamaliel saith, Even concerning the holy books, the wise men permitted not that they should be written in any other language than Greek. R. Abhu saith that R. Jochanan said, The tradition is according to Rabban Simeon; that R. Jochanan said, moreover, Whence is that of Rabban Simeon proved? From thence, that the Scripture saith, 'The Lord shall persuade Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Sem': the words of Japhet shall be in the tents of Sem": and a little after, *God shall persuade Japhet*; i.e. *The grace of Japhet shall be in the tents of Sem.*" Where the Gloss speaks thus; "'The grace of Japhet' is the Greek language; the fairest of those tongues which belonged to the sons of Japhet."

"Rabban Simeon Ben Gamaliel saith, Even concerning the sacred books, they permitted not that they should be written in any other language than Greek. They searched seriously, and found, *that the law could not be translated according to what was needful for it, but in Greek.*" You have this latter clause cut off in Massecheth Sopherim, where this story also is added: "The five elders wrote the law in Greek for Ptolemy the king: and that day was bitter to Israel, as the day wherein the golden calf was made, because the law could not be translated according to what was needful for it." This story of the 'five interpreters' of the law is worthy of consideration, which you find seldom mentioned, or scarce anywhere else. The tradition next following after this, in the place cited, recites the story of the Seventy. Look at it.

When, therefore, the common use of the Hebrew language had perished, and when the mother Syriac or Chaldee tongue of a cursed nation could not be blessed, our very enemies being judges, no other language could be found, which might be fit to write the (new) divine law, besides the Greek tongue. That this language was scattered, and in use among all the eastern nations almost, and was in a manner the mother tongue, and that it was planted every where by the conquests of Alexander, and the empire of the Greeks, we need not many words to prove; since it is every where to be seen in the historians. The Jews do well near acknowledge it for their mother-tongue even in Judea.

"R. Jochanan of Beth Gubrin said, There are four noble languages which the world useth; the mother-tongue, for singing; the Roman, for war; the Syriac, for mourning; and the Hebrew, for elocution: and there are some who say, the Assyrian for writing." What is that which he calls the mother-tongue? It is very easily answered, the Greek, from those encomiums added to it, mentioned before: and that may more confidently be affirmed from the words of Midras Tillin, respecting this saying of R. Jochanan, and mentioning the Greek language by name. "R. Jochanan said, There are three languages; the Roman, for war; the Greek, for speech; the Assyrian, for prayer." To this also belongs that, that occurs once and again in Bab. Megillah, *In the Greek mother tongue.* You have an instance of the thing; "R. Levi, coming to Caesarea, heard some *reciting the phylacteries in the Hellenistical language.*" This is worthy to be marked. At Caesarea flourished the famous schools of the Rabbins. *The Rabbins of Caesarea* are mentioned in both Talmuds most frequently, and with great praise, but especially in that of Jerusalem. But yet among these, the Greek is used as the mother-

tongue, and that in reciting the phylacteries, which, you may well think, above all other things, in Judea were to be said in Hebrew.

In that very Caesarea, Jerome mentions the Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew, to be laid up in the library of Pamphilus, in these words: "Matthew, who was also called Levi, from a publican made an apostle, first of all in Judea composed the Gospel of Christ in Hebrew letters and words, for their sakes, who were of the circumcision and believed. Which Gospel, who he was that afterward translated it into Greek, it is not sufficiently know. Moreover, that very Hebrew Gospel is reserved to this day in the library at Caesarea, which Pamphilus the martyr, with much care, collected. I also had leave given me by the Nazarenes, who use this book in Berea, a city of Syria, to write it out."

It is not at all to be doubted, that this Gospel was found in Hebrew; but that which deceived the good man was not the very handwriting of Matthew, nor, indeed, did Matthew write the Gospel in that language: but it was turned by somebody out of the original Greek into Hebrew, that so, if possible, the learned Jews might read it. For since they had little kindness for foreign books, that is, heathen books, or such as were written in a language different from their own, which might be illustrated from various canons, concerning this matter; some person converted to the gospel, excited with a good zeal, seems to have translated this Gospel of St. Matthew out of the Greek original into the Hebrew language, that learned men among the Jews, who as yet believed not, might perhaps read it, being now published in their language: which was rejected by them while it remained in a foreign speech. Thus, I suppose, this gospel was written in Greek by St. Matthew, for the sake of those that believed in Judea, and turned into Hebrew by somebody else, for the sake of those that did not believe.

The same is to be resolved concerning the original language of the Epistle to the Hebrews. That Epistle was written to the Jews inhabiting Judea, to whom the Syriac was the mother-tongue; but yet it was writ in Greek, for the reasons above named. For the same reasons, also, the same apostle writ in Greek to the Romans, although in that church there were Romans, to whom it might seem more agreeable to have written in Latin; and there were Jews, to whom it might seem more proepr to have written in Syriac.

A calculation of the times when Christ was born.

1. Now when Jesus was born in Beth-lehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.

[*Now when Jesus was born.*] We thus lay down a scheme of the times when Christ was born:

I. He was born in the year of the world 3928.

For from the creation of the world to the deluge are commonly reckoned 1656 years.

From the deluge to Abraham's promise are 427 years. This being supposed, that Abraham was born the 130th year of Terah: which must be supposed.

From the promise given, to the going out of Egypt, 430 years, [Exodus 12:40](#); [Galatians 3:17](#).

From the going out of Egypt to the laying the foundations of the Temple are 480 years, [1 Kings 6:1](#).

The Temple was building 7 years, [1 Kings 6:38](#).

Casting up, therefore, all these together, viz. $1656 + 427 + 430 + 480 + 7 =$ The sum of years amounts to 3000.

And it is clear, the building of the Temple was finished and completed in the year of the world 3000.

The Temple was finished in the eleventh year of Solomon, [1 Kings 6:38](#): and thence to the revolting of the ten tribes, in the first year of Rehoboam, were 30 years. Therefore, that revolt was in the year of the world 3030.

From the revolt of the ten tribes to the destruction of Jerusalem under Zedekiah were three hundred and ninety years: which appears sufficiently from the chronical computation of the parallel times of the kings of Judah and Israel: and which is implied by [Ezekiel 4:4-6](#): "Thou shalt sleep upon thy left side, and shalt put the iniquities of the house of Israel upon it, &c. according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days. And when thou shalt have accomplished them, thou shalt sleep upon thy right side the second time, and shalt take upon thee the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days." Concerning the computation of these years, it is doubted, whether those forty years are to be numbered together within the three hundred and ninety years, or by themselves, as following after those three hundred and ninety years. We, not without cause, embrace the former opinion, and suppose those forty years to be included within the sum of three hundred and ninety; but mentioned by themselves particularly, for a particular reason. For by the space of forty years before the destruction of the city by the Chaldeans, did Jeremiah prophesy daily, namely, from the third year of Josias to the sacking of the city: whom the people not hearkening to, they are marked for that peculiar iniquity with this note.

Therefore, these three hundred and ninety years being added to the year of the world, 3030, when the ten tribes fell off from the house of David, the age of the world when Jerusalem perished, arose to the year 3420.

At that time there remained fifty years of the Babylonian captivity to be completed. For those remarkable seventy years took their beginning from the third year of Jehoiakim, [Daniel 1:1](#), whose fourth year begins the Babylonian monarchy, [Jeremiah 25:1](#). And, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, the Temple was destroyed, [2 Kings 25:8](#), when now the twentieth year of the captivity passed; and other fifty remained: which fifty being added to the year of the world 3420, a year fatal to the Temple, the years of the world amount, in the first year of Cyrus, unto 3470.

From the first of Cyrus to the death of Christ are seventy weeks of years, or four hundred and ninety years, [Daniel 9:24](#). Add these to the three thousand four hundred and seventy, and you observe Christ crucified in the year of the world 3960. When, therefore, you have subtracted thirty-two years and a half, wherein Christ lived upon the earth, you will find him born in the year of the world 3928.

II. He was born in the one-and-thirtieth year of Augustus Caesar, the computation of his monarchy beginning from the victory at Actium. Of which matter thus Dion Cassius writes: "This their sea-fight was on the second of September: and this I speak upon no other account (for I am not wont to do it), but because then Caesar first obtained the whole power: so that the computation of the years of his monarchy must be precisely reckoned from that very day." We confirm this our computation, by drawing down a chronological table from this year of Augustus to the fifteenth year of Tiberius, when Christ, having now completed the nine-and-twentieth year of his age, and entering just upon his thirtieth, was baptized. Now this table, adding the consuls of every year, we thus frame:

M	V	A	D	Q
		g		S
		t		S
3	7	3	1	G
				A
				g
				u
				L
				A
				g
				u
9	7	3	2	T
				i
				u

				V i s i t a t i o n
9	8	3	3	L A s t i c i t y
9	7	4	4	S e c u l a r i t y
9	8	5	5	L i t e r a t u r e

3	9	3	6	M A I L A U S
9	0	3	7	A I N S A P Q E M E
5	7	3	8	F U G M I L S M U P M
3	2	9	9	Q E P

				G e n e r a l C o n f e r e n c e
9	7	4	D	B e n e d i c t i n e r i c u s S e c u n d u s
9	7	4	I	M e t h o d i c u s T e r t i u s T e r t i u s
9	7	2	2	G e n e r a l C o n f e r e n c e

				6
				6
9	7	4	B	L
				M
				M
				6
				M
				C
				4
				5
				6
				8
9	7	4	11	8
				8
				8
				F
				M
				8
				4
				5
				8
				F

[A.M Latin anno mundi = in the year of the world.

A.U.C. Latin ab urbe condita = from the year of the founding of the city (of Rome).]

Augustus Caesar died the 19th day of August: on which day he had formerly entered upon the first consulship. He lived seventy-five years, ten months, and twenty-six days. He bore the empire alone, from the victory at Actium, forty-four years, wanting only thirteen days.

"Tiberius held the empire in great slothfulness, with grievous cruelty, wicked covetousness, and filthy lust."

M	A	T	D	8
		5		SUS
9	7	1	5	8
				6
				M
				C

				G II
9	2	5	D	M I I U S F A M I L I A R I U M
9	3	6	D	M U S I C I A L M A G I C
9	4	7	1	T E C H N I C A L
9	3	8	2	D I S

				A g g n i C S p i t u S G l
9	7	9	3	C A i i u S h n C A t i s t i u V
9	7	D	2	S G n G S n V d i i u V

9	8	1	3	M A n i- u s A g n i l e s G e n e r a l i s
9	9	2	3	G e n e r a l C o n s u l t
9	8	B	2	M i c h a e l P. L G i l i s B

9	8	4	2	Ap p u l q as al P. G u N
9	2	5	2	C R t i u s in al C E u is

In the early spring of this year came John baptizing. In the month Tisri Christ is baptized, when he had now accomplished the nine-and-twentieth year of his age, and had now newly entered upon his thirtieth. The thirtieth of Christ is to be reckoned with the sixteenth of Tiberius.

Of Augustus, now entering upon his one-and-thirtieth year, wherein Christ was born, Dion Cassius hath moreover these words: "Having now completed thrice ten years, being compelled, indeed, to it, he continued his government, and entered upon a fourth ten of years: being now more easy and slothful by reason of age." In this very year was the taxation under Cyrenius, of which Luke speaks, chapter 2. So that if it be asked when the fifth monarchy of the Romans arose, after the dissolution of those four mentioned by Daniel, an easy answer may be fetched from St. Luke, who relates that in that very year wherein Christ was born, Augustus laid a tax upon the whole world.

III. Christ was born in the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Herod: which we gather from the observation of these things: 1. Herod reigned, from that time he was first declared king by the Romans, seven-and-thirty years. 2. Between the death of Herod and the death of Augustus there was this space of time:

1. The ten years current of the reign of Archelaus.
2. Coponius succeeds him, banished to Vienna in the presidentship of Judea.
3. Marcus Ambibuchus [Ambivius] succeeds Coponius.
4. Annius Rufus succeeds Ambibuchus [Ambivius], during whose presidentship Augustus dies.

Since, therefore, only fourteen years passed from the nativity of Christ to the death of Augustus, out of which sum when you shall have reckoned the ten years current of Archelaus, and the times of the three presidents, we must reckon that Christ was not born but in the last years of Herod. Thus we conjecture:

In his thirty-fifth Christ was born.

In his thirty-seventh, now newly begun, the wise men came: presently after this was the slaying of the infants; and, after a few months, the death of Herod.

IV. Christ was born about the twenty-seventh year of the presidentship of Hillel in the Sanhedrim.

The rise of the family of Hillel took its beginning at the decease of the Asmonean family (Herod, indeed, succeeded in the kingly government); a family sprung from Babylon, and, as was believed, of the stock of David. For "a book of genealogy was found at Jerusalem" (which we mentioned before), "in which it was written, that Hillel was sprung from the stock of David, by his wife Abital." Now Hillel went up out of Babylon to Jerusalem, to inquire of the wise men concerning some things, when now, after the death of Shemaia and Abtalion, the two sons of Betira held the chief seats. And when he who had resorted thither to learn something, had taught them some things of the Passover rites, which they had forgot, they put him into the chair. You have the full story of it in the Jerusalem Talmud. We mention it chapter 26:1.

Now Hillel went up to Jerusalem and took the chair a hundred years before the destruction of the city: "Hillel and his son Simeon, and his son Gamaliel, and his son Simeon, bare the government for a hundred years before the laying waste of the Temple." Of those hundred years if you take away two-and-thirty and a half of the life of Christ, and forty years (as it is commonly deputed) coming between the death of Christ and the destruction of the city, there remain the twenty-seven years of Hillel before the birth of our Saviour.

Hillel held the government forty years: so that his death happened about the twelfth or thirteenth year of Christ. his son also held it after him, and his grandsons, in a long succession, even to R. Judah the Holy. The splendour and pomp of this family of Hillel had so obscured the rest of the families of David's stock, that perhaps they believed or expected the

less, that the Messiah should spring from any of them. Yea, one in the Babylonian Gemara was almost persuaded, that "Rabbi Judah the Holy, of the Hillelian family, was the Messiah. Rabh said, *If Messiah be among the living, our Holy Rabbi is such*: if among the dead, Daniel was he."

V. Christ was born in the month of Tisri; somewhat answering to our September. This we conclude, omitting other things, by computing backwards from his death. For if he died in his two-and-thirtieth year and a half, at the feast of the Passover, in the month Nisan, you must necessarily lay the time of his birth in the month Tisri. But that he died at that age, not to make any delay by mentioning more things, appears hence, that he was baptized now beginning his thirtieth year, and that he lived after his baptism three years and a half; as the space of his public ministry is determined by the angel Gabriel, [Daniel 9](#); "In the half of a week" (that is, three years and a half), "he shall make the sacrifice to cease," &c. But of this hereafter.

This month was ennobled in former times, 1. For the creation of the world. Weigh well [Exodus 23:15](#); [Joel 2:23](#). 2. For the nativity of the first fathers; which the Jews assert not without reason. 3. For the repairing the tables of the law. For Moses, after the third fast of forty days, comes down from the mountain, a messenger of good things, the tenth day of this month, which was from hence appointed for the feast of Expiation to following ages. 4. For the dedication of the Temple, [1 Kings 8:2](#). And, 5. For three solemn feasts, namely, that of the Beginning of the Year, that of Expiation, and that of Tabernacles. From this month also was the beginning of the Jubilee.

VI. It is probable Christ was born at the feast of Tabernacles.

1. So it ariseth exactly to three-and-thirty years and a half, when he died at the feast of the Passover.

2. He fulfilled the typical equity of the Passover and Pentecost, when, at the Passover, he offered himself for a passover, at Pentecost he bestowed the Holy Ghost from heaven, as at that time the law had been given from heaven. At that time the first-fruits of the Spirit were given by him ([Rom 8:23](#)), when the first-fruits of corn had been wont to be given, [Leviticus 23:17](#). It had been a wonder if he had honoured the third solemnity, namely, the feast of Tabernacles, with no antitype.

3. The institution of the feast of Tabernacles agrees excellently with the time of Christ's birth. For when Moses went down from the mount on the tenth day of the month Tisri, declaring that God was appeased, that the people was pardoned, and that the building of the holy tabernacle was forthwith to be gone in hand with (hitherto hindered by and because of the golden calf), seeing that God now would dwell among them, and forsake them no more; the Israelites immediately pitch their tents, knowing they were not to depart from that place before the divine tabernacle was finished, and they set upon this work with all their strength. Whence the tenth day of that month, wherein Moses came down and brought

this good news with him, was appointed for the feast of Expiation; and the fifteenth day, and seven days after, for the feast of Tabernacles, in memory of their dwelling in tents in the wilderness, when God dwelt in the midst of them: which things with how aptly typical an aspect they respect the incarnation, when God dwelt among men in human flesh, is plain enough.

4. Weigh [Zechariah 14:16, 17](#): "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up, from year to year, to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of Tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem, to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no more rain."

[*In Beth-lehem.*] It will not be improper here to produce the Gemarists themselves, openly confessing that the Messiah was born now a good while ago before their times. For so they write: "After this the children of Israel shall be converted, and shall inquire after the Lord their God, and David their king, [Hosea 3:5](#). Our Rabbins say, That is king Messiah: if he be among the living, his name is David; or if dead, David is his name. R. Ranchum said, Thus I prove it: 'He showeth mercy to David his Messiah' ([Psa 18:50](#)). R. Joshua Ben Levi saith, His name is *A branch* ([Zech 3:8](#)). R. Judan Bar Aibu saith, His name is *Menahem* [that is, *the comforter*]. And that which happened to a certain Jew, as he was ploughing, agreeth with this business:--A certain Arabian travelling, and hearing the ox bellow, said to the Jew at plough, 'O Jew, loose thy oxen, and loose thy ploughs: for behold! the Temple is laid waste.' The ox bellowed the second time; the Arabian said to him, *O Jew, Jew, yoke thy oxen and fit thy ploughs, for behold! King Messiah is born.* But, saith the Jew, 'What is his name?' 'Menahem,' saith he. 'And what is the name of his father?' 'Hezekiah,' saith the Arabian. To whom the Jew, 'But whence is he?' The other answered, 'From the palace of the king of Beth-lehem Judah.' Away he went, and sold his oxen and his ploughs, and became a seller of infants' swaddling-clothes, going about from town to town. When he came to that city [*Beth-lehem*], all the women bought of him, but the mother of Menahem bought nothing. He heard the voice of the women saying, 'O thou mother of Menahem, thou mother of Menahem, carry thy son the things that are here sold.' But she replied, 'May the enemies of Israel be strangled, because on the day that he was born the Temple was laid waste!' To whom he said, 'But we hoped, that as it was laid waste at his feet, so at his feet it would be built again.' She saith, 'I have no money.' To whom he replied, 'But why should this be prejudicial to him? Carry him what you buy here; and if you have no money to-day, after some days I will come back and receive it.' After some days he returns to that city, and saith to her, 'How does the little infant?' And she said, 'From the time you saw me last, spirits and tempests came, and snatched him away out of my hands.' R. Bon saith, What need have we to learn from an Arabian? Is it not plainly written, 'And Lebanon shall fall before the powerful one?' ([Isa 10:34](#)). And what follows after? 'A branch shall come out of the root of Jesse'" ([Isa 11:1](#)).

The Babylonian doctors yield us a confession not very unlike the former: "R. Chaninah saith, After four hundred years are past from the destruction of the Temple, if any one shall say to you, 'Take to thyself for one penny a field worth a thousand pence,' do not take it." And again; "After four thousand two hundred thirty-and-one years from the creation of the world, if any shall say to you, 'Take for a penny a field worth a thousand pence,' take it not." The Gloss is, "For that is the time of redemption; and you shall be brought back to the holy mountain, to the inheritance of your fathers: why, therefore, should you misspend your penny?"

You may fetch the reason of this calculation, if you are at leisure, out of the tract Sanhedrim: "The tradition of the school of Elias, The world is to last six thousand years," &c. And a little after; "Elias said to Rabh Judah, 'The world shall last not less than eighty-five jubilees; and in the last jubilee shall the Son of David come.' He saith to him, 'Whether in the beginning of it, or in the end?' He answered him, 'I know not.' 'Whether is this whole time to be finished first, or not?' He answered him, 'I know not.' But Rabh Asher asserts that he answered thus, 'Until then expect him not, but from thence expect him.'" Hear your own countrymen, O Jew, how many centuries of years are past by and gone from the eighty-fifth jubilee of the world, that is, the year 4250, and yet the Messiah of your expectation is not yet come.

Daniel's weeks had so clearly defined the time of the true Messiah's coming, that the minds of the whole nation were raised into the expectation of him. Hence it was doubted of the Baptist whether he were not the Messiah, [Luke 3:15](#). Hence it was that the Jews are gathered together from all countries unto Jerusalem [[Acts 2](#)], expecting, and coming to see, because at that time the term of revealing the Messiah, that had been prefixed by Daniel, was come. Hence it was that there was so great a number of false Christs, [Matthew 24:5](#), &c., taking the occasion of their impostures hence, that now the time of that great expectation was at hand, and fulfilled: and in one word, "They thought the kingdom of God should presently appear"; [Luke 19:11](#).

But when those times of expectation were past, nor did such a Messiah appear as they expected (for when they saw the true Messiah, they would not see him), they first broke out into various and those wild conjectures of the time; and at length all those conjectures coming to nothing, all ended in this curse (the just cause of their eternal blindness), *May their soul be confounded who compute the times!*

[*Wise men from the east.*] Magi, that is, wizards, or such as practised ill arts: for in this sense alone this word occurs in holy writ.

From the east. This more generally denotes as much as, 'Out of the land of the heathen,' in the same sense as 'the queen of the south' is taken, [Matthew 12:42](#); that is, 'a heathen queen.' Consider this passage in the Talmud, "From Rekam to the east, and Rekam is as the east: from Ascalon to the south, and Ascalon is as the south: from Acon to the north, and

Acon is as the north." These words R. Nissim quotes from R. Judah, and illustrates it with this Gloss, "From Rekam to the furthest bounds of the land eastward is heathen land; and Rekam itself is reckoned for the east of the world, and not for the land of Israel. So also from Ascalon onwards to the south is the heathen country, and Ascalon itself is reckoned for the south": that is, for heathen land.

Those countries where the sons of Abraham by his wife Keturah were dispersed, are more particularly called the 'eastern' countries, [Genesis 25:6](#), [Judges 6:3](#), and elsewhere often. And hence came these first-fruits of the Gentiles: whence it is not unlikely that Jethro also came, the first proselyte to the law. And that which is spoken by the Gemara concerning the Arabian, the first pointer-out of the Messiah born, is perhaps some shadow of this story of the magicians' coming out of Arabia, and who first publicly declared him to be born.

2. Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

[*For we have seen his star in the east.*] We, being in the east, have seen his star:--that heavenly light, which in that very night wherein the Saviour was born shone round about the shepherds of Beth-lehem, perhaps was seen by these magicians, being then a great distance off, resembling a star hanging over Judea; whence they might the more easily guess that the happy sign belonged to the Jews.

4. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

[*And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together.*] That is, he assembled the Sanhedrim. Herod is said by very many authors to have slain the Sanhedrim, but this is neither to be understood of the whole Sanhedrim, nor, if it were to be understood of the whole, would it denote the total subversion of the Sanhedrim. The Babylonian Gemarists do thus relate the story: "Herod was a servant of the Asmonean family. He cast his eyes upon a young maid [*of that family*]. On a certain day he heard the *Bath Kol* [*a voice from heaven*] saying, Whatsoever servant shall now rebel shall prosper. He arose up against his masters, and slew them all." And a little after; "Herod said, Who is there that interprets these words, 'Thou shalt set a king over thee out of the midst of thy brethren?' ([Deut 17:15](#)). The Rabbins [interpreted the words]. He rose up and slew all the Rabbins, leaving only Bava Ben Buta, with whom he consulted."

Herod was to overcome two difficulties, that he might, with the peace and favour of the Jews, become their king. For, although he had been raised unto the kingdom by the Romans, nevertheless, that he might establish his throne, the people remaining quiet and accepting him, first it seemed necessary to him that the Asmonean family should be removed out of the way, which, formerly governing the people, they had some affection and love for, and which still remaining, he suspected he could scarce be secure. Secondly, that law of setting

no king over them but of their brethren debarred him, since he himself was of the stock of Edom. Therefore he took away all those Rabbins, who, adhering stiffly to this law, opposed, what they could, his coming to the kingdom. "But all the Rabbins indeed he slew not (saith the Gloss upon the place alleged); for the sons of Betira were left alive, who held the chair when Hillel came out of Babylon."

Therefore he slew not all the elders of the Sanhedrim, but those only who, taking occasion from that law, opposed his access to the kingdom. Out of that slaughter the two sons of Betira escaped, who held the first places in the Sanhedrim after the death of Shemaiah and Abtalion. Shammai also escaped, who, according as Josephus relates, foretold this slaughter. Hillel escaped likewise, if he were then present; and Menahem, who certainly was there, and who thenceforth sat second in the chair. Bava Ben Buta escaped also, as the Gemara relates, who afterward persuaded Herod that he should repair the Temple to expiate this bloody impiety. And others escaped.

[*The chief priests.*] When the Sanhedrim consisted of priests, Levites, and Israelites (as Maimonides teacheth), under the word *chief priests*, are comprehended the two former; namely, whosoever of the clergy were members of the Sanhedrim; and under the *scribes of the people* are comprehended all those of the Sanhedrim who were not of the clergy.

Among the priests were divers differences:

I. Of the priests some were called, as if you would say *the plebeian priests*; namely, such who indeed were not of the common people, but wanted school education, and were not reckoned among the learned, nor among such as were devoted to religion. For seeing the whole seed of Aaron was sacerdotal, and priests were not so much made as born, no wonder if some ignorant and poor were found among them. Hence is that distinction, *The poor Israelites and the poor priests are gatherers. A Votary priest, and a Plebeian priest.* And caution is given, *That the oblation be not given to a Plebeian priest.* And the reason of it is added, "Because whosoever giveth an oblation to a Plebeian priest doth all one as if he should give it to a lion; of which it may be doubted whether he will treat it under his feet and eat it or not. So it may be doubted of a Plebeian priest, whether he will eat it in cleanness or in uncleanness." However ignorant and illiterate these were, yet they had their courses at the altar according to their lot, being instructed at that time by certain rules for the performing their office, appointed them by lot. You would stand amazed to read those things which are supposed concerning the ignorance and rudeness even of the high-priest himself.

II. There were others who were called *Idiot, or private, priests*; who although they both were learned, and performed the public office at the altar, yet were called private, because they were priests of a lower, and not of a worthier, order.

III. The worthier degree of priests was fourfold, besides the degree of the high-priest, and of the sagan his substitute. For, 1. There were *the heads of the Ephemerics*, or courses; in number twenty-four. 2. There were *the heads of the families* in every course. Of both, see

the Jerusalem Talmud. 3. *The presidents over the various offices in the Temple*. Of them, see Shekalim. 4. Any priests or Levites, indeed, (although not of these orders), that were chosen into the chief Sanhedrim. *Chief priests*, therefore, here and elsewhere, where the discourse is of the Sanhedrim, were they who, being of the priestly or Levitical stock, were chosen into that chief senate.

[*The scribes of the people.*] A *scribe*, denotes more generally any man learned, and is opposed to the word *rude*, or *clownish*. "Two, who ate together, are bound to give thanks each by themselves, *when both of them are scribes: But if one be a scribe, and the other ignorant [or a clown], let the scribe give thanks, and thence satisfaction is made for the duty of the ignorant, or unlearned person.*" So we read of *The scribes of the Samaritans*; that is, the learned among the Samaritans: for among them there were no traditionarians.

More particularly, *scribes*, denote such, who, being learned, and of scholastic education, addicted themselves especially to handling the pen, and to writing. Such were the public notaries in the Sanhedrim, registrars in the synagogues, amanuenses who employed themselves in transcribing the law, phylacteries, short sentences to be fixed upon the door-posts, bills of contracts, or divorce, &c. And in this sense a *scribe*, and a *Talmudic doctor*, are sometimes opposed; although he was not *Tanna*, a Talmudic doctor, who was not *Sophra*, a *scribe*, in the sense above mentioned. In the Babylonian Talmud it is disputed (a passage not unworthy our reading), what disagreement in calculation may be borne with between an *expounder* out of the chair, or the pulpits, and a *writer* of contracts, or bills of divorce, or a register, &c., in reckoning up the year of the Temple, of the Greek empire, &c. Concerning which matter, this, among other things, is concluded on, that a *scribe computes more briefly, a doctor more largely*. It will not repent one to read the place; nor that whole tract called *The tract of the scribes*; which dictates to the *scribes* of that sort of which we are now speaking, concerning writing out the law, the phylacteries, &c.

But, above all others, the fathers of the traditions are called scribes (who were, indeed, the elders of the Sanhedrim): which is clear enough in these and such-like expressions: *The words of the scribes are more lovely than the words of the law*; that is, traditions are better than the written law: *This is of the words of the scribes*: that is, 'this is from the traditionary decrees.'

These, therefore, whom Matthew calls *the scribes of the people*, were those elders of the Sanhedrim, who were not sprung from the sacerdotal or Levitical stock, but of other tribes: the elders of the Sanhedrim, sprung of the blood of the priests, were the *scribes of the clergy*, the rest were *the scribes of the people*.

We may therefore guess, and that no improbable conjecture, that, in this assembly, called together by Herod, these were present, among others:--1. Hillel, the president. 2. Shammai, vice-president. 3. The sons of Betira, Judah, and Joshua. 4. Bava Ben Buta. 5. Jonathan the son of Uzziel, the Chaldee paraphrast. 6. Simeon, the son of Hillel.

6. And thou Beth-lehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

[*Art not the least.*] These words do not at all disagree with the words of the prophet whence they are taken, [Micah 5:2](#), which I thus render, "But thou, Beth-lehem Ephrata, it is a small thing that thou art" [or, art reckoned] "among the thousands of Israel"; for thou art to be crowned with higher dignity; "for from thee shall go forth a ruler," &c. And in effect to this sense, unless I mistake, does the Chaldee paraphrast plainly render it, whom I suspect to be present at this very council, "Thou art within a little to become chief." See the same sense of the word in the Targum upon [Psalm 73:2](#), [Hosea 1:4](#), &c.

9. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

[*The star, which they saw in the east, went before them.*] It is probable the star had shone in the very birthnight: and thence-forward to this very time it had disappeared. The wise men had no need of the star to be their guide when they were going to Jerusalem, a city well known; but going forward thence to Beth-lehem, and that, as it seems, by night, it was their guide.

14. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt.

[*Departed into Egypt.*] Egypt was now replenished with Jews above measure, and that, partly by reason of them that travelled thither under Jochanan, the son of Kareah, [Jeremiah 43](#); partly with them that flocked thither, more latewardly, to the temple of Onias, of which Josephus writes, and both Talmuds: "When Simeon the Just said, 'I shall die this year,' they said to him, 'Whom, therefore, shall we put in thy place?' He answered, '*Behold! my son Onias is before you.*' They made Onias therefore high-priest. But his brother Simeon envied him. Onias, therefore, fled, first into the Royal Mountain, and then into Egypt, and built there an altar, repeating that of the prophet, 'In that day there shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of Egypt.'"

"He that hath not seen the cathedral church of Alexandria hath never seen the glory of Israel. It was after the manner of a court-walk, double cloistered. There were sometimes there so many as doubly exceeded the number of those that went out of Egypt. There were seventy golden chairs set with gems, according to the number of the seventy elders. A wooden pulpit also placed in the middle, in which the bishop of the synagogue stood. And when the law was read, after every benediction, a sign being given by a private person waving a handkerchief, they all answered 'Amen.' But they sat not confusedly and mixedly together; but every artificer with the professors of the same art: so that if a stranger came, he might

mingle himself with the workmen of the same trade, &c. These did wicked Trajan destroy," &c.

The Babylonian Gemara repeats almost the same things, alleging these last matters after this manner: "They sat not confusedly, but the artificers by themselves, the silversmiths by themselves, the braziers by themselves, the weavers by themselves, &c.; so that if a poor stranger came in, he might know his own fellow-workmen, and betake himself to them, and thence receive sustenance for himself and family."

So provision was made for the poverty of Joseph and Mary, while they sojourned in Egypt (at Alexandria, probably), partly by selling the presents of the wise men for food and provision by the way; and partly by a supply of victuals from their country-folks in Egypt when they had need.

There are some footsteps in the Talmudists of this journey of our Saviour into Egypt, but so corrupted with venomous malice and blasphemy (as all their writings are), that they seem only to have confessed the truth, that they might have matter the more liberally to reproach him; for so they speak: "When Jannai the king slew the Rabbins, R. Josua Ben Perachiah, and Jesus, went away unto Alexandria in Egypt. Simeon Ben Shetah sent thither, speaking thus, 'From me Jerusalem the holy city, to thee, O Alexandria in Egypt, my sister, health. My husband dwells with thee, while I, in the mean time, sit alone. Therefore he rose up, and went.'" And a little after; "He brought forth four hundred trumpets, and anathematized" [Jesus]. And a little before that; "Elisaeus turned away Gehazi with both his hands, and R. Josua Ben Perachiah thrust away Jesus with both his hands."

"Did not Ben Satda bring enchantments out of Egypt in the cutting which was in his flesh?" Under the name of *Ben Satda* they wound our *Jesus* with their reproaches, although the Glosser upon the place, from the authority of R. Tam, denies it: for thus he; R. Tam saith, This was not Jesus of Nazareth, because they say here, *Ben Satda* was in the days of Paphus, the son of Judah, who was in the days of R. Akiba: but Jesus was in the days of R. Josua, the son of Perachiah, &c.

16. Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

[*From two years old, and under.*] It was now two years ago, or thereabouts, since the star had shone, and Christ was born. The reason of the tarrying of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem was this; that they believed that the Messias, who, according to the prophet was born there, should have been brought up nowhere but there also; nor dared they to carry him elsewhere, before they had leave to do so by an angel from heaven.

The Jewish nation are very purblind, how and whence the Messias shall arise; and "Nemo novit, no man knows whence the Son of man is," [John 7:27](#); that is, from what original. It

was doubted *whether he should come from the living or from the dead*. Only it was confessed by all without controversy, that he should first make some show of himself from Beth-lehem, which the priests and scribes of the people assert, verse 4. Hence you have Christ now in his second year at Beth-lehem, whither Joseph and Mary had again betaken themselves with him, when they had now presented him in the Temple, according to the law, being forty days old, [Luke 2:22](#). And they had taken care for his education in this place, and not elsewhere, until he himself, going forth from hence, might show himself openly the Messiah, if they had not been sent away somewhere else by permission from heaven.

23. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

[*He shall be called a Nazarene.*] Those things which are brought from [Isaiah 11:1](#) concerning *Netzer, the Branch*; and those things also produced concerning Samson the Nazarite, a most noble type of Christ, have their weight, by no means to be despised. We add, that Matthew may be understood concerning the outward, humble, and mean condition of our Saviour. And that by the word, *Nazarene*, he hints his *separation* and *estrangement* from other men, as a despicable person, and unworthy of the society of men.

I. Let it be observed, that the evangelist does not cite some one of the prophets, but all: "spoken by the prophets." But now all the prophets, in a manner, do preach the vile and abject condition of Christ; none, that his original should be out of Nazareth.

II. David, in his person, speaks thus; *I was a stranger to my brethren*, [Psalm 69:9](#).

III. If you derive the word *Nazarene*, which not a few do, from *Nazir*, a *Nazirean*, that word denotes not only a *separation*, dedicated to God, such as that of the *Nazarenes* was; but it signifies also the *separation* of a man from others, as being unworthy of their society; [Genesis 49:26](#), "They shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was *separate* from his brethren."

Therefore, let us digest the sense of the evangelist by this paraphrase: Joseph was to depart with Christ to Beth-lehem, the city of David, or to Jerusalem, the royal city, had not the fear of Archelaus hindered him. Therefore, by the signification of an angel, he is sent away into Galilee, a very contemptible country, and into the city Nazareth, a place of no account: whence, from this very place, and the name of it, you may observe that fulfilled to a tittle which is so often declared by the prophets, that the Messiah should be *Nazor*, a *stranger*, or *separate* from men, as if he were a very vile person, and not worthy of their company.

1. In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

[*John The Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judaea.*] That John was born in Hebron, one may not unfitly conjecture by comparing [Luke 1:39](#) with [Joshua 21:11](#); and that he was born about the feast of the Passover, namely, half a year before the nativity of our Saviour, [Luke 1:36](#). So the conceptions and births of the Baptist and our Saviour ennobled the four famous *tekuphas* [*revolutions*] of the year: one being conceived at the summer solstice, the other at the winter; one born at the vernal equinox, the other at the autumnal.

"John lived in the deserts, until he made himself known unto Israel," [Luke 1:80](#). That is, if the pope's school may be interpreter, he led the life of a hermit. But,

I. Be ashamed, O papist, to be so ignorant of the sense of the word *wilderness*, or *desert*; which in the common dialect sounds all one as if it had been said, "He lived in the country, not in the city; his education was more coarse and plain in the country, without the breeding of the university, or court at Jerusalem." *An oblation for thanksgiving consists of five Jerusalem seahs, which were in value six seahs of the wilderness; that is, six country seahs.*

"A Jerusalem seah exceeds a seah of the wilderness by a sixth part."

"*The trees of the wilderness* are those which are common, and not appropriate to one master": that is, trees in groves and common meadows.

So 2 Corinthians 11:26: "in perils in the city, and in perils in *the country*."

II. The wildernesses of the land of Canaan were not without towns and cities; nor was he presently to be called an *Eremite* who dwelt in the wilderness. The hill-country of Judaea, John's native soil, is called by the Talmudists, *The royal mountain*, or *hill*; and by the Psalmist, *The desert hill-country*, [Psalm 75:6](#); and yet "in the royal mountain were a myriad of cities."

III. David passed much of his youth in the wilderness, [1 Samuel 17:28](#): but yet, who will call him an eremite? In the like sense I conceive John living in the deserts, not only spending his time in leisure and contemplation, but employing himself in some work, or studies. For when I read, that the youth of our Saviour was taken up in the carpenter's trade, I scarcely believe his forerunner employed his youth in no calling at all.

Beginning now the thirtieth year of his age, when, according to the custom of the priests, he ought to have come to the chief Sanhedrim to undergo their examination, and to be entered into the priesthood by them, "the word of God coming unto him," [Luke 3:2](#), as it had done before to the prophets, he is diverted to another ministry.

2. And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[*Repent ye.*] A doctrine most fit for the gospel, and most suitable to the time, and the word or the phrase as agreeable to the doctrine.

I. A nation leavened with the error of the Pharisees, concerning justification by the works of the law, was necessarily to be called off to the contrary doctrine of repentance. No receiving of the gospel was otherwise to be expected.

II. However the schools of the Pharisees had illy defined repentance, which we observe presently, yet they asserted that repentance itself was necessary to the reception of the Messiah. Concerning this matter the Babylonian Gemarists do dispute: whom Kimchi also upon [Isaiah 54:19](#) cites, and determines the question: "From the words of our Rabbins (saith he) it is plain there arose a doubt among them concerning this matter, namely, whether Israel were to be redeemed with repentance or without repentance. And it sprang from this occasion, that some texts of Scripture seemed to go against them: such as those; 'He saw, and there was no man, and he wondered, that there was none to intercede; therefore, his own arm brought salvation.' And also, 'Not for your sake, O Israel, do I this.' And again, 'I will remember for them my old covenant,' &c. And these places, on the other hand, make for repentance: 'Thou shalt return to the Lord thy God, and shalt hearken to his voice.' And again; 'And thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, and shalt find him, if thou seekest him with all thy heart,' &c. But these may be reconciled after this manner; namely, that many of Israel shall repent, when they shall see the signs of redemption. And hence is that which is said, 'And he saw that there was no man,' because they will not repent until they see the beginning of redemption."

"If Israel shall repent but one day, forthwith the Redeemer cometh" (Taanith).

Therefore, it is very fitly argued by the Baptist, and by our Saviour after him, [Matthew 4:17](#), from the approach of the kingdom of heaven to repentance, since they themselves to whom this is preached do acknowledge that thus the kingdom of heaven, or the manifestation of the Messiah, is to be brought in. For however the Gemarists who dispute of this were of a later age, yet for the most part they do but speak the sense of their fathers.

III. The word *repentance* as it does very well express the sense of true repentance, so among the Jews it was necessary that it should be so expressed, among whom repentance, for the most part, was thought to consist in the confession of the mouth only.

"Whosoever, out of error or presumption, shall transgress the precepts of the law, whether they be those that command or those that forbid, when he repents and returns from his sins, he is bound to make confession. Whosoever brings an offering for a sin, committed either out of ignorance or presumption, his sin is not expiated by the offering, until he makes an oral confession. Or whosoever is guilty of death, or of scourging by the Sanhedrim, his sin is not taken away by his death, or by his scourging, if he do not repent and make confession. And because the scape-goat is the expiation for all Israel, therefore the high priest makes confession over him for all Israel."

It is worthy observing, that, when John urgeth those that came to his baptism to repent, it is said, that they were baptized, "confessing their sins": which was a sign of repentance highly requisite among the Jews, and necessary for those that were then brought in to the profession of the Gospel; that hereby they might openly profess that they renounced the doctrine of justification by the works of the law.

It is worthy of observing also, that John said not, "Repent, and believe the gospel," which our Saviour did, [Matthew 4:17](#), (and yet John preached the gospel, [Mark 1:1,2](#); [John 1:7](#)); for his office, chiefly, was to make Christ known, who when he should come was to be the great preacher of the gospel.

Therefore the Baptist doth very properly urge repentance upon those that looked for the Messiah; and the text of the Gospel used a very proper word to express true and lively repentance.

[*For the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*] I. *The kingdom of heaven*, in Matthew, is *the kingdom of God*, for the most part, in the other evangelists. Compare these places:

"The poor in spirit, theirs is *the kingdom of heaven*," [Matthew 5:3](#).

"The mysteries of *the kingdom of heaven*," [Matthew 13:11](#).

"*The kingdom of God* is at hand," [Mark 1:15](#).

"The least in *the kingdom of God*," [Luke 7:28](#).

"Little children, of such is *the kingdom of God*," [Mark 10:14](#).

And so we have it elsewhere very often, For *Heaven* is very usually, in the Jewish dialect, taken for *God*, [Daniel 4:23](#); [Matthew 21:25](#); [Luke 15:21](#); [John 3:27](#). And, in these and such-like speeches, scattered in the Talmudists: *Death by the hand of heaven: The name of heaven is profaned: The worship of heaven: by the help of heaven*, &c. "For they called God by the name of *Heaven*, because his habitation is in heaven" (Tishbi).

The story of the Jews is related, groaning out under their persecution these words, *O Heavens!* that is, as the Gloss renders it, *Ah! Jehovah!*

II. This manner of speech, *the kingdom of heaven*, is taken from Daniel, chapter 7:13, 14; where, after the description of the four earthly and tyrannical monarchies, that is, the Babylonian, Mede-Persian, Grecian, and Syro-Grecian, and the destruction of them at last; the entrance and nature of the reign of Christ is described, as it is universal over the whole world, and eternal throughout all ages: "under whom the rule, and dominion, and authority of kingdoms under the whole heaven is given to the people of the saints of the Most High," verse 27: that is, "Whereas, before, the rule had been in the hands of heathen kings, under the reign of Christ there should be Christian kings." Unto which that of the apostle hath respect, [1 Corinthians 6:2](#); "know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?"

Truly I admire that the fulfilling of that vision and prophecy in Daniel should be lengthened out still into I know not what long and late expectation, not to receive its completion before Rome and antichrist shall fall; since the books of the Gospel afford us a commentary clearer than the sun, that that *kingdom of heaven* took its beginning immediately

upon the preaching of the Gospel. When both the Baptist and Christ published the approach of *the kingdom of heaven* from their very first preaching; certainly, for any to think that the fulfilling of those things in Daniel did not then begin, for my part, I think it is to grope in the dark, either through wilfulness or ignorance.

III. *The kingdom of heaven* implies, 1. The exhibition and manifestation of the Messias, [Matthew 12:28](#); "But if I, by the finger of God, cast out devils, the kingdom of God is come upon you": that is, 'Hence is the manifestation of the Messias.' See [John 3:3](#), [12:13](#), &c. 2. The resurrection of Christ; death, hell, Satan, being conquered: whence is a most evident manifestation that he is that 'eternal King,' &c.: see [Matthew 26:29](#); [Romans 1:4](#). 3. His vengeance upon the Jewish nation, his most implacable enemies: this is another, and most eminent manifestation of him: see [Matthew 16:28](#), [19:28](#). 4. His dominion by the sceptre of the gospel among the Gentiles, [Matthew 21:43](#). In this place which is before us it points out the exhibition and revelation of the Messias.

IV. The phrase *the kingdom of heaven* very frequently occurs in the Jewish writers. We will produce some places; let the reader gather the sense of them:

"R. Joshua Ben Korcha saith, In reciting the phylacteries, why is *Hear, O Israel*, [[Deut 6:4](#), &c.] recited before that passage *And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken* [[Deut 11:13](#)], &c. To wit, that a man first take upon himself *the kingdom of heaven*, and then the yoke of the precept." So the Jerusalem Misna hath it; but the Babylonian thus: "That a man first take upon himself the yoke of *the kingdom of heaven*, and then the yoke of the precept."

"Rabh said to Rabbi Chaijah, *We never saw Rabbi* [Judah] *taking upon himself the kingdom of heaven*. Bar Pahti answered, At that time when he put his hands to his face, he took upon himself *the kingdom of heaven*." Where the Gloss speaks thus: "We saw not that he took upon himself *the kingdom of heaven*; for until the time came of reciting the phylacteries, he instructed his scholars; and when that time was come, I saw him not interposing any space."

"Doth any ease nature? Let him wash his hands, put on his phylacteries, repeat them, and pray, *and this is the kingdom of heaven fulfilled*." "*If thou shalt have explained Shaddai, and divided the letters of the kingdom of heaven*, thou shalt make the shadow of death to be cool to thee"; that is, "If, in the repeating of that passage of the phylacteries [[Deut 6:4](#)], 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord,' &c., you shall pronounce the letters distinctly and deliberately, so that you shall have sounded out the names of God rightly, 'thou shalt make cool the shades of death.'" For the same Gloss had said, *The repeating of that passage*, 'Hear, O Israel,' &c., *is the taking of the kingdom of heaven upon thee*. But the repeating of that place, 'And it shall be, if thou shalt hearken,' &c. [[Deut 19:13](#)] *is the taking of the yoke of the precept upon thee*.

"Rabban Gamaliel recited his phylacterical prayers on the very night of his nuptials. And when his scholars said unto him, 'Hast thou not taught us, O our master, that a bride-

groom is freed from the reciting of his phylacteries the first night?' he answered, 'I will not hearken to you, nor will I lay aside *the kingdom of heaven* from me, no, not for an hour.'

"What is the yoke of *the kingdom of heaven*? In like manner as they lay the yoke upon an ox, that he may be serviceable; and if he bear not the yoke, he becomes unprofitable: so it becomes a man first to take the yoke upon himself, and to serve in all things with it: but if he casts it off, he is unprofitable: as it is said, 'Serve the Lord in fear.' What means, 'in fear?' the same that is written, 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.' And this is *the kingdom of heaven*."

"The scholars of Jochanan Ben Zaccai asked, Why a servant was to be bored through the ear, rather than through some other part of the body? He answered, When he heard with the ear those words from mount Sinai, 'Thou shalt have no other Lord before my face,' he broke the yoke of *the kingdom of heaven* from him, and took upon himself the yoke of flesh and blood."

If by *the kingdom of heaven*, in these and other such-like places, which it would be too much to heap together, they mean the inward love and fear of God, which indeed they seem to do; so far they agree with our gospel sense, which asserts the inward and spiritual kingdom of Christ especially. And if the words of our Saviour, "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you," [Luke 17:21](#), be suited to this sense of the nation concerning *the kingdom of heaven*, there is nothing sounds hard or rough in them: for it is as much as if he had said "Do you think *the kingdom of heaven* shall come with some remarkable observation, or *with much show*? Your very schools teach that the kingdom of God is within a man."

But, however they most ordinarily applied this manner of speech hither, yet they used it also for the exhibition and revelation of the Messiah in the like manner as the evangelical history doth. Hence are these expressions, and the like to them, in sacred writers: "The Pharisees asked Jesus when the kingdom of God should come." "They thought that the kingdom of God should presently be manifested." "Josephus of Arimathea waited for the kingdom of God."

And these words in the Chaldee paraphrast, "Say ye to the cities of Judah, The kingdom of your God is revealed," [Isaiah 40:9](#): "They shall see the kingdom of their Messiah," [Isaiah 53:11](#).

The Baptist, therefore, by his preaching, stirs up the minds of his hearers to meet the coming of the Messiah, now presently to be manifested, with that repentance and preparation as is meet.

4. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

[His food was locusts.] He that by vow tieth himself from flesh, is forbidden the flesh of fish and of locusts. See the Babylonian Talmud (Cholin) concerning locusts fit for food.

5. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan.

[*The region round about Jordan.*] The word *the region round about*, is used by the Jerusalem Gemara: "From Beth-horon to the sea is one region *round about*," or, *one circumjacent region*. Perhaps, both in the Talmudist and in the evangelist, is one and the same thing with a *coast*, or a *country along a coast*, in Pliny: "The country (saith he) along the coast is Samaria": that is, the sea-coast, and the country further, lying along by that coast: which may be said also concerning *the region round about Jordan*. Strabo, concerning the plain bordering on Jordan, hath these words; "It is a place of a hundred furlongs, all well watered and full of dwellings."

A few things concerning Baptism.

6. And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

[*And were baptized.*] It is no unfit or unprofitable question, whence it came to pass that there was so great a conflux of men to the Baptist, and so ready a reception of his baptism?

I. The first reason is, Because the manifestation of the Messiah was then expected, the weeks of Daniel being now spent to the last four years. Let us consult a little his text:--

Daniel 9:24. "Seventy weeks [*of years*] are decreed concerning thy people," &c. That is, four hundred and ninety years, from the first of Cyrus to the death of Christ. These years are divided into three parts, and they very unequal.

1. Into seven weeks, or forty-nine years, from the giving of Cyrus' patent for the rebuilding Jerusalem, to the finishing the rebuilding of it by Nehemiah.

2. Into sixty-two weeks, or four hundred thirty-four years,--namely, from the finishing the building of the city to the beginning of the last week of the seventy. In which space of time, the times of the Persian empire (which remained after Nehemiah, if indeed there was any time now remaining), and the times of the Grecian empire, and of the Syro-Grecian, were all run out, and those times also, wherein the Romans ruled over the Jews.

3. The holy text divides the last week, or the last seven years, into two equal parts, verse 27; which I thus render; "And he shall strengthen, or *confirm*, the covenant with many in that one week: and the half of that week shall make the sacrifice and oblation to cease: *or*, in the half of that week he shall make to cease," &c. Not in the middle of that week, but in the latter half, that is, the latter three years and a half of the seven.

First, seven weeks having been reckoned up before, and then sixty-two weeks, verse 25,--now there remained one only of the seventy; and in reference to that, in the middle of it the Messiah shall begin his ministry; which being finished in three years and a half (the latter halved part of that week), "he shall make the sacrifice and oblation to cease," &c.

The nation could not but know, could not but take great notice of, the times so exactly set out by the angel Gabriel. Since, therefore, the coming of the Messiah was the great wish and desire of all,--and since the time of his appearing was so clearly decreed by the angel

that nothing could be more,--and when the latter half of the last seven years, chiefly to be observed, was now, within a very little, come:--it is no wonder if the people, hearing from this venerable preacher that the kingdom of heaven was now come, should be stirred up beyond measure to meet him, and should flock to him. For, as we observed before, "They thought that the kingdom of God would immediately be manifested," [Luke 19:11](#).

II. Another reason of it was this,--the institution of baptism, for an evangelical sacrament, was first in the hand of the Baptist, who, "the word of the Lord coming to him," ([Luke 3:2](#)) went forth, backed with the same authority as the chiefest prophets had in times past. But yet the first use of baptism was not exhibited at that time. For baptism, very many centuries of years backwards, had been both known and received in most frequent use among the Jews,--and for the very same end as it now obtains among Christians,--namely, that by it proselytes might be admitted into the church; and hence it was called *Baptism for proselytism*: and was distinct from *Baptism [or washing] from uncleanness*. See the Babylonian Talmud in Jevamoth.

I. I ascribe the first use of it, for this end, to the patriarch Jacob, when he chose into his family and church the young women of Sychem, and other heathens who then lived with him. "Jacob said to his family, and to all who were with him, Put away from you the strange gods, and be ye clean, and change your garments," &c. [Genesis 35:2](#). What that words means, *and be ye clean*, Aben Ezra does very well interpret to be *the washing of the body, or baptism*; which reason itself also persuades us to believe.

II. All the nation of Israel do assert, as it were with one mouth, that all the nation of Israel were brought into the covenant, among other things, by baptism. "Israel (saith Maimonides, the great interpreter of the Jewish law) was admitted into the covenant by three things,--namely, by circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice. Circumcision was in Egypt; as it is said, 'None uncircumcised shall eat of the passover.' Baptism was in the wilderness before the giving of the law; as it is said, 'Thou shalt sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their garments.'"

III. They assert, that that infinite number of proselytes in the day of David and Solomon were admitted by baptism: "The Sanhedrims received not proselytes in the days of David and Solomon: not in the days of David, lest they should betake themselves to proselytism out of a fear of the kingdom of Israel: not in the days of Solomon, lest they might do the same by reason of the glory of the kingdom. And yet abundance of proselytes were made in the days of David and Solomon before private men; and the great Sanhedrim was full of care about this business: for they would not cast them out of the church, because they were baptized," &c.

IV. "Whensoever any heathen will betake himself, and be joined to the covenant of Israel, and place himself under the wings of the divine Majesty, and take the yoke of the law upon

him, voluntary circumcision, baptism, and oblation, are required: but if it be a woman, baptism and oblation."

That was a common axiom *No man is a proselyte until he be circumcised and baptized*. It is disputed by the Babylonian Gemara, "A proselyte, that is circumcised and not baptized, what of him? R. Eliezer saith Behold, he is a proselyte: for so we find concerning our fathers, that they were circumcised, but not baptized. One is baptized, but not circumcised; what of him? R. Joshua saith, Behold, he is a proselyte: for so we find concerning the maidservants, who were baptized, but not circumcised. But the wise men say, Is he baptized, and not circumcised? Or, Is he circumcised, and not baptized? He is not a proselyte, until he be circumcised and baptized."

But baptism was sufficient for women so far forth as this held good, "*One baptizeth a heathen woman in the name of a woman, we can assert that for a deed rightly done.*" Where the Gloss is this; "To be baptized in the name of a woman, was to be baptized *with the washing of a woman polluted*, and not with the baptism to proselytism. But we may, nevertheless, assert her, who is so baptized, for a complete proselytess; because that baptism of washing for uncleanness serves for proselytism to her; for a heathen woman is not baptized [or washed] for uncleanness."

V. They baptized also young children (for the most part with their parents). *They baptize a little proselyte according to the judgment of the Sanhedrim*: that is, as the Gloss renders it, "If he be deprived of his father, and his mother brings him to be made a proselyte, they baptize him [because none becomes a proselyte without circumcision and baptism] according to the judgment [or right] of the Sanhedrim; that is, that three men be present at the baptism, who are now instead of a father to him."

And the Gemara a little after; *If with a proselyte his sons and his daughters are made proselytes also, that which is done by their father redounds to their good*. R. Joseph saith, *When they grow into years, they may retract*. Where the Gloss writes thus; "This is to be understood of little children, who are made proselytes together with their father."

"A heathen woman, if she is made a proselytess, when she is now big with child,--the child needs not baptism: *for the baptism of his mother serves him for baptism.*" Otherwise, he were to be baptized.

"If an Israelite take a Gentile child, or find a Gentile infant, and baptizeth him in the name of a proselyte,--behold, he is a proselyte."

We cannot also pass over that, which indeed is worthy to be remembered: "Any one's servant is to be circumcised, though he be unwilling; but any one's son is not to be circumcised, if he be unwilling. R. Jochanan inquired, Behold a little son; do you circumcise him by force? Yea, although he be as the son of Urcan. R. Hezekiah saith, Behold, a man finds an infant cast out, and he baptizeth him in the name of a servant: in the name of a freeman, do you also circumcise him in the name of a freeman."

We have therefore alleged these things the more largely, not only that you may receive satisfaction concerning the people flocked, in so universal a concourse, to John's baptism (because baptism was no strange thing to the Jews); but that some other things may be observed hence, which afford some light to certain places of Scripture, and will help to clear some knotty questions about baptism.

First, You see baptism inseparably joined to the circumcision of proselytes. There was, indeed, some little distance of time; for "they were not baptized till the pain of circumcision was healed, because water might be injurious to the wound." But certainly baptism ever followed. We acknowledge, indeed, that circumcision was plainly of divine institution; but by whom baptism, that was inseparable from it, was instituted, is doubtful. And yet it is worthy of observation, our Saviour rejected circumcision, and retained the appendix to it: and when all the Gentiles were now to be introduced into the true religion, he preferred this 'proselytical introductory' (pardon the expression) unto the sacrament of entrance into the gospel.

One might observe the same almost in the eucharist. The lamb in the Passover was of divine institution, and so indeed was the bread. But whence was the wine? But yet, rejecting the lamb, Christ instituted the sacrament in the bread and wine.

Secondly, Observing from these things which have been spoken, how very known and frequent the use of baptism was among the Jews, the reason appears very easy why the Sanhedrim, by their messengers, inquired not of John concerning the reason of baptism, but concerning the authority of the baptizer; not what baptism meant, but whence he had a license so to baptize, [John 1:25](#).

Thirdly, Hence also the reason appears why the New Testament doth not prescribe, by some more accurate rule, who the persons are to be baptized. The Anabaptists object, 'It is not commanded to baptize infants,--therefore they are not to be baptized.' To whom I answer, 'It is not forbidden to baptize infants,--therefore they are to be baptized.' And the reason is plain. For when Paedobaptism in the Jewish church was so known, usual, and frequent, in the admission of proselytes, that nothing almost was more known, usual, and frequent,--

1. There was no need to strengthen it with any precept, when baptism was now passed into an evangelical sacrament. For Christ took baptism into his hands, and into evangelical use, as he found it; this only added, that he might promote it to a worthier end and a larger use. The whole nation knew well enough that little children used to be baptized: there was no need of a precept for that which had ever, by common use, prevailed. If a royal proclamation should now issue forth in these words, "Let every one resort, on the Lord's day, to the public assembly in the church"; certainly he would be mad, who, in times to come, should argue hence that prayers, sermons, singing of psalms, were not to be celebrated on the Lord's day in the public assemblies, because there is no mention of them in the proclamation. For the proclamation provided for the celebration of the Lord's day in the public assemblies in

general: but there was no need to make mention of the particular kinds of the divine worship to be celebrated there, when they were always, and every where, well known and in daily use before the publishing of the proclamation, and when it was published. The case is the very same in baptism. Christ instituted it for an evangelical sacrament, whereby all should be admitted into the possession of the gospel, as heretofore it was used for admission into proselytism to the Jewish religion. The particulars belonging to it,--as, the manner of baptizing, the age, the sex to be baptized, &c.--had no need of a rule and definition; because these were, by the common use of them, sufficiently known even to mechanics and the most ignorant men.

2. On the other hand, therefore, there was need of a plain and open prohibition that infants and little children should not be baptized, if our Saviour would not have had them baptized. For, since it was most common, in all ages foregoing, that little children should be baptized, if Christ had been minded to have that custom abolished, he would have openly forbidden it. Therefore his silence, and the silence of the Scripture in this matter, confirms Paedobaptism, and continueth it unto all ages.

Fourthly, It is clear enough, by what hath been already said, in what sense that is to be taken in the New Testament which we sometimes meet with,--namely, that the master of the family was baptized with his whole family, [Acts 16:15, 33](#), &c. Nor is it of any strength which the Anti-paedobaptists contend for, that it cannot be proved there were infants in those families; for the inquiry is not so proper, whether there were infants in those families, as it is concluded truly and deservedly,--if there were, they had all been to be baptized. Nor do I believe this people, that flocked to John's baptism, were so forgetful of the manner and custom of the nation, that they brought not their little children also with them to be baptized.

Some things are now to be spoken of the manner and form which John used.

First, In some things he seems to have followed the *manner* whereby proselytes were baptized; in other things, not to have followed them. Concerning it the Talmudic Canons have these sayings:--

I. *They do not baptize a proselyte by night.* Nor, indeed, "were the unclean to be washed but in the day-time." Maimonides adds, "They baptized not a proselyte on the sabbath, nor on a holy-day, nor by night."

II. *A proselyte hath need of three:* that is, it is required, that three men, who are scholars of the wise men, be present at the baptism of a proselyte; who may take care that the business be rightly performed, and may briefly instruct the catechumen [the person to be baptized], and may judge of the matter itself. For the admission of a proselyte was reckoned no light matter; *Proselytes are dangerous to Israel, like the itch*, was an axiom. For they, either tenacious of their former customs, or ignorant of the law of Israel, have corrupted others with their example; or, being mingled with Israel, were the cause that the divine glory did rest the less upon them; because it resteth not on any but upon families of a nobler pedigree. These

reasons the Glossers give. When, therefore, the admission of proselytes was of so great moment, they were not to be admitted but by the judicial consistory of *three*.

III. *They baptize a proselyte in such a confluence of waters as was fit for the washing of a menstruous woman.* Of such a confluence of waters the lawyers have these words: "A man that hath the gonorrhoea is cleansed nowhere but in a fountain: but a menstruous woman, as also all other unclean persons, were washed in some confluence of waters; in which so much water ought to be as may serve to wash the whole body at one dipping. Our wise men have esteemed this proportion to be a cubit square, and three cubits depth: and this measure contains forty seahs of water."

When it is said, that "he that hath the gonorrhoea is to wash in a spring [or a stream]; but a menstruous woman, and all other unclean persons, in some confluence of waters," -- it forbids not a menstruous woman, and other unclean persons, to wash in streams, where they might: but it permits, where they might not, to wash in some confluence of water; which was not lawful for a man that had the gonorrhoea to do. The same is to be understood concerning the baptism of a proselyte, who was allowed to wash himself in streams: and was allowed also, where there were no streams, to wash in a confluence of waters.

IV. When a proselyte was to be circumcised, they first asked him concerning the sincerity of his conversion to Judaism: whether he offered not himself to proselytism for the obtaining riches, for fear, or for love to some Israelite woman, &c. And when they saw that he came out of love of the law, they instructed him concerning the various articles of the law, of one God, of the evil of idolatry, of the reward of obedience, of the world to come, of the privileges of Israel, &c. All which, if he professed that he embraced them he is forthwith circumcised.

"As soon as he grows whole of the wound of circumcision, they bring him to baptism; and being placed in the water, they again instruct him in some weightier and in some lighter commands of the law. Which being heard, *he plunges himself, and comes up, and behold, he is as an Israelite in all things.* The women place a woman in the waters up to the neck; and two disciples of the wise men, standing without, instruct her about some lighter precepts of the law and some weightier, while she, in the meantime, stands in the waters. *And then she plungeth herself;* and they, turning away their faces, go out, while she comes up out of the water."

In the baptizing of a proselyte, this is not to be passed over, but let it be observed, namely, that *others baptized him*, and that *he baptized himself*, or dipped, or plunged himself in the waters. Now, what that plunging was, you may understand from those things which Maimonides speaks in Mikvaoth in the place before cited. "*Every person baptized*" [or *dipped*, whether he were washed from pollution, or baptized into proselytism], "must dip his whole body, now stripped and made naked, at one dipping. And wheresoever in the law washing of the body or garments is mentioned, it means nothing else than the washing of the whole body. For if any wash himself all over, except the very top of his little finger, he is still in his

uncleanness. And if any hath much hair, he must wash all the hair of his head, for that also was reckoned for the body. But if any should enter into the water with their clothes on, yet their washing holds good; because the water would pass through their clothes, and their garments would not hinder it."

And now, a little to compare the baptism of John with that proselytical baptism, and ours with both, these things are to be considered:--

I. If you compare the washing of polluted persons, prescribed by the law, with the baptism of proselytes,--both that and this imply uncleanness, however something different, that implies legal uncleanness,--this, heathen,--but both polluting. But a proselyte was baptized not only into the washing-off of that Gentile pollution, nor only thereby to be transplanted into the religion of the Jews; but that by the most accurate rite of translation that could possibly be, he might so pass into an Israelite, that, being married to an Israelite woman, he might produce a free and legitimate seed, and an undefiled offspring. Hence, servants that were taken into a family were baptized,--and servants also that were to be made free: not so much because they were defiled with heathen uncleanness, as that, by that rite *becoming Israelites in all respects*, they might be more fit to match with Israelites, and their children be accounted as Israelites. And hence the sons of proselytes, in following generations, were circumcised indeed, but not baptized. They were circumcised, that they might take upon themselves the obligation of the law; but they needed not baptism, because they were already Israelites. From these things it is plain that there was some difference as to the end, between the Mosaical washings of unclean persons, and the baptism of proselytes; and some between the baptism of proselytes and John's baptism: not as though they concurred not in some parallel end; but because other ends were added over and above to this or that, or some ends were withdrawn.

II. The baptism of proselytes was the bringing over of Gentiles into the Jewish religion; the baptism of John was the bringing over of Jews into another religion. And hence it is the more to be wondered at, that the people so readily flocked to him, when he introduced a baptism so different from the known proselytical baptism. The reason of which is to be fetched from hence,--that at the coming of the Messiah they thought, not without cause, that the state of things was plainly to be changed; and that, from the oracles of the prophets, who, with one mouth, described the times of the Messiah for a new world. Hence was that received opinion, *That God, at that time, would renew the world for a thousand years...* And that also, that they used *the world to come* by a form of speech very common among them, for the times of the Messiah; which we observe more largely elsewhere.

III. The baptism of proselytes was an obligation to perform the law; that of John was an obligation to repentance. For although proselytical baptism admitted of some ends,--and circumcision of others,--yet a traditional and erroneous doctrine at that time had joined this to both, that the proselytes covenanted in both, and obliged himself to perform the law;

to which that of the apostle relates, [Galatians 5:3](#), "I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law."

But the baptism of John was a 'baptism of repentance'; [Mark 1:4](#): which being undertaken, they who were baptized professed to renounce their own legal righteousness; and, on the contrary, acknowledged themselves to be obliged to repentance and faith in the Messias to come. How much the Pharisaical doctrine of justification differed from the evangelical, so much the obligation undertaken in the baptism of proselytes differed from the obligation undertaken in the baptism of John: which obligation also holds amongst Christians to the end of the world.

IV. That the baptism of John was by plunging the body (after the same manner as the washing of unclean persons, and the baptism of proselytes was), seems to appear from those things which are related of him; namely, that he "baptized in Jordan"; that he baptized "in Aenon, because there was much water there"; and that Christ, being baptized, "came up out of the water": to which that seems to be parallel, [Acts 8:38](#), "Philip and the eunuch went down into the water," &c. Some complain, that this rite is not retained in the Christian church, as though it something derogated from the truth of baptism; or as though it were to be called an innovation, when the sprinkling of water is used instead of plunging. This is no place to dispute of these things. Let us return these three things only for a present answer:--

1. That the notion of washing in John's baptism differs from ours, in that he baptized none who were not brought over from one religion, and that an irreligious one too,--into another, and that a true one. But there is no place for this among us who are born Christians: the condition, therefore, being varied, the rite is not only lawfully, but deservedly, varied also. Our baptism argues defilement, indeed, and uncleanness; and demonstrates this doctrinally,--that we, being polluted, have need of washing: but this is to be understood of our natural and sinful stain, to be washed away by the blood of Christ and the grace of God: with which stain, indeed, they were defiled who were baptized by John. But to denote this washing by a sacramental sign, the sprinkling of water is as sufficient as the dipping into water,--when, in truth, this argues washing and purification as well as that. But those who were baptized by John were blemished with another stain, and that an outward one, and after a manner visible; that is, a polluted religion,--namely, Judaism or heathenism; from which, if, according to the custom of the nation, they passed by a deeper and severer washing,--they neither underwent it without reason; nor with any reason may it be laid upon us, whose condition is different from theirs.

2. Since dipping was a rite used only in the Jewish nation and proper to it, it were something hard, if all nations should be subjected under it; but especially, when it is neither necessarily to be esteemed of the essence of baptism, and is moreover so harsh and dangerous, that, in regard of these things, it scarcely gave place to circumcision. We read that some,

leavened with Judaism to the highest degree, yet wished that dipping in purification might be taken away, because it was accompanied with so much severity. "In the days of R. Joshua Ben Levi, some endeavoured to abolish this dipping, for the sake of the women of Galilee; because, by reason of the cold, they became barren. R. Joshua Ben Levi said unto them, Do ye go about to take away that which hedges in Israel from transgression?" Surely it is hard to lay this yoke upon the neck of all nations, which seemed too rough to the Jews themselves, and not to be borne by them, men too much given to such kind of severer rites. And if it be demanded of them who went about to take away that dipping, Would you have no purification at all by water? it is probable that they would have allowed of the sprinkling of water, which is less harsh, and not less agreeable to the thing itself.

3. The following ages, with good reason, and by divine prescript, administered a baptism differing in a greater matter from the baptism of John; and therefore it was less to differ in a less matter. The application of water was necessarily of the essence of baptism; but the application of it in this or that manner speaks but a circumstance: the adding also of the word was of the nature of a sacrament; but the changing of the word into this or that form, would you not call this a circumstance also? And yet we read the form of baptism so changed, that you may observe it to have been threefold in the history of the New Testament.

Secondly, In reference to the form of John's baptism [which thing we have propounded to consider in the second place], it is not at all to be doubted but he baptized "in the name of the Messiah now ready to come": and it may be gathered from his words, and from his story. As yet he knew not that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah; which he confesseth himself, [John 1:31](#): yet he knew well enough, that the Messiah was coming; therefore, he baptized those that came to him in his name, instructing them in the doctrine of the gospel, concerning faith in the Messiah, and repentance; that they might be the readier to receive the Messiah when he should manifest himself. Consider well [Malachi 3:1](#), [Luke 1:17](#), [John 1:7,31](#), &c. The apostles, baptizing the Jews, baptized them "in the name of Jesus"; because Jesus of Nazareth had now been revealed for the Messiah; and that they did, when it had been before commanded them by Christ, "Baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." So you must understand that which is spoken, [John 3:23, 4:2](#), concerning the disciples of Christ baptizing; namely, that they baptized in 'the name of Jesus,' that thence it might be known that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, in the name of whom, suddenly to come, John had baptized. That of St. Peter is plain, [Acts 2:38](#); "Be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ": and that, [Acts 8:16](#), "They were baptized in the name of Jesus."

But the apostles baptized the Gentiles, according to the precept of our Lord, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," [Matthew 28:19](#). For since it was very much controverted among the Jews about the true Messiah, and that unbelieving nation denied, stiffly and without ceasing, that Jesus of Nazareth was he (under which virulent

spirit they labour even to this day), it was not without cause, yea, nor without necessity, that they baptized in the name of Jesus; that by that seal might be confirmed this most principal truth in the gospel, and that those that were baptized might profess it; that Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah. But among the Gentiles, the controversy was not concerning the true Messiah, but concerning the true God: among them, therefore, it was needful that baptism should be conferred in the name of the true God, "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

We suppose, therefore, that men, women, and children came to John's baptism, according to the manner of the nation in the reception of proselytes; namely, that they standing in Jordan were taught by John that they were baptized into the name of the Messiah, that was now immediately to come; and into the profession of the doctrine of the gospel concerning faith and repentance; that they plunged themselves into the river, and so came out. And that which is said of them, that they were baptized by him "confessing their sins," is to be understood according to the tenour of the Baptist's preaching; not that they did this man by man, or by some auricular confession made to John, or by openly declaring some particular sins; but when the doctrine of John exhorted them to repentance and to faith in the Messiah, they renounced and disowned the doctrine and opinion of justification by their works, wherewith they had been beforetime leavened, and acknowledged and confessed themselves sinners.

[*In Jordan.*] John could not baptize in any part of Jordan, so it were within the bounds of Judea (which the evangelists assert), which had not been dried up, and had afforded a passage to the Israelites when they came out of Egypt, and were now entering into the promised land.

Some few remarks concerning the Pharisees and Sadducees.

7. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

[*And seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees.*] To attempt a history of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*, after so many very learned men, who have treated of their original, manners, and institutions, would be next to madness: we will briefly touch at a few things, and those, perhaps, less obvious.

1. That the *Pharisees* do not derive their name (as some would have it) from the word which signifies to *expound* is sufficiently evinced by this, that there were *women-Pharisees* as well as men. "R. Joshua saith, A religious man foolish, a wicked man crafty, a *woman-Pharisee*, and the dashing of the *Pharisees* [against the stones], destroy the world." Those things are worthy observing, which are spoke by the Babylonian Gemarists on that clause, *A woman-Pharisee. "The Rabbins teach. A praying [procax] maid, a gadding widow, and a boy whose months are not fulfilled, these corrupt the world.* But R. Jochanan saith, We learn the shunning of sin from a maid, and the receiving of a reward from a widow. "The shunning

of sin from a maid'; for R. Jochanan heard a certain maid prostrate on her face thus praying; Eternal Lord, thou hast created Paradise, thou hast created hell also, thou hast created the righteous, and thou hast created the wicked: let it be thy good pleasure that I be not a scandal to men. 'The receiving of a reward from a widow'; for there was a certain widow, who, when there were synagogues nearer everywhere, she always resorted to the school of R. Jochanan to pray: to whom R. Jochanan said, O my daughter, are there not synagogues at hand round about you? But she answered, *Will there not be a reward for my steps* [or, for my journey hither]? for [the tradition] saith, These destroy the world, as Joanna, the daughter of Retib."

...[O]ne Gloss [says] *a maid given to prayer, or a maid of many prayers*. By another it is rendered, *a maid given to fasting: losing her virginity by fasting*.

A *gadding widow* they call her, "who always goes about from place to place to visit her neighbours"; they are the words of the Gloss. "And these corrupt the world, because they are no other but bawds and sorceresses, and yet they pretend sanctity."

"Joanna the daughter of Retib [the Gloss also being witness] was a certain sorceress widow, who, when the time of any child's birth drew near, shut up the womb of the child-bearing woman with magic arts, that she could not be delivered. And when the poor woman had endured long and great torments, she would say, 'I will go and pray for you; perhaps my prayers will be heard': when she was gone, she would dissolve the enchantments, and presently the infant would be born. On a certain day as a hired man wrought in her house, she being gone to a woman's labour, he heard the charms tinkling in a pan; and, taking off the cover, the charms presently came out, and strait the infant is born; and hence it was known that she was a witch."

I have therefore cited these passages, not only that it may be shown that there were *women-Pharisees*, and so that the name is not take from *interpreting* or *expounding*, but that it may be observed also what kind of women, for the most part, embrace Pharisaism; namely, widows and maids, under the veil of sanctity and devotion, hiding and practising all manner of wickedness. And so much we gain of the history of the *Pharisees*, while we are tracing the etymology of the word.

II. That the *Pharisees* therefore were so called from the word signifying *separation*, is more commonly asserted, and more truly; and the thing itself, as well as the word, speaks it. So that by a word more known to us, you might rightly call the *Pharisees*, *Separatists*; but in what sense, has need of more narrow inquiry. The differences of the Jewish people are to be disposed here into diverse ranks: and, first, we will begin with the women.

1. It were an infinite task to search particularly, how their canons *indulged* (shall I say?) or *prescribed* the woman a freedom from very many rites, in which a great part of the Jewish religion was placed. How numberless are the times that that occurs in the Talmudic pandect, "*Women, servants, and children, are not bound to these things*. Women, servants, and children, are not bound to recite their phylacteries, nor to wear them. *The Passovers of women are at*

their own will." And, not to dwell upon things that are obvious, let this one serve instead of many: "A certain matron asked R. Eleazar, Why, when Aaron sinned in making the golden calf, the people are punished with a threefold death? He answered, Let not a woman be learned beyond her distaff. Hircanus his son said unto him, Because no answer is given her in one word out of the law, she will withdraw from us three hundred tenth cori yearly. To whom he replied, Let them rather go and be burnt, than the words of the law be delivered to women."

From hence it appears that the women that embraced Pharisaism did it of their own free will and vow, not by command: which the men-Pharisees also did.

2. Pass we from the women to the men; and, first, to the lowest degrees of men in the distinction relating to religion; namely, to them whom they ordinarily called *illiterate*, and *the people of the earth*, or *the plebeians*. Of them, thus the Gemara in Sotah newly cited: "One reads the Scriptures, and recites the Misna, and yet he waits not upon the scholars of the wise men; what of him? R. Eleazar said, *This is one of the people of the earth*. R. Samuel Bar Nachmani saith, *Behold, this is an illiterate man*. R. Jannai saith, 'Behold, this is a Cuthean.' R. Achabar saith, 'Behold, this is a magician.'" And a little after, "Who is *the people of the earth*? R. Meith saith, 'He that recites not his phylacteries morning and evening with his prayers.' But the wise men say, 'He, whosoever he be, that lays not up his phylacteries.' Ben Azzai saith, 'He who hath not a fringe on his garment.' R. Jochanan Ben Joseph saith, 'He that instructs not his sons in the doctrine of the law.' Others say, 'He who, although he read the Scriptures, and repeats the traditions, yet attends not on the scholars of the wise men, this is, *the people of the earth* [or *the plebeians*]. Does he read the Scriptures, and not repeat the tradition? Behold, this man is *illiterate*.'" The Gloss upon the place speaks thus, "*The people of the earth* are they of whom there is suspicion of tenths and cleanness": that is, lest they tithe not rightly, nor take care aright concerning cleansings. And *the illiterate* person is "*more vile than, or inferior to, the people of the earth*." Compare that, [John 7:49](#), "this people that knoweth not the law is cursed."

The *colleagues* or *associates*, and *scholars of the wise men*, were opposed to these vulgar persons. Under the title of *scholars of the wise men* are comprehended all that were learned and studious: under the title of *religious*, as well learned as unlearned. There were some of the learned whom they commonly called *colleagues of the Rabbins*; who as yet were candidates, and not preferred to the public office of teaching or judging. The thing may be illustrated by one example: "*Do the colleagues enter in to appoint the new moon?* R. Hoshaiia said, When I was a *colleague*, R. Samuel Ben R. Isaac led me in to the appointment of the new moon, but I knew not whether I were of the number or no." And a little later; "*Do the colleagues* [or *fellows*] go in to intercalate the year? Let us learn this from the example of Rabban Gamaliel, who said, Let the seven seniors meet me in the chamber. But eight entered, 'Who came in hither,' saith he, 'without leave?' 'I,' answered Samuel the Little."

In this sense the word *a colleague*, differs nothing from *a scholar of a wise man*, in that both signify a student and a learned man. But the word *a colleague*, hath a wider sense, denoting all such who have more professedly devoted themselves to religion, and have professed a more devout life and rule than the common people, whether they were learned or unlearned, whether of the sect of the *Pharisees*, or of the *Sadducees*, or some other. Hence you have mention of *a religious Samaritan*, and of *a religious baker*. And the phrase seems to be drawn from [Psalm 119:63](#); "I am *a companion* of all those that fear thee": *They take upon them the habit of religion*. See the Babylonian Talmud in Avodah Zarah in the Gloss. That distinction also is worthy of consideration, of *The greater and the less religious*.

Yet the word seems sometimes to be appropriated to the *Pharisees*, as being men who, above all others, put on a splendidly cloaked religion, which appears enough from the history of the Gospel. So, perhaps, is that to be understood, *The religious Galileans purify*: that is, as the Gloss explains it, "They cleanse their wine and their oil for a drink-offering, if perhaps the Temple may be built in their days." Which, nevertheless, the Aruch citing, thus explains them, *The religious eat their common food in cleanness*. By which very thing the Gloss defines *Pharisees*; *To the Pharisees; that is, to them that eat their common food in cleanness*. Behold, how the word *religious*, and *Pharisees*, are convertible terms; and how this was the proper notion whereby a *Pharisee* was defined, "That he ate his common food in cleanness": that is, that he washed his hands when he ate.

III. We must not think that Pharisaism arose altogether and at once, but it was long a-conceiving, and of not fixed form when it was brought forth. The same may, in a manner, be said of this, which is of the traditions: both these and that were the issue of many years. The traditionarians do refer the first conception of the Traditions to the times of Ezra. But how many centuries of years passed before the birth of this whole monster was full ripe? In like manner, the first seeds of Pharisaism were cast long before its birth; and being now brought forth, was a long time growing, before it came to maturity; if so be any can define what its maturity was.

We observe presently, that the foundations of Sadduceeism were laid in the days of Ezra, before there were any Sadducees: in his days also, I suspect, the foundations of Pharisaism were laid long before there were any *Pharisees*. For, since the *Pharisees* were marked with that title because they *separated* themselves from other men, as more profane; and since, in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, it was the great care, and that a holy care too, to *separate* the seed of Israel from the heathen inhabitants of the land, to wit, the Samaritans, the Ashdodites, the Moabites, &c., not much after; some men, arrogating too much for themselves, took occasion hence of *separating* themselves from the men of the Israelitic seed, as too profane, and very unfit (alas!) for their communion. Which very thing we experience in our present Separatists. For when the Scripture commands Christians that they communicate not "with unbelievers, with those who are without," &c., that is, with heathens; some do

hence make a pretence of withdrawing themselves from the assemblies of Christians: by what right, by what foundation, let themselves look to it.

We shall not trace the time wherein the name of *Pharisee* first arose; this is done by learned men: and therefore let it be enough to have observed that only. After once this pretence of religion was received, "that it was a pious matter to separate a man's self from the common people," superstition increased every day, which served for a stay and patronage to this sect and separation. For when they had espoused a religion so supercilious, that they commonly said, "Stand off, I am holier than thou" (which was also foretold by the prophet with an execration, [Isaiah 65:5](#)), and that they place the highest sanctimony in this, to withdraw themselves from the common people, as profane; it was certainly necessary to circumscribe, and to put themselves under a more austere rule and discipline, that they might retain the name and fame of religious person in other things besides that separation, that argued so much pride and arrogancy. Hence the troubles about tithings and washings arose, and increased age after age: hence sprang the frequent fasting and prayers, the cares of the phylacteries, fringes, and other matters without number: so that (a thing fatal to *Separatists*) this sect, at last, was crumbled into sects, and a *Pharisee* was, in a manner, the same to a *Pharisee*, that *the people of the earth* was to a *Pharisee*.

Both Talmuds reckon seven sects of *Pharisees*, and so does the Aruch: which it will not be irksome to describe with their pencil, that the reader may see to what a degree of madness this sect was come, as well as to what a degree of hypocrisy. *The Pharisees are seven:*

1. *A Shechemite Pharisee.* This [*Pharisee*] does as *Shechem* Where the Gloss is, "Who is circumcised, but not for the honour of God." *He carrieth his precepts upon his shoulders:* that is, as the Aruch explains it, "wood to make a booth [in the feast of Tabernacles], or something of that nature."

2. *A Pharisee struck or dashing.* *Who dasheth his feet.* The Gloss is, "He who walketh in humility, the heel of one foot touching the great toe of the other: nor did he lift up his feet from the earth, so that his toes were dashed against the stones." The Aruch writes, "Who withdrew himself a great way off, that he might not press upon men in the ways, and dashed his feet against the stones." *Strike me (or surround me), and yet I will perform the command.*

3. *A Pharisee that lets out his blood.* "He strikes out his blood against the walls." The Gloss is; "He shows himself such a one as if his eyes were hoodwinked, that he might not look upon a woman; and hereupon dashed his head against the walls, and let out his blood." The Aruch writes, "He so pressed up himself against the walls, that he might not touch those that passed by, that by the dashing he fetched blood of himself."--"He performed one precept, and one duty, and struck out blood at each."

4. *A Pharisee of the mortar.* The Aruch thus describes him; "He went in a loose coat, resembling a mortar with the mouth turned downwards. So he, with his loose garment, was

straiter above and broader below." In the Jerusalem Talmud he is called "who saith, I withdraw whatsoever is mine and fulfil the command."

5. "*The Pharisee* which saith, Let me know *what my duty is, and I will do it.*" "I have done my duty, that the command may be performed according to it." The Aruch thus; "As though he should say, There is no man can show me wherein I have transgressed."

6. *A Pharisee of fear*: such was Job.

7. *A Pharisee of love*: Among all these, none is worthy to be loved but the *Pharisee of love*: as Abraham.

Whether Pharisaism ran out into any of these sects in the days of the Baptist, we dispute not. Let it be granted, that the best and the most modest of that order came to his baptism: the best of the *Pharisees* certainly were the worst of men. And it is so much the more to be wondered at that these men should receive his baptism after that manner as they did; when it was highly contrary to the rule of the *Pharisees* to converse among the common people, of whom there was so great a concourse to John; and highly contrary to the doctrine of the *Pharisees*, so much as to dream of any righteousness, besides that which was of the works of the law, which the doctrine of John diametrically contradicted.

The original of the *Sadducees*, learned men as well Jews as Christians, do, for the most part, refer to one *Zadoc*, a scholar of Antigonus Socheus; which Antigonus took the chief seat in the Sanhedrim after the death of Simeon the Just. Of him thus speaks the tract Avoth: "Antigonus of Socho received traditions of Simeon the Just. He said, Be not as servants, who wait upon their master for the sake of the reward; but be ye like servants who wait upon their master not for the sake of the reward: but let the fear of the Lord rule you."

"This wise man (saith Rambam upon the place) had two scholars, *Zadoc* and *Baithus*; who, when they heard this from their master, said among themselves, when they were gone away. Our master in his exposition teacheth us that there is neither reward nor punishment, nor any expectation at all [for the future]: for they understood not what he meant: therefore, they mutually strengthened one another, and departed from the rule, and forsook the law: and some company adhered to both. The wise men, therefore, called them *Sadducees* and *Baithusees*." And a little after; "But in these countries, namely in Egypt, they call them *Karaites*, but *Sadducees* and *Baithusees* are their names among the wise men." See also the Avoth of R. Nathan.

Yet that raiseth a scruple here: "At the conclusion of all prayers in the Temple they said, *for ever*. But when the heretics brake in and said, There was no age but one, it was appointed to be said, *for ever and ever*, or *from age to age*." Upon these words thus the Gloss; "In the first Temple they said only, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel for ever.' But when the heretics brake in and said there was no age but this, Ezra and his consistory appointed that it should be said, *for ever and ever*, or *from age to age*, to imply there is a double world [this, and one

to come], to root out of the heart the opinion of those that deny the resurrection of the dead."

Take notice, reader, that "there were some who denied the resurrection of the dead in the days of Ezra," when as yet Zadoc, the father of the *Sadducees*, was not born. After Ezra, and his great synagogue (which endured many a year after Ezra was dead), sat Simeon the Just, performing the office of the high-priest, for the space of forty years: and Antigonus Socheus, the master of Zadoc, succeeded him in the chair of the Sanhedrim. So that although the *Sadducees*, with good reason, do bear an ill report for denying the resurrection, and that was their principal heresy; yet that heresy was, when as yet there were no heretics, called by the name of *Sadducees*. To which, perhaps, those words do agree (which sufficiently taste of such a heresy), "Ye have said, It is in vain to serve God," &c., [Malachi 3:14](#).

It is not, therefore, to be denied that the *Sadducee-heretics* were so named from Zadoc; but that the heresy of the *Sadducees*, concerning the resurrection, was older than that name, one may suppose not without reason; nor that that cursed doctrine first arose from the words of Antigonus, illy understood by Zadoc and Baithus, but was of an ancients original, when as yet the prophets Zecharias, Malachi, and Ezra himself, were alive, if that Ezra were not the same with Malachi, as the Jews suppose. Therefore I do rather think that heresy sprang from the misunderstanding of the words of Ezekiel, chapter 37; which some understanding according to the letter, and, together with it, seeing no resurrection, dreamt that there would be none afterward. And this doctrine increased, and exalted itself into a sect; when, at length, Zadoc and Baithus asserted that it was so determined out of the chair by their master Antigonus, the president of the Sanhedrim.

When I fetch the rise of the *Sadducees* not much after the death of Simeon the Just, that does not unseasonably come into my mind, which is mentioned by the Talmudists, that the state of things became worse after his death. "All the days of Simeon the Just, the scape-goat had scarce come to the middle of the precipice of the mountain [whence he was cast down], but he was broken into pieces: but, when Simeon the Just was dead, he fled away [alive] into the desert, and was eaten by Saracens. While Simeon the Just lived, the lot of God [in the day of expiation] went forth always to the right hand: Simeon the Just being dead, it went forth sometimes to the right hand and sometimes to the left. All the days of Simeon the Just, the little scarlet tongue looked always white; but when Simeon the Just was dead, it sometimes looked white and sometimes red. All the days of Simeon the Just, the west light always burnt; but when he was dead, it sometimes burnt and sometimes went out. All the days of Simeon the Just, the fire upon the altar burnt clear and bright; and, after two pieces of wood laid on in the morning, they laid on nothing else the whole day: but when he was dead, the force of the fire languished in that manner that they were compelled to supply it all the day. All the days of Simeon the Just, a blessing was sent upon the two loaves and the show-bread, so that a portion came to every priest, to the quantity of an olive at least; and there were some

others to whom something remained after they had eaten their fill: but when Simeon the Just was dead, that blessing was withdrawn, and so little remained to each, that those that were modest withdrew their hands, and those that were greedy still stretched them out."

[*Generation of vipers.*] I. *Serpents*, chapter 23:33. Not so much "the seed of Abraham," which ye boast of, as "the seed of the serpent," "O, *the Antichrist, the Opposer*, [2 Thessalonians 2:4](#). A nation and offspring diametrically opposite, and an enemy to that seed of the woman, and which was to bruise his heel."

II. Hence, not without ground, it is concluded that that nation was rejected and given over to a reprobate sense, even before the coming of Christ. They were not only *a generation*, but *an offspring* of vipers, serpents sprung from serpents. Nor is it wonder that they were rejected by God, when they had long since rejected God, and God's word, by their traditions. See that [Matthew 13:13-15](#), [1 Peter 2:10](#), "Ye were not a people."

There was, indeed, a certain *remnant* among them to be gathered by Christ: and when that was gathered, the rest of the nation as delivered over to everlasting perdition. This is that *remnant* of the apostle, [Romans 11:5](#), which then was, when he writ those things; which then as to be gathered, before the destruction of that nation.

[*To fly from the wrath to come.*] These words respect the very last words of the Old Testament, "lest I smite the earth with a curse," [Malachi 4](#); and denote the most miserable destruction of the nation, and now almost ready to fall upon them.

The receiving of John's baptism signed and fenced those that received it from the ruin that was just coming. To this belongs that of St. Peter, Epistle 1, chapter 3:20, 21: in that manner as Noah and his sons were by water delivered from the flood, "so also baptism now, the antitype of that type, saveth us" from the deluge of divine indignation, which in a short time is to overflow the Jewish nation. Think here, if those that came to baptism brought not their little ones with them to baptism: when, by the plain words of the Baptist, those that are baptized are said to "fly from the wrath to come?" that is, 'the wrath of God,' that was not long hence to destroy the nation by a most sad overthrow.

9. And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

[*Think not to say.*] A Jerusalem phrase, to be met with everywhere in the Talmud: *To think a word, or to be of that opinion.*

10. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

[*The axe is laid to the root.*] These words seem to be taken from [Isaiah 5:33,34](#). The destruction of the nation was to proceed from the Romans, who had now a great while held them under the yoke. That axe, now laid to the root of the tree, shall certainly cut it down, if from this last dressing by the gospel it bears not fruit. In the Talmud, those words of

Isaiah are applied to the destruction of the city; and thence it is argued, that the Messiah should be born not much after the time of that destruction, because presently after the threatening of that ruin follows, "A Branch shall arise out of the stock of Jesse," [Isaiah 11:1](#).

11. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

[*Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear.*] In Luke it is *to unloose the latchet of his shoes*: which comes to the same thing: both sound to the same import, as if he had said, 'Whose servant I am not worthy to be.'

"A Canaanite servant is like a farm, in respect of buying: for he is bought with money, or with a writing, *or by some service done* as a pledge or pawn. And what is such a pawning in the buying of servants? Namely, that he looseth the shoe of him [who buys], or binds on his shoe, or carries to the bath such things as be necessary for him," &c. These things Maimonides produceth out of the Talmud, where these words are, "How is a servant bought *by service*? He looseth the buyer's shoe; he carrieth such things after him as are necessary for the bath; he unclothes him; washes, anoints, rubs, dresses him; puts on his shoes, and lifts him up from the earth," &c. See also the Tosaphta.

This, by the way, is to be noted, which the Gloss intimates, that all servants, of what heathen nation soever, bought by the Jews, were called 'Canaanite servants,' because it is said of Canaan, "Canaan a servant of servants."

[*Thus it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness.*] That is, 'that we fulfil every thing that is just.' Now in the baptism of Christ there were these two just things especially:--I. That this great priest, being initiated into his ministerial office, should answer the type of the admission of the Levitical priests, who were initiated by washing and anointing; so was he by baptism, and the Holy Ghost. II. When, by the institution of Christ, those that entered into the profession of the gospel were to be introduced by baptism, it was just, yea, necessary, that Christ, being to enter into the same profession, and to preach it too, should be admitted by baptism.

16. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

[*And Jesus being baptized.*] I. That Christ conversed upon earth two-and-thirty years and a half (as many years as David lived at Jerusalem; compare [2 Samuel 5:5](#)), is proved hence:--1. That he was baptized when he had now completed his twenty-ninth year, and had newly begun his thirtieth. That the words of Luke imply, *He began to be about thirty years old*. Which words, although they are applied by some Christians to I know not what large latitude,--yet in the Jewish schools, and among that nation, they would not admit, certainly, of another sense than we produce. For there this axiom holds, *The first day of the*

year is reckoned for that year. And, questionless, Luke speaks with the vulgar. For let it be supposed that the evangelist uttered these words in some Jewish school, "N. was baptized *beginning to be about thirty years old*": how could it be understood by them of the thirtieth complete (much less of the thirty-first, or thirty-second, as some wrest it)? when the words *beginning to be about*, do so harmoniously agree with the said axiom, as scarcely any thing can do more clearly. 2. That, from his baptism to his cross, he lived three years and a half. This is intimated by the angel Gabriel, [Daniel 9:27](#); "In the half of a week" (that is, in three years and a half) "he shall make the sacrifice and oblation to cease"; and it is confirmed from the computation in the evangelists, but especially in John, who clearly mentioneth four Passovers (chap 2:13, 5:1, 6:4, and 13:1) after his forty days' fast, and not a little time spent in Galilee.

II. Therefore, we suppose Christ was baptized about the feast of Tabernacles, in the month Tisri, at which time we suppose him born; and that John was born about the feast of the Passover, and at that time began to baptize. For when Christ lived two-and-thirty years and a half, and died at the feast of the Passover, you must necessarily reduce his birth to the month Tisri, and about the time of the feast of Tabernacles: and when John the Baptist was elder than he by half a year, you must necessarily suppose him born about the feast of the Passover. But of these things we have said something already.

17. And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

[*And behold, a voice from heaven.*] Christ was honoured with a threefold testimony, pronounced by a voice from heaven, according to his threefold office. See what we say at chapter 17:2.

You find not a voice sent from heaven between the giving of the law and the baptism of Christ. What things the Jews relate of *Bath Kol*, they must pardon me if I esteem them, partly, for Jewish fables,--partly, for devilish witchcrafts. They hold it for a tradition: "After the death of the last prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, *the Holy Spirit departed from Israel* [which was most true] *but they used thenceforth the Bath Kol.*" "The *Bath Kol* was this: *When a voice (or thunder) came out of heaven, another voice came out from it.*"

But why, I pray, was prophecy withdrawn, if heavenly oracles were to be continued? Why, also, was Urim and Thummim taken away? Or rather, why was it not restored after the Babylonian captivity? For "Five things (say they) were wanting under the second Temple, which were under the first; namely, the fire from heaven, the ark, Urim and Thummim, the oil of anointing, and the Holy Spirit." It would certainly be a wonder, if God, taking away from his people his ordinary oracles, should bestow upon them a nobler oracle, or as noble; and that when the nation had degenerated, and were sunk into all kind of impiety, superstition, heresy. When the last prophets, Haggai and the rest, were dead, the Sadducean heresy, concerning the resurrection crept in, and the Pharisaical heresy also, weakening all Scripture,

and making it of none effect by vain traditions. And shall I believe that God should so indulge his people, when they were guilty of so grievous apostasy, as to vouchsafe to talk familiarly with them from heaven, and to afford them oracles so sublime, so frequent, as the prophets themselves had not the like? If I may speak plainly what I think, I should reduce those numberless stories of the *Bath Kol* which occur everywhere under these two heads; namely, that very many are mere fables, invented for this purpose, that hence the worth of this or that Rabbin or story may be illustrated: the rest are mere magical and diabolical delusions.

When I read these and such-like passages, that the *Bath Kol* in Jericho gave witness to Hillel, that he was worthy to have the Holy Ghost abide upon him; that the *Bath Kol* in Jabneh yielded the same testimony to Samuel the Little; that the *Bath Kol* again in Jabneh determined the controversies between the schools of Shammai and Hillel, for those of Hillel; and innumerable other stories of that kind, I cannot but either suspect these to be tales, or that these voices were framed by art magic for the honour of the Rabbins.

It is remarkable what is related in the Jerusalem Talmud; *R. Eliezer saith, They follow the hearing of Bath Kol*. And a little after; "R. Jochanan, and R. Simeon Ben Lachish, desired to see the face of Samuel [*the Babylonian Doctor*]; Let us follow, say they, the hearing of *Bath Kol*. Travelling therefore, near a school, they heard a boy's voice reading [in [1 Samuel 25:1](#)] *And Samuel died*. They observed this, and so it came to pass, for Samuel of Babylon was dead."

"R. Jonah and R. Josah went to visit R. Acha lying sick: Let us follow, say they, the hearing of *Bath Kol*. They heard the voice of a certain woman speaking to her neighbour, 'The light is put out.' To whom she said, 'Let it not be put out, nor let the light of Israel be quenched.'"

Behold! reader, a people very well contented to be deceived with a new kind of *Bath Kol*. Compare these things with *Virgil's lots*, of which the Roman historians speak frequently. Not to be more tedious therefore in this matter, let two things only be observed: 1. That the nation, under the second Temple was given to magical arts beyond measure. And, 2. That it was given to an easiness of believing all manner of delusions beyond measure. And one may safely suspect, that those voices which they thought to be from heaven, and noted with the name of *Bath Kol*, were either formed by the devil in the air to deceive the people, or by magicians by devilish art to promote their own affairs. Hence the apostle Peter saith with good reason, that "the word of prophecy was surer than a *voice* from heaven"; [2 Peter 1:19](#).

The very same which I judge of the *Bath Kol*, is my opinion also of the frequent appearances of Elias, with which the leaves of the Talmud do every where abound; namely, that in very many places the stories are false, and, in the rest, the apparitions of him were diabolical. See the notes upon the tenth verse of the seventeenth chapter.

1. Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

[*He was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted, &c.*] The war, proclaimed of old in Eden between the serpent, and the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman, [Genesis 3:15](#), now takes place; when that promised seed of the woman comes forth into the field (being initiated by baptism, and anointed by the Holy Ghost, unto the public office of his ministry) to fight with that old serpent, and at last to bruise his head. And, since the devil was always a most impudent spirit, now he takes upon him a more hardened boldness than ever, even of waging war with him whom he knew to be the Son of God, because from that ancient proclamation of this war he knew well enough that he should bruise his heel.

The first scene or field of the combat was the 'desert of Judea,' which Luke intimates, when he saith, that "Jesus returned from Jordan, and that he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness"; that is, from the same coast or region of Jordan in which he had been baptized.

The *time* of his temptations was from the middle of the month Tisri to the end of forty days; that is, from the beginning of our month of October to the middle of November, or thereabouts: so that he conflicted with cold, as well as want and Satan.

The *manner* of his temptations was twofold. First, invisibly, as the devil is wont to tempt sinners; and this for forty days: while the tempter endeavoured with all his industry to throw in his suggestions, if possible, into the mind of Christ, as he does to mortal men. Which when he could not compass, because he found 'nothing in him' in which such a temptation might fix itself, [John 14:30](#), he attempted another way, namely, by appearing to him in a visible shape, and conversing with him, and that in the form of an angel of light. Let the evangelists be compared. Mark saith, "he was tempted forty days": so also doth Luke: but Matthew, that "the tempter came to him after forty days"; that is, in a visible form.

The *matter* of his temptations was very like the temptations of Eve. She fell by the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life": which are the heads of all sins, [1 John 2:16](#).

By "the lust of the eyes": for "she saw the fruit, that it was pleasant to the sight."

By "the lust of the flesh": she lusted for it, because "it was desirable to be eaten."

By "the pride of life"; not contented with the state of perfection wherein she was created, she affected a higher; and she "took of the fruit, and did eat," that she might become wiser by it.

The same tempter set upon our Saviour with the same stratagems.

I. As Eve was deceived by mistaking his person, supposing a good angel discoursed with her when it was a bad, so the devil in like manner puts on the good angel here, clothed with light and feigned glory.

II. He endeavours to ensnare Christ by "the lust of the flesh"; "Command that these stones be made bread": by "the lust of the eye"; "All these things will I give thee, and the glory

of them": by "the pride of life"; "'Throw thyself down,' and fly in the air, and be held up by angels."

5. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple.

[*Upon the pinnacle of the Temple.*] Whether he placed him upon the Temple itself, or upon some building within the holy circuit, it is in vain to seek, because it cannot be found. If it were upon the Temple itself, I should reflect upon the top of the *porch of the Temple*: if upon some other building, I should reflect upon the *royal gallery*. The priests were wont sometimes to go up to the top of the Temple, stairs being made for this purpose, and described in the Talmudic book entitled Middoth; and they are said to have ascended hither, "When fire was first put to the Temple, and to have thrown up the keys of the chambers of the Temple towards heaven, with these words; 'O thou eternal Lord, because we are not worthy to keep these keys, to thee they are delivered.' And there came, as it were, the form of a hand out of heaven, and took them from them: and they leaped down, and fell into the fire."

Above all other parts of the Temple the *porch of the Temple*, yea, the whole *space before it*, may not unfitly be called *the wing of the Temple*, because, like *wings*, it extended itself in breadth on each side, far beyond the breadth of the Temple: which we take notice of elsewhere.

If, therefore, the devil had placed Christ in the very precipice of this part of the Temple, he may well be said to have placed him upon *the wing of the Temple*, both because this part was like a wing to the Temple itself, and that that precipice was *the wing* of this part.

But if you suppose him placed *upon the royal gallery*, look upon it thus painted out by Josephus: "On the south part [of the court of the Gentiles] was the *king's gallery*, that deserves to be mentioned among the most magnificent things under the sun: for upon a huge depth of a valley, scarcely to be fathomed by the eye of him that stands above, Herod erected a gallery of a vast height; from the top of which if any looked down, *he would grow dizzy, his eyes not being able to reach to so vast a depth.*"

8. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

[*Showed him all the kingdoms of the world, &c.*] That is, Rome with her empire and state. For, 1. That empire is called *all the world*, (which word Luke useth in this story), both in sacred and profane writers. 2. At this time all cities were of little account in comparison of Rome, nor did any part of the earth bear any vogue without that empire. 3. Rome was 'the seat of Satan,' [Revelation 13:2](#); and he granted to the beast of that city both it and the dominion. 4. This therefore seems to be that whereby he attempts to ensnare our Saviour in this object, namely, that he promiseth to give him the pomp and power of Caesar, and

to deliver into his hand the highest empire of the world, that is, the Roman. This, antichrist afterward obtained.

13. And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephtholim:

[*And, leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt at Capernaum.*] Why he left Nazareth after he had passed six or seven-and-twenty years there, the reason appears, [Luke 4:28](#), &c. We do not read that he returned thither again; and so, unhappy Nazareth, thou perishest by thine own folly and perverseness. Whether his father Joseph had any inheritance at Capernaum, which he possessed as his heir, or rather dwelt there in some hired house, we dispute not. This is certainly called his city, [Matthew 9:1](#), &c.; and here, as a citizen, he paid the half-shekel, [Matthew 17:24](#). Where it is worthy marking what is said by the Jews: *How long does a man dwell in some city before he be as one of the citizens? Twelve months.* The same is recited again elsewhere. The Jerusalem Gemara thus explains it; "If he tarry in the city thirty days, he becomes as one of the citizens in respect of the alms-chest; if six months, he becomes a citizen in respect of clothing; if twelve months, in respect of tributes and taxes." The Babylonian adds, "if nine months, in respect of burial." That is, if any abide in a city thirty days, they require of him alms for the poor; if six months, he is bound, with the other citizens, to clothe the poor; if nine months, to bury the dead poor; if twelve months, he is bound to undergo all other taxes with the rest of the citizens.

15. The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephtholim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

[*The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthali.*] It is needful that the words of Isaiah be considered, whence these words are taken. He had been discoursing, in the eighth chapter towards the end, concerning the straits and miseries that compassed the transgressors of the law and the testimony. "To the law and to the testimony," &c., verse 20. "But if a man transgress against it [that is, *the law* and *the testimony*], it will redound to his hardship, and he shall suffer hunger," &c., verse 21. "And he shall look to the earth, and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish, and he shall be driven to darkness," verse 22. And then it follows, chapter 9:1, "For the dimness shall not be like to that wherein it was ill with him, at what time the former [afflicter] lightly touched the land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthali, and the latter grievously afflicted," &c. "That people who sat in darkness, saw a great light," &c.

That which the prophet means here is this: 1. That the contemners of Emanuel and his testimony, that is, the gospel, should undergo far greater calamities than those places had undergone, either under their first conqueror Ben-hadad, or under the second, the king of Assyria. For those places saw light at last restored to them, when the Messiah preached the gospel there: but the contemners of the gospel are driven into eternal darkness. 2. He foretells

the morning of liberty, and of evangelical light, to arise there, where the first darkness and the calamities of their captivity had arisen. St. Matthew citing these words, that he might show the prophecy to be fulfilled, of that light that should arise there, omits those words which speak of their former misery, that is, the first clause of the verse; and produceth those words only, and that very fitly too, which make to his purpose, and which aim directly thither by the prophet's intention. The prophet Hosea affords us an instance of curtailing a sentence after that manner, chapter 1:11, 2:1; when he proclaims Israel and Judah miserable, he calls them 'Lo-Ammi,' and 'Lo-Ruchamah'; when happy, 'Ammi,' and 'Ruchamah.'

[*Beyond Jordan.*] Not *by* Jordan, but *beyond* Jordan. For the latter afflicter, the king of Assyria, had carried away that country also into banishment and bonds, [1 Chronicles 5:26](#). Here is an ellipsis of the conjunction *and*.

18. And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

[*Casting a net into the sea.*] *Fishing in the sea of Tiberias*, in Talmudic speech. There the fathers of the traditions dream that Joshua the son of Nun gave ten laws to the Israelites concerning having some things in common, as lawful, and to be allowed of: *Our Rabbins have a tradition that Joshua ordained ten conditions: That cattle graze in common in woody places. And that a man gather wood in common in his neighbour's field, &c. Among others, And that any, in common, spread his nets for fishing in the sea of Tiberias.* But yet under this caution, *That none set up a wall, which may be any stop to ships.* The Gloss is, "It is the manner of fishermen to fasten stakes in the water, and to make fences of canes or reeds, in which the fish may be taken: but this is not permitted, because it is an impediment to the ships." However therefore the sea of Tiberias belonged to the tribe of Nephthali, yet it was free for any Israelite to fish in it, so it were under the condition mentioned.

19. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

[*Fishers of men.*] This phrase is something agreeable with that of Maimonides upon the Talmud, *A fisher of the law*.

21. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James *the son of Zebedee*, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

[*James the son of Zebedee.*] We meet with a certain Rabbin of this very same name, *R. Jacob the son of Zabdi*.

23. And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

[*Teaching in their synagogues.*] Since we meet with very frequent mention of synagogues every where in the books of the Gospel, it may be needful to know something more clearly what the customs and institutions of the synagogues were, for the better understanding very many things which have some reference thereunto in the New Testament; let us here despatch the history of them as briefly as we may, now when the mention of synagogues first occurs.

Of the Synagogues.

I. A synagogue was not formed anywhere but where there were ten learned men professedly students of the law. 1. Let that of the Talmud be observed. "*What is a great city? That in which were ten men of leisure. If there be less than this number, behold, it is a village.*" 2. Observe that of Maimonides; "Wheresoever there be ten of Israel, there a house must needs be built, to which they may resort to prayers in the time of prayer, and this house is called a synagogue." Not that any ten of Israel made a synagogue; but wheresoever were ten learned men, and studious of the law, these were called *Batlanin, men of leisure*; "who were not to be esteemed for lazy and idle persons, but such who," not being encumbered with worldly things, "*were at leisure only to take care of the affairs of the synagogues, and to give themselves to the study of the law.*"

The reason of the number of ten, though lean and empty enough, is given in the Talmud: and it is this; *A congregation consists of ten*: which they prove hence, because it is said, "*How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, &c. (Num 14:27).*" Take away Joshua and Caleb, and there remain only ten"; namely, of the spies of the land.

II. Of these ten men:

1. Three bear the magistracy, and were called *The bench of three*: whose office it was to decide the differences arising between the members of the synagogue, and to take care about other matters of the synagogue. These judged concerning money-matters, thefts, losses, restitutions, ravishing a virgin, of a man enticing a virgin, of the admission of proselytes, *laying on of hands*, and divers other things, of which see the tract Sanhedrim. These were properly, and with good reason, called *rulers of the synagogue*, because on them laid the chief care of things, and the chief power.

2. Besides these there was 'the public minister of the synagogue,' who prayed publicly, and took care about the reading of the law, and sometimes preached, if there were not some other to discharge this office. This person was called *the angel of the church*, and *the Chazan* or *bishop of the congregation*. The Aruch gives the reason of the name: "The *Chazan* (saith he) is *the angel of the church* (or *the public minister*), and the Targum renders...[it as] one that oversees; *for it is incumbent on him to oversee* how the reader reads, and whom he may call out to read in the law." The public minister of the synagogue himself read not the law

publicly; but, every sabbath, he called out seven of the synagogue (on other days, fewer) whom he judged fit to read. He stood by him that read, with great care observing that he read nothing either falsely or improperly; and calling him back and correcting him if he had failed in any thing...Certainly the signification of the word *bishop*, and *angel of the church*, had been determined with less noise, if recourse had been made to the proper fountains, and men had not vainly disputed about the signification of words, taken I know not whence. The service and worship of the Temple being abolished, as being ceremonial, God transplanted the worship and public adoration of God used in the synagogues, which was moral, into the Christian church; to wit, the public ministry, public prayers, reading God's word, and preaching, &c. Hence the names of the ministers of the Gospel were the very same, *the angel of the church*, and *the bishop*; which belonged to the ministers in the synagogues.

3. There were also three deacons, or almoners, on whom was the care of the poor; and these were called *Parnasin*, or *Pastors*. And these seven perhaps were reputed *the seven good men of the city*; of whom there is frequent remembrance in the Talmudists.

Of these *Parnasin* we shall only produce these things. There were two, who demanded alms of the townsmen; and they were called, *the two collectors of alms. To whom was added a third to distribute it.*

"R. Chelbo in the name of R. Ba Bar Zabda saith, They do not make fewer than three *Parnasin*. For I see the judgments about many matters to be managed by three: therefore much more these which concern life. R. Josi in the name of R. Jochanan saith, They do not make two brethren *Parnasin*. R. Josi went to Cephar, intending there to set *Parnasin* over them, but they received him not. He went away, after he had said these words before them, Ben Bebai was only set over the threaded [linen of the lamps], and yet he was reckoned worthy to be numbered with the eminent men of that age. Ye who are set over the lives of men, how much more are ye so! R. Chaggai, when he appointed the *Parnasin*, argued to them out of the law, all dominion that is given is given from the law. By me kings reign. R. Chaiia Bar Ba set rulers, over them, that is, he appointed *Parnasin*. R. Lazar was a *Parnas*."

This perhaps holds out a light to those words of the apostle, [1 Timothy 3:13](#), "They that have performed the office of a deacon well have obtained to themselves a good degree": that is, being faithful in their care and provision for the poor, as to their corporal life, they may well be probationers for the care of souls. For when those *Parnasin*, as also all the ten, were learned and studious, they might with good reason be preferred from the care of bodies to that of souls. The apostles' deacons are to be reckoned also of the same learned and studious rank. And now let us turn our eyes a little from the synagogues to Christian churches, in the history of the New Testament. When the Romans permitted the Jewish synagogues to use their own laws and proper government, why, I pray, should there not be the same toleration allowed to the apostolical churches? The Roman censure had as yet made no difference between the Judaizing synagogues of the Jews, and the Christian synagogues or churches

of Jews; nor did it permit them to live after their own laws, and forbid these. I am not, therefore, afraid to assert, that the churches of that first age were wanting to themselves, if they took not up the same liberty of government as the Romans allowed the Jewish synagogues to use. And I do not think that was said by the apostle, [1 Corinthians 6:2, 3](#), &c. without this foundation. Therefore, this power of their own government being allowed them, if so be they were minded to enjoy what they might, how easily may those words of the apostle be understood, which have so racked learned men (shall I say?), or which have been so racked by them, [1 Timothy 5:17](#): "Let the elders that rule well," &c.

4. We may reckon the eighth man of these ten to be *the interpreter* in the synagogue; who, being skilled in the tongues, and standing by him that read in the law, rendered in the mother-tongue, verse by verse, those things that were read out of the Hebrew text. The duty of this interpreter, and the rules of his duty, you may read at large in the Talmud.

The use of such an interpreter, they think, was drawn down to them from the times of Ezra, and not without good reason. "*And they read in the book of the law: that was the text. Explaining: that was the Targum. And added the meaning: they are the accents: and they understood the text: that was the Masoreth.*" See [Nehemiah 8:8](#); see also Buxtorf's Tiberias, chapter 8.

5. We do not readily know whom to name for the ninth and tenth of this last three. Let us suppose them to be the *master of the divinity-school*, and his *interpreter*: of whom we shall have a fuller occasion of inquiry. And thus much concerning the head of the synagogue, that learned Decemvirate, which was also the representative body of the synagogue.

III. The days wherein they met together in the synagogue were the sabbath, and the second day and the fifth of every week. Of the sabbath there is no question. They refer the appointment of the second and fifth days to Ezra. "Ezra (say they) decreed ten decrees. He appointed the public reading of the law in the second and fifth days of the week. Also on the sabbath at the time of the sacrifice. He appointed washing to those that had the gonorrhoea. He appointed the session of the judges in cities on the second and fifth days of the week," &c. Hence, perhaps, it will appear in what sense that is to be understood, [Acts 13:42](#). "The Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the *next sabbath*, or the *sabbath between*"; that is, on the days of that intervening week, wherein they met together in the synagogue.

IV. Synagogues were anciently builded in fields. "To the evening recital of the phylacteries are to be added two prayers going before, and two following after." Where the Gloss thus; "The Rabbins instituted that prayer that they might retain their colleagues in the synagogue. And this certainly respected their synagogues at that time; because they were situated in the fields, where they might be in danger." And so Rabbenu Asher upon the same tract; "Anciently their synagogues were in fields: therefore they were afraid to tarry there, until the evening

prayers were ended. It was therefore appointed that they should recite some verses, in which a short sum of all the eighteen prayers had been compacted"...

But the following times brought back their synagogues for the most part into the cities; and provision was made by sharp canons, that a synagogue should be built in the highest place of the city, and that no house should be built higher than it.

V. The like provision was made, that every one at the stated times of prayer should frequent the synagogue. "God does not refuse the prayers, although sinners are mingled there. Therefore it is necessary that a man associate himself with the congregation, and that he pray not alone when an opportunity is given of praying with the congregation. Let every one therefore come morning and evening to the synagogue." And "It is forbidden to pass by the synagogue in the time of prayer, unless a man carry some burden upon his back: or unless there be more synagogues in the same city; for then it may be judged that he goes to another; or unless there be two doors in the synagogue; for it may be judged that he passed by one to go in at another. But if he carry his phylacteries upon his head, then it is allowed him to pass by, because they bear him witness that he is not unmindful of the law." These things are taken out of the Babylonian Talmud: where these are also added: "The holy blessed one saith, Whosoever employeth himself in the study of the law, and in the returning of mercy, and whosoever prays with the synagogue, I account concerning him, as if he redeemed me and my sons from the nations of the world. And whosoever prays not with the synagogue is called an 'ill neighbour,' as it is said, 'Thus saith the Lord of all my evil neighbours,'" &c. [Jeremiah 12:14](#).

VI. When they were met together in the synagogue on the sabbath-day (for this being observed, there is no need to speak any thing of the other days), the service being begun, the minister of the church calls out seven, whomsoever he pleases to call out, to read the law in their order. First, a priest, then a Levite, if they were present; and after these five Israelites. Hence it is, O young student in Hebrew learning, that in some editions of the Hebrew Bible you see marked in the margin of the Pentateuch, 1. *The priest*. 2. *The Levite*. 3. *The third*. 4. *The fourth*. 5. *The fifth*. 6. *The sixth*. 7. *The seventh*:--denoting by these words the order of the readers, and measuring out hereby the portion read by each one. Thus, I suppose, Christ was called out by *the angel of the church* of Nazareth, [Luke 4:16](#), and reading according to the custom as a member of that synagogue.

There is no need to mention that prayers were made publicly by *the angel of the church* for the whole congregation, and that the congregation answered *Amen* to every prayer: and it would be too much particularly to enumerate what those prayers were, and to recite them. It is known enough to all that prayers, and reading of the law and the prophets, was the chief business in the synagogue, and that both were under the care of *the angel of the synagogue*.

I. There seemed to have been catechizing of boys in the synagogue. Consider what that means, "*What is the privilege of women? This, that their sons read in the synagogue. That*

their husbands recite in the school of the doctors." Where the Gloss thus, "The boys that were scholars were wont to be instructed [or to learn] before their master in the synagogue."

II. The *Targumist*, or *Interpreter*, who stood by him that read in the law, and rendered what was read out of the Hebrew original into the mother-tongue,--sometimes used a liberty of enlarging himself in paraphrase. Examples of this we meet with in the Talmud, and also in the Chaldee paraphrast himself.

III. Observe that of the Glosser, *Women and the common people were wont to meet together to hear the exposition or the sermon.* But of what place is this better to be understood than of the synagogue? That especially being well weighed which immediately followeth, *And they had need of expounders [or preachers] to affect their hearts:* which is not much unlike that which is said [Acts 13:13](#), *If ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.*

IV. Service being done in the synagogue, they went to dinner. And after dinner to *the school, or the church, or a lecture of divinity;* call it by what name you will. It is called also not seldom by the Talmudists *The synagogue.* In this sense, it may be, is *upper synagogue* to be taken, mentioned in the Talmud; if it be not to be taken of the Sanhedrim. In this place a doctor read to his auditors some traditional matter, and expounded it. *In the Beth Midrash they taught traditions, and their exposition.*

There are three things to be taken notice of concerning the rites used in this place.

1. He that read to the auditors spake not out with an audible voice, but muttered it with a small whisper in somebody's ear; and he pronounced it aloud to all the people. So that here the doctor had his interpreter in this sense, as well as the reader of the law his in the synagogue. "Rabh went to the place of R. Shilla, *and there was no interpreter to stand by R. Shilla;* Rabh therefore stood by him." Where the Gloss hath these words, "*He had no speaker,* that is, he had no *interpreter* present, who stood before the doctor when he was reading the lecture. *And the doctor whispered him in the ear in Hebrew,* and he rendered it in the mother-tongue to the people." Hither that of our Saviour hath respect, [Matthew 10:27](#); "What ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops." Consult the same place.

2. It was customary in this place, and in these exercises, to propound questions. In that remarkable story of removing Rabban Gamaliel of Jafne from his presidentship, which we meet with in divers places of both Talmuds: when they met together in the Beth Midrash, "*The questioner stood forth and asked,* The evening prayer, is it observed by way of duty, or of free will?" And after a few lines, the mention of an interpreter occurs: "The whole multitude murmured against it, and said to Hotspith the interpreter, 'Hold your peace'; and he held his peace," &c.

3. While the interpreter preached from the mouth of the doctor, the people sat upon the earth. "Let not a judge go upon the heads of the holy people." The Gloss is, "While the interpreter preached the *synagogue* [or *the whole congregation*] sat on the ground: and

whosoever walked through the middle of them to take his place, seemed as if he walked upon their heads."

One may safely be of opinion that the word *synagogue*, was used sometimes in the New Testament in this sense; and that Christ sometimes preached in these divinity-schools, as well as in the synagogues.

But by what right was Christ permitted by the rulers of the synagogue to preach, being the son of a carpenter, and of no learned education? Was it allowed any illiterate person, or mechanic, to preach in the synagogues, if he had the confidence himself to it? By no means. For it was permitted to none to teach there but those that were learned. But there were two things especially that gave Christ admission to preach in every synagogue; namely, the fame of his miracles, and that he gave out himself the head of a religious sect. For however the religion of Christ and his disciples was both scorned and hated by the scribes and Pharisees, yet they accounted them among the *religious* in the same sense as they did the Sadducees; that is, distinguished from *the common people*, or *the seculars*, who took little care of religion. When, therefore, Christ was reckoned among the religious, and grew so famous by the rumour of his miracles, and the shining rays of his doctrine, no wonder if he raised among the people an earnest desire of hearing him, and obtained among the governors of the synagogues a liberty of preaching.

For more info on synagogues, see "Sketches of Jewish Social Life," chapters 16. Synagogues: their Origin, Structure, and Outward Arrangements and 17. The Worship of the Synagogue by Alfred Edersheim.

3-5. Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

[*Blessed, blessed, &c.*] It is commanded, [Deuteronomy 27](#), that, upon the entrance of the people into the promised land, blessings and curses should be denounced from the mounts Gerizim and Ebal: the curses being particularly reckoned up, but the blessings not so. Which seems not to be without a mystery, since the law brought the curse with it; but Christ, who should bring the blessing, was yet to come a great while hence. Now he is present pronouncing the blessings, and that on a mountain. The Jewish writers do thus relate that matter:

"Six tribes went up to the top of mount Gerizim, and six to the top of mount Ebal. But the priests and the Levites stood below with the ark of the covenant. The priests compassed the ark; the Levites compassed the priests; and the whole people of Israel stood on one side and on that other: as it is said, 'All Israel and the elders,' &c. ([Josh 8:33](#)). Turning their faces to mouth Gerizim, they began with the blessing, 'Blessed is the man that shall make no idol, or molten image,' &c. And both the one and the other answered, Amen. Turning their faces to mount Ebal, they pronounced the curse, 'Cursed is the man who shall make an idol, or molten image': and both the one and the other answered, Amen. And so of the rest. And at last, turning their faces to Gerizim, they began with the blessing, 'Blessed is the man who shall continue in all the words of the law'; and the answer on both sides is, Amen. Turning their faces to Ebal, they pronounce the curse, 'Cursed is every one that shall not continue in all the words of the law': and the answer from both sides is, Amen," &c.

In like manner Christ here, having begun with blessings, "Blessed, blessed," thundereth out curses, "Woe, woe," [Luke 6:24-26](#).

That which many do comment concerning the octonary number of beatitudes hath too much curiosity, and little benefit. It hath that which is like it among the Jews: for thus they write; "There is a tradition from the school of R. Esaiiah Ben Korcha, that twenty blessings are pronounced in the Book of the Psalms, and in like manner twenty woes in the Book of Isaiiah. 'But I say,' saith Rabbi, 'that there are two-and-twenty blessings, according to the number of the two-and-twenty letters.'"

"Abraham was blessed with seven blessings."

"These six are blessed, every one with six blessings, David, Daniel, and his three companions, and king Messias."

8. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

[*Blessed are the pure in heart.*] Hearken, O Pharisee, all whose praise lies in outward cleanness. How foolish is this boasting of a Jew! "Come and see, saith R. Simeon Ben Eleazar, how far the purity of Israel extends itself: when it is not only appointed, that a clean man eat not with an unclean woman; but [that an unclean man eat not with an unclean man]

that a Pharisee that hath the gonorrhoea eat not with a common person that hath the gonorrhoea."

9. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

[*Blessed are the peacemakers.*] *Making peace between neighbours* is numbered among those things which bring forth good fruit in this life, and benefit in the life to come.

17. Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

[*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, &c.*] I. It was the opinion of the nation concerning the Messias, that he would bring in a new law, but not at all to the prejudice or damage of Moses and the prophets: but that he would advance the Mosaic law to the very highest pitch, and would fulfil those things that were foretold by the prophets, and that according to the letter, even to the greatest pomp.

II. The scribes and Pharisees, therefore, snatch an occasion of cavilling against Christ; and readily objected that he was not the true Messias, because he abolished the doctrines of the traditions which they obtruded upon the people for Moses and the prophets.

III. He meets with this prejudice here and so onwards by many arguments, as namely, 1. That he abolished not the law when he abolished traditions; for therefore he came that he might fulfil the law. 2. That he asserts, that "not one iota shall perish from the law." 3. That he brought in an observation of the law much more pure and excellent than the Pharisaeal observation of it was: which he confirms even to the end of the chapter, explaining the law according to its genuine and spiritual sense.

18. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

[*Verily, I say unto you.*] I. Such an asseveration was usual to the nation, though the syllables were something changed, "A certain matron said to R. Judah Bar Allai, Thy face is like to a swineherd or a usurer. To whom he answered, *In truth, both are forbidden me.*" The Gloss there, "*In truth* is a manner of speech used in swearing."

II. But our Saviour useth this phrase by the highest divine right. 1. Because he is "Amen, the faithful witness," [Revelation 3:14](#), [2 Corinthians 1:20](#): see also [Isaiah 65:16](#); and Kimchi there. 2. Because he published the gospel, the highest truth, [John 18:37](#), &c. 3. By this asseveration he doth well oppose his divine oracles against the insolent madness of the traditional doctors, who did often vent their blasphemous and frivolous tales under this seal, *They speak in truth*: and "wheresoever this is said (say they), it is *a tradition of Moses from Sinai.*"

[*One jot.*] The Jerusalem Gemarists speak almost to the same sense: "The Book of Deuteronomy came and prostrated itself before God, and said, 'O Lord of the universe, thou hast written in me thy law, but now a testament defective in some part is defective in all. Behold, Solomon endeavours to root the letter Jod out of me' [to wit, in this text, *He shall*

not multiply wives, [Deuteronomy 17:17](#)]. The holy blessed God answered, 'Solomon and a thousand such as he shall perish, but the least word shall not perish out of thee.' R. Honna said in the name of R. Acha, The letter Jod which God took out of the name of Sarai our mother, was given half to Sara and half to Abraham. A tradition of R. Hoshai: The letter Jod came and prostrated itself before God, and said, 'O eternal Lord, thou hast rooted me out of the name of that holy woman.' The blessed God answered, 'Hitherto thou hast been in the name of a woman, and that in the end [viz. in Sarai]; but henceforward thou shalt be in the name of a man, and that in the beginning.' Hence is that which is written, 'And Moses called the name of Hoshea, Jehoshua.'" The Babylonians also do relate this translation of the letter Jod out of the name of Sarai to the name of Joshua, after this manner: "The letter Jod, saith God, which I took out of the name of Sarai, stood and cried to me for very many years, How long will it be ere Joshua arise? to whose name I have added it"...

There is a certain little city mentioned by name *Derokreth*, which, by reason of the smallness of it, was called Jod in the Gloss. And there was a rabbin named Rabh Jod. Of the letter Jod, see Midrash Tillin upon the hundred and fourteenth Psalm.

[*One tittle.*] It seems to denote the little heads or dashes of letters, whereby the difference is made between letters of a form almost alike. The matter may be illustrated by these examples, *If it were Daleth, and a man should have formed it into Resh [on the sabbath], or should have formed Resh into Daleth, he is guilty.*

"It is written [[Lev 22:32](#)] *Ye shall not profane my holy name*: whosoever shall change Cheth into He, destroys the world...It is written [[Psa 150:6](#)], *Let every spirit praise the Lord*: whosoever changeth He into Cheth, destroys the world. It is written [[Jer 5:12](#)], *They lied against the Lord*: whosoever changeth Beth into Caph, destroys the world. It is written [[1 Sam 2:2](#)] *There is none holy as the Lord*: whosoever changeth Caph into Beth, destroys the world. It is written [[Deut 6:4](#)], *The Lord our God is one Lord*: he that changeth Daleth into Resh, destroys the world."

But that our Saviour, by *jot and tittle*, did not only understand the bare letters, or the little marks that distinguished them, appears sufficiently from verse 19, where he renders it, one of "these least commands": in which sense is that also in the Jerusalem Gemara of Solomon's rooting out Jod, that is, evacuating that precept *He shall not multiply wives*. And yet it appears enough hence, that our Saviour also so far asserts the uncorrupt immortality and purity of the holy text, that no particle of the sacred sense should perish, from the beginning of the law to the end of it.

To him that diligently considers these words of our Saviour, their opinion offers itself, who suppose that the whole alphabet of the law, or rather the original character of it is perished; namely, the Samaritan, in which they think the law was first given and written; and that that Hebrew wherein we now read the Bible was substituted in its stead. We shall not expatiate in the question; but let me, with the reader's good leave, produce and consider

some passages of the Talmud, whence, if I be not mistaken, Christians seem first to have taken up this opinion.

The Jerusalem Talmud treats of this matter in these words: "R. Jochanan de Beth Gubrin saith, There are four noble tongues which the world useth: the mother-tongue, for singing; the Roman, for war; the Syriac, for mourning; the Hebrew, for elocution: and there are some which add the Assyrian, for writing. The Assyrian hath writing [that is, letters or characters], but a language it hath not. The Hebrew hath a language, but writing it hath not. They chose to themselves the Hebrew language in the Assyrian character. But why is it called *the Assyrian*? Because it is *blessed* (or *direct*) in its writing. R. Levi saith, Because it came up into their hands out of Assyria."

"A tradition. R. Josi saith, Ezra was fit, by whose hands the law might have been given, but that the age of Moses prevented. But although the law was not given by his hand, yet writing [that is, the forms of the letters] and the language were given by his hand. 'And the writing of the epistle was writ in Syriac, and rendered in Syriac,' [Ezra 4:7](#). 'And they could not read the writing,' [Daniel 5:8](#). From whence is shown that the writing [that is, the form of the characters and letters] was given that very same day. R. Nathan saith: The law was given in breaking [that is, in letters more rude and more disjoined]: and the matter is as R. Josi saith. Rabbi [Judah Haccodesh] saith, The law was given in the Assyrian language; and when they sinned it was turned into breaking. And when they were worthy in the days of Ezra, it was turned for them again into the Assyrian. I show to-day, that I will render to you *Mishneh*, *the doubled*, or, as if he should say *the seconded* ([Zech 9:12](#)). And he shall write for himself the *Mishneh* (*the doubled*) of this law in a book ([Deut 17:18](#)), namely, in a writing that was to be changed. R. Simeon Ben Eleazar saith, in the name of R. Eleazar Ben Parta, and he in the name of R. Lazar the Hammodean, The law was given in Assyrian writing..." So the Jerusalem Talmudists.

Discourse is had of the same business in the Babylonian Talmud, and almost in the same words, these being added over: The law was given to Israel in Hebrew writing, and in the holy language. And it was given to them again in the days of Ezra, in Assyrian writing, and the Syriac language. The Israelites chose to themselves the Assyrian writing, and the holy language; *and left the Hebrew writing and the Syriac language to ignorant persons. But who are those idiots (or ignorant persons)?* R. Chasda saith, *The Samaritans*. And what is the Hebrew writing? R. Chasda saith...according to the Gloss, "Great letters, such as those are which are writ in charms and upon doorposts."

That we may a little apprehend the meaning of the Rabbins, let it be observed,

I. That by 'the mother-tongue' (the Hebrew, Syriac, Roman, being named particularly) no other certainly can be understood than the Greek, we have shown at the three-and-twentieth verse of the first chapter...

Many nations were united into one language, that is, the old Syriac,--namely, the Chaldeans, the Mesopotamians, the Assyrians, the Syrians. Of these some were the sons of Sem and some of Ham. Though all had the same language, it is no wonder if all had not the same letters. The Assyrians and Israelites refer their original to Sem; these had the Assyrian writing; the sons of Ham that inhabited beyond Euphrates had another; perhaps that which is now called by us the Samaritan, which it may be the sons of Ham the Canaanites used.

III. That the law was given by Moses in Assyrian letters, is the opinion (as you see) of some Talmudists; and that, indeed, the sounder by much. For to think that the divine law was writ in characters proper to the cursed seed of Ham, is agreeable neither to the dignity of the law, nor indeed to reason itself. They that assert the mother-writing was Assyrian, do indeed confess that the characters of the law were changed; but this was done by reason of the sin of the people, and through negligence. For when under the first Temple the Israelites degenerated into Canaanitish manners, perhaps they used the letters of the Canaanites, which were the same with those of the inhabitants beyond Euphrates. These words of theirs put the matter out of doubt: "The law was given to Israel in the Assyrian writing in the days of Moses: but when they sinned under the first Temple and contemned the law, it was changed into breaking to them."

Therefore, according to these men's opinion, the Assyrian writing was the original of the law, and endured and obtained unto the degenerate age under the first Temple. Then they think it was changed into the writing used beyond Euphrates or the Samaritan; or, if you will, the Canaanitish (if so be these were not one and the same); but by Ezra it was at last restored into the original Assyrian.

Truly, I wonder that learned men should attribute so much to this tradition (for whence else they have received their opinion, I do not understand), that they should think that the primitive writing of the law was in Samaritan: seeing that which the Gemarists assert concerning the changing of the characters rests upon so brittle and tottering a foundation, that it is much more probable that there was no change at all (but that the law was first writ in Assyrian by Moses, and in the Assyrian also by Ezra), because the change cannot be built and established upon stronger arguments.

A second question might follow concerning Keri and Kethib: and a suspicion might also arise, that the text of the law was not preserved perfect to *one jot and one tittle*, when so many various readings do so frequently occur. Concerning this business we will offer these few things only, that so we may return to our task:--

I. These things are delivered by tradition; "*They found three books in the court, the book Meoni, the book Zaatuti, and the book Hi.* In one they found written, 'The eternal God is thy refuge': but in the two other they found it written, ([Deut 33:27](#)); *They approved [or confirmed] those two, but rejected that one*"...

I do much suspect that these three books laid up in the court answered to the threefold congregation of the Jews, namely, in Judea, Babylon, and Egypt, whence these copies might be particularly taken. For, however that nation was scattered abroad almost throughout the whole world, yet, by number and companies scarcely to be numbered, it more plentifully increased in these three countries than any where else: in Judea, by those that returned from Babylon; in Babylon, by those that returned not; and in Egypt, by the temple of Onias. The two copies that agreed, I judge to be out of Judea and Babylon; that that differed to be out of Egypt: and this last I suspect by this, that the word *Zaatuti* smells of the Seventy interpreters, whom the Jews of Egypt might be judged, for the very sake of the place, to favour more than any elsewhere. For it is asserted by the Jewish writers that *Zaatuti* was one of those changes which the Septuagint brought into the sacred text.

II. It is therefore very probable, that the Keri and Kethib were compacted from the comparing of the two copies of the greatest authority, that is, the Jewish and the Babylonian: which when they differed from one another in so many places in certain little dashes of writing, but little or nothing at all as to the sense, by very sound counsel they provided that both should be reserved, so that both copies might have their worth preserved, and the sacred text its purity and fulness, whilst not *one jot* nor *one title* of it perished.

21. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

[*Ye have heard.*] That is, ye have received it by tradition. *If they have heard* [that is, *learned by tradition*], *they speak to them. They learned by hearing*, that is, by tradition; a saying very frequent in Maimonides.

[*That it was said by them of old time.*] That is, "it is an old tradition." For the particular passages of the law which are here cited by our Saviour are not produced as the bare words of Moses, but was clothed in the Glosses of the Scribes; which most plainly appears above the rest, verse 43, and sufficiently in this first allegation, where those words, "Whosoever shall kill shall be guilty of the judgment," do hold out the false paint of tradition, and, as we observe in the following verses, such as misrepresents the law, and makes it of none effect. If it be asked, why Christ makes mention of "those of old time?" it may be answered, that the memory of the ancients Fathers of the Traditions was venerable among the people. Reverend was the name of *the first good men*, and *the first wise men*. Therefore Christ chose to confute their doctrines and Glosses, that he might more clearly prove the vanity of traditions, when he reproved their most famous men. But the sense which we have produced is plain, and without any difficulty; as if he should say, "It is an old tradition which hath obtained for many ages."

22. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

[*But I say unto you.*] *But I say*, the words of one that refutes or determines a question, very frequently to be met with in the Hebrew writers. To this you may lay that of Isaiah, chapter 2:3, "And he will teach us of his ways," &c. Where Kimchi writes thus, *This teacher is king Messias*. And that of Zechariah, chapter 11:8; where this great Shepherd destroys "three evil shepherds," namely, the Pharisee, and the Sadducee, and the Essene.

[*That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, &c.*] First let us treat of the words, and then of the sentences.

[*With his brother.*] The Jewish schools do thus distinguish between a brother and a neighbour; that a *brother* signifies an Israelite by nation and blood: a *neighbour*, an Israelite in religion and worship, that is, a proselyte. The author of Aruch, in the word *A son of the covenant*, writes thus; "The sons of the covenant, these are Israel. And when the Scripture saith, 'If any one's ox gore the ox of his neighbour,' it excludes all the heathen, in that it saith, 'of his neighbour.'" Maimonides writes thus: "It is all one to kill an Israelite and a Canaanite servant: for both, the punishment is death; but an Israelite who shall kill a *stranger-inhabitant* shall not be punished with death, because it is said, 'Whosoever shall proudly rise up against his neighbour to kill him' [Exodus 21:14](#): and it is needless to say he shall not be punished with death for killing a heathen." Where this is to be noted, that heathens and stranger-inhabitants, who were not admitted to perfect and complete proselytism, were not qualified with the title of *neighbour*, nor with any privileges.

But under the Gospel, where there is no distinction of nations or tribes, *brother* is taken in the same latitude as among the Jews both *brother* and *neighbour* were; that is, for all professing the gospel: and is contradistinguished to the *heathen*, [1 Corinthians 5:11](#), "If any one who is called a *brother*": and [Matthew 18:15](#), "If thy *brother* sin against thee," &c., verse 17, "If he hear not the church, let him be a *heathen*."

But *neighbour* is extended to all, even such as are strangers to our religion: [Luke 10:29,30](#), &c.

[*He shall be guilty.*] [W]ords signifying *guilt* or *debt* [are] to be met with a thousand times in the Talmudists. [Isaiah 24:23](#); "They shall be gathered together, as captives are gathered into prison." Where R. Solomon speaks thus, *Guilty of hell unto hell*: which agrees with the last clause of this verse.

[*Of the council.*] *Of the Sanhedrim*: that is, of the judgment, or tribunal of the magistrate. For that *judgment*, in the clause before, is to be referred to the *judgment of God*, will appear by what follows.

[*Raca.*] A word used by one that despiseth another in the highest scorn: very usual in the Hebrew writers, and very common in the mouth of the nation.

"One returned to repentance: his wife said to him, *Raca*, if it be appointed you to repent, the very girdle wherewith you gird yourself shall not be your own."

"A heathen said to an Israelite, Very suitable food is made ready for you at my house. What is it? saith the other. To whom he replied, Swine's flesh. *Raca* (saith the Jew), I must not eat of clean beasts with you."

"A king's daughter was married to a certain dirty fellow. He commands her to stand by him as a mean servant, and to be his butler. To whom she said, *Raca*, I am a king's daughter."

"One of the scholars of R. Jochanan made sport with the teaching of his master: but returning at last to a sober mind, Teach thou, O master, saith he, for thou art worthy to teach: for I have found and seen that which thou hast taught. To whom he replied, *Raca*, thou hadst not believed, unless thou hadst seen."

"A certain captain saluted a religious man praying in the way, but he saluted him not again: he waited till he had done his prayer, and saith to him, *Raca*, it is written in your law," &c.

[*Into hell-fire.*] The Jews do very usually express *hell*, or *the place of the damned*, by the word *Gehinnom*, which might be shown in infinite examples; the manner of speech being taken from the *valley of Hinnom*, a place infamous for foul idolatry committed there; for the howlings of infants roasted to Moloch; filth carried out thither; and for a fire that always was burning, and so most fit to represent the horror of hell.

"There are three doors of Gehenna; one in the wilderness, as it is written, 'They went down, and all that belonged to them, alive into hell' ([Num 16:33](#)). Another in the sea, as it is written, 'Out of the belly of hell have I called; thou hast heard my voice' ([Jonah 2:2](#)). The third in Jerusalem, as it is written, 'Thus saith the Lord, whose fire is in Sion, and his furnace in Jerusalem,' [Isaiah 31:9](#). The tradition of the school of R. Ismael; 'Whose fire is in Sion,' this is the gate of Gehenna."

The Chaldee paraphrast upon Isaiah, chapter 33:14, *Gehenna, eternal fire, &c. The Gehenna of eternal fire.*

We come now to the sentences and sense of the verse. A threefold punishment is adjudged to a threefold wickedness. *Judgment* to him that is angry...*without cause*. *Judgment* also, and that by the Sanhedrim, to him that calls *Raca*. *Judgment of hell* to him that calleth *Fool*.

That which is here produced of the threefold Sanhedrim among the Jews pleases me not, because, passing over other reasons, mention of the Sanhedrim is made only in the middle clause.

How the judgment in the first clause is to be distinguished from the judgment of the Sanhedrim in the second, will very easily appear from this Gloss and commentary of the

Talmudists, "Of not killing": "he is a manslayer, whosoever shall strike his neighbour with a stone or iron, or thrust him into the water, or fire, whence he cannot come out, so that he die, he is guilty. But if he shall thrust another into the water or fire, whence he might come out, if he die, he is guiltless. A man sets a dog or serpent on another, he is guiltless." See also the Babylonian Gemara there; "Whosoever shall slay his neighbour with his own hand, striking him with his sword, or with a stone, so that he kills him; or shall strangle or burn him so that he die, in any manner whatsoever killing him in his own person; behold, such a one is to be put to death by the Sanhedrim. But he that hires another by a reward to kill his neighbour, or who sends his servants, and they kill him; or he that thrusts him violently upon a lion, or upon some other beast, and the beast kill him; or he that kills himself, *every one of these is a shedder of blood*, and the iniquity of manslaughter is in his hand, and he is liable to death *by the hand of God*; but he is not to be punished with death by the Sanhedrim."

Behold a double manslayer! Behold a double judgment! Now let the words of our Saviour be applied to this Gloss of the ancients upon the law of murder: "Do ye hear," saith he, "What is said by the ancients, Whosoever shall kill, after what manner soever a man shall kill him, whether by the hand of one that he hath hired, or by his servants, or by setting a beast on him; he is guilty of the judgment of God, though not of the judgment of the Sanhedrim: and whosoever shall kill his neighbour by himself, none other interposing, this man is liable to the judgment of the Sanhedrim: but I say unto you, That whosoever is rashly angry with his brother, this man is liable to the judgment of God; and whosoever shall say to his brother, *Raca*, he is liable to the Sanhedrim."

These words of our Saviour, perhaps, we shall more truly understand by comparing some more phrases and doctrines, very usual in the Jewish schools. Such as these, *Absolved from the judgment of men, but guilty in the judgment of Heaven*, that is, *of God*. *Death by the Sanhedrim, and death by the hand of Heaven*.

And in a word, *cutting off*, speaks vengeance by the hand of God. They are very much deceived who understand...*cutting off*, of which there is very frequent mention in the Holy Bible, concerning the *cutting-off* from the public assembly *by ecclesiastical censure*, when as it means nothing else than *cutting off by divine vengeance*. There is nothing more usual and common among the Hebrew canonists, than to adjudge very many transgressions to *cutting off*, in that worn phrase...*"If he shall do this out of presumption, he is guilty of cutting off*; but if he shall do it out of ignorance, he is bound for a sacrifice for sin." When they adjudge a thing or a guilty person to cutting off, they deliver and leaven him to the judgment of God; nevertheless, a censure and punishment from the Sanhedrim sometimes is added, and sometimes not. Which might be illustrated by infinite examples, but we are afraid of being tedious. Let these two be enough on both sides.

I. Of mere delivering over to the judgment of God, without any punishment inflicted by the Sanhedrim, those words speak, which were lately cited, "He is absolved from the judgment of men, but liable to the judgment of Heaven."

II. Of the judgment of God and of the Sanhedrim joined together, these words in the same place speak: "If he that is made guilty by the Sanhedrim be bound to make restitution, Heaven [or God] doth not pardon him until he pay it." But he that bears a punishment laid on him by the Sanhedrim is absolved from cutting off. "All persons guilty of cutting off, when they are beaten are absolved from their cutting off: as it is said, 'And thy brother become vile in thy sight.' When he shall be beaten, behold, he is thy brother."

Liabie or guilty even to the hell-fire. He had said, guilty of *judgment* and of *the council*, before; but now he saith *unto hell*, and that in a higher emphasis; as if he should have said, "Whosoever shall say to his brother, *Fool*, shall be guilty of judgment, even unto *the judgment of hell*."

But what was there more grievous in the word *fool*, than in the word *Raca*? Let king Solomon be the interpreter, who everywhere by a *fool* understands a *wicked and reprobate* person; foolishness being opposed to spiritual wisdom. *Raca* denotes indeed *morosity*, and *lightness of manners and life*: but *fool* judgeth bitterly of the spiritual and eternal state, and decreeth a man to certain destruction. Let the judgments and censures of the scribes and Pharisees concerning the common people serve us instead of a lexicon. They did not only suffer themselves to be styled *wise men*, but also arrogated it to themselves, as their merit and due. But what do they say of the common people? "This people, that knoweth not the law, is cursed," [John 7:49](#).

You have a form of speaking, not much unlike this which is now under our hands: *He that calls his neighbour Servant, let him be in excommunication.* The Gloss is, "They therefore excommunicate him, because he vilified an Israelite: him, therefore, they vilify in like manner." "If he call him *bastard*, let him be punished with forty stripes. If *wicked man*, let it descend with him into his life": that is, according to the Gloss, "into misery and penury."

After this manner, therefore, our Saviour suits a different punishment to different sins by a most just parity, and a very equal compensation: to unjust anger, the just anger and judgment of God; to public reproach, a public trial; and hell-fire to the censure that adjudgeth another thither.

23. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

[*That thy brother hath ought against thee, &c.*] ...that which the Jews restrained only to pecuniary damages, Christ extends to all offences against our brother.

"He that offers an oblation, not restoring that which he had unjustly taken away, does not do that which is his duty." And again; "He that steals any thing from his neighbour, yea,

though it be but a farthing, and swears falsely, is bound to restitution, meeting the wronged party half way." See also Baal Turim upon [Leviticus 6](#).

"An oblation is not offered for a sin, unless that which is [wrongfully] taken away, be first restored either to the owner or the priest." In like manner, "He that swears falsely, either of the *Pruta* [*small money*], or what the *Pruta* is worth, is bound to inquire after the owner, even as far as the islands in the sea, and to make restitution."

Observe, how provision is here made for pecuniary damages only and bare restitution, which might be done without a charitable mind and a brotherly heart. But Christ urgeth charity, reconciliation of mind, and a pure desire of reunion with our offended brother; and that not only in money matters, but in any other, and for whatever cause, wherein our neighbour complains that he is grieved.

24. Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

[*Leave there thy gift before the altar.*] This business was altogether unusual in gifts offered at the altar, in such a cause. We read, indeed, of the drink-offering, delayed after the sacrifice was offered: "For the wise men say, That a man is not held in his sin, when the drink-offering is put off by some delay; because one may offer his sacrifice to-day, but his drink-offering twenty days hence." We read also that the oblation of a sacrifice presented even at the altar, in some cases hath not only been delayed, but the sacrifice itself hath been rejected; that is, if, in that instant, discovery was made, in sacrificing the best, either of a blemish, or of somewhat else, whereby it became an illegal sacrifice; or if some uncleanness or other cause appeared in the offerer, whereby he was rendered unfit for the present to offer a gift. Of which things, causing the oblation of the sacrifice already presented at the altar to be deferred, the Hebrew lawyers speak much. But among those things we do not meet at all with this whereof our Saviour is here speaking: so that he seems to enjoin some new matter,--and not new alone, but seemingly impossible. For the offended brother might perhaps be absent in the furthest parts of the land of Israel, so that he could not be spoke with, and his pardon asked in very many days after: and what shall become of the beast in the mean time, which is left at the altar? It is a wonder indeed that our Saviour, treating of the worship at the altar, should prescribe such a duty, which was both unusual (in such a case) and next to impossible. But it is answered:--

I. It was a custom and a law among the Jews, that the sacrifices of particular men should not presently, as soon as they were due, be brought to the altar, but that they should be reserved to the feast next following, whatsoever that were, whether the Passover, or Pentecost, or Tabernacles, to be then offered. "Teeming women, women that have the gonorrhoea, and men that have the gonorrhoea, reserve their pigeons until they go up to the feast."--"The oblations which were devoted before the feast shall be offered at the feast: for its is said, These things shall ye do in their solemnities," &c. But now all the Israelites were present at the

feasts; and any brother, against whom one had sinned, was not then far off from the altar. Unto which time and custom of the nation it is equal to think Christ alluded.

II. He does silently chastise the curiosity used in deferring of a sacrifice brought about lesser matters, when this that was greater was unregarded. And he teacheth, that God is worshipped in vain without true charity to our brother. The same also, in effect, do the Gemarists confess.

25. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

[*Whilst thou art in the way with him.*] That is, "while thou goest with him to the magistrate," [Luke 12:58](#); where there is a clear distinction between *the magistrate*, and *the judge*: so that by *magistrate*, or *ruler*, one may understand the judges in the lower Sanhedrims; by *judge*, the judges in the highest. That allusion is here made to contentions about money matters, sufficiently appears from the following words, verse 26; "Thou shalt by no means come out of prison till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." Now it was the business of the bench, that consisted of three men, to judge of such matters.

The words, therefore, of the verse have this sense: 'Does your neighbour accuse you of some damage, or of money that is due to him? and are ye now going in the way to the bench of three to commence the suit? compound with your adversary, lest he compel you to some higher tribunal, where your danger will be greater.' "For if the lender say to the debtor, 'Let us go, that judgment may be had of our case from the chief Sanhedrim,' they force the debtor to go up thence with him. In like manner, if any accuse another of something taken away from him, or of some damage done him, and he that is the accuser will have the higher Sanhedrim to judge of the suit; they force the debtor to go up thence with him. And so it is done with all other things of that nature."

Before, Christ had argued from *piety*, that men should seek to be reconciled; now he argues from *prudence*, and an honest care of a man's self.

[*And the judge deliver thee to the officer.*] A word answering to *an executioner, a whipper*, among the Rabbins. *Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates*, [Deuteronomy 16:18](#). ..."vergers and scourge-bearers [*executioners*] who stand before the judges. These go through the lanes and streets and inns, and take care about weights and measures; and scourge those that do amiss. But all their business is by the order of the judges. Whomsoever they see doing evil, they bring before the judges," &c. And *Whosoever goes out into the street, let him reckon concerning himself, as if he were already delivered over to the officer*; that is, as the Gloss hath it, "Contentions and contentious men will there be met with Gentiles and Israelites: so that let him reckon concerning himself, as though he were already delivered over to the officer, ready to lead him away before the judges." The Gloss upon Babyl. Joma writes thus; "is the executioner of the Sanhedrim, whose office is to whip."

26. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

[*Farthing.*] According to the Jerusalem Talmud, it is *Kordiontes*; according to the Babylonian, *Kontrik*. For thus they write:

"Two *assars* make a *pondion*.

Two *semisses* make an *assar*.

Two *farthings* a *semissis*.

Two *prutahs* a *farthing*.

A *pondion* is in value two *assars*.

An *assar* is two *semisses*.

A *semissis* is two *farthings*.

A *kontrik*, or a *farthing*, is two *prutahs*."

That which is here said by the Jerusalem Talmud, *Two prutahs make a farthing*, is the very same thing that is said, [Mark 12:42](#), *Two mites, which make a farthing*. A *prutah* was the very least piece among coins. So Maimonides, *That which is not worth a prutah, is not to be reckoned among riches*. Hence are those numberless passages in the Talmudic Pandects relating to the *prutah*: "He that steals less than a *prutah* is not bound to pay five-fold." "No land is bought for a price less than a *prutah*," that is, given as an earnest.

You have the value of these coins in the same Maimonides: "Selaa (saith he) is in value four-pence: a penny, six meahs. Now a meah, in the days of Moses our master, was called a *gerah*; it contains two *pondions*; a *pondion*, two *assars*; and a *prutah* is the eighth part of an *assar*. The weight of a meah, which is also called a *gerah*, is sixteen barleycorns. And the weight of an *assar* is four barleycorns. And the weight of a *prutah* is half a barleycorn."

Luke hath, *the last mite*, chapter 12:59; that is, *the last prutah*, which was *the eighth part of the Italian assarius*. Therefore, a *farthing*, was so called, not that it was the fourth part of a penny, but the fourth part of an *assar*; which how very small a part of a penny it was, we may observe by those things that are said by both Gemaras in the place before cited.

"Six silver *meahs* make a penny.

A *meah* is worth two *pondions*.

A *pondion* is worth two *assars*."

Let this be noted by the way; a *meah*, which, as Maimonides before testifies, was anciently called a *gerah*, was also commonly called *zuz*, in the Talmudists. For as it is said here, *six meahs of silver make a penny*, so in Rambam, *a penny contains six zuzim*.

The *prutah*, as it was the least piece of money among the Jews, so it seems to have been a coin merely Jewish, not Roman. For although the Jews, being subjects to the Romans, used Roman money, and thence, as our Saviour argues, confessed their subjection to the Romans; yet they were permitted to use their own money, which appears by the common use of the shekels and half-shekels among them: with good reason, therefore, one may hold the *farthing*

was the least Roman coin, and the *prutah*, the least Jewish. Whilst our Saviour mentions both, he is not inconstant to his own speech, but speaks more to the capacity of all.

27. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

[*Ye have heard, that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery.*] He citeth not the command or text of Moses, as barely delivered by Moses, but as deformed by those of old time with such a gloss as almost evacuated all the force of the command; for they interpreted it of the act of adultery only, and that with a married woman. So the enumeration of the six hundred and thirteen precepts of the law, and that, [Exodus 20:14](#), 'Thou shalt not commit adultery,' hath these words, "This is the thirty-fifth precept of the law, namely, That no man lie with another man's wife."

28. But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

[*Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, &c.*] "He that looketh upon a woman's heel, is as if he looked upon her belly: and he that looks upon her belly, is as if he lay with her." And yet, *It was Rabban Gamaliel's custom to look upon women.* And in the other Talmud; "He that looks upon the little finger of a woman, is as if he looked upon her privy parts." And yet "Rabh Gidal and R. Jochanan were wont to sit at the place of dipping, where the women were washed; and when they were admonished by some of the danger of lasciviousness, R. Jochanan answered, 'I am of the seed of Joseph, over whom an evil affection could not rule.'"

30. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

[*If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off.*] See here Babyl. Niddah, fol. 13, quite through. Among other things, R. Tarphon saith, "Whosoever brings his hand to his modest parts, let his hand be cut off unto his navel." And a little after; "It is better that his belly should be cleft in two, than that he should descend into the well of corruption." The discourse is of moving the hand to the privy member, that, by the handling it, it might be known whether the party had the gonorrhoea, or no: and yet they adjudge never so little handling it to cutting off the hand. Read the place, if you have leisure.

31. It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

[*Whosoever putteth away his wife, let him give her a bill of divorcement*] Notice is to be taken how our Saviour passeth into these words, namely, by using the particle *but*. "*But* it hath been said." This particle hath this emphasis in this place, that it whispers a silent objec-

tion, which is answered in the following verse. Christ had said, "Whosoever looks upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery already": but the Jewish lawyers said, "If any one sees a woman which he is delighted withal above his wife, let him dismiss his wife and marry her."

Among the chapters of Talmudical doctrine, we meet with none concerning which it is treated more largely, and more to a punctilio, than of divorces: and yet there the chief care is not so much of a just cause of it as of the manner and form of doing it. To him that turns over the book *Gittin* (as also, indeed, the whole *Seder Nashim*, that part of the Talmud that treats of women), the diligence of the Masters about this matter will appear such that they seem to have dwelt, not without some complacency, upon this article above all others.

God, indeed, granted to that nation a law concerning divorces, [Deuteronomy 24:1](#), permitted only "for the hardness of their hearts," [Matthew 19:8](#): in which permission, nevertheless, they boast, as though it were indulged them by mere privilege. When God had established that fatal law of punishing adultery by death ([Deut 22](#)), for the terror of the people, and for their avoiding of that sin; the same merciful God foreseeing also how hard (occasion being taken from this law) the issue of this might be to the women, by reason of the roughness of the men; lusting, perhaps, after other women, and loathing their own wives; he more graciously provided against such kind of wife-killing by a law, mitigating the former, and allowed the putting away a wife in the same case, concerning which that fatal law was given; namely, in the case of adultery. So that that law of divorce, in the exhibition of it, implied their hearts to be hard; and, in the use of it, they shewed them to be carnal. And yet hear them thus boasting of that law: "The Lord of Israel saith, *That he hateth putting away*, [Malachi 2:16](#). Through the whole chapter, saith R. Chananiah in the name of R. Phineas, he is called the Lord of *Hosts*: but here, of *Israel*, that it might appear that God subscribed not his name to divorces, but only among the Israelites. As if he should say, 'To the Israelites I have granted the putting way of wives; to the Gentiles I have not granted it.' R. Chaijah Rabbah saith, Divorces are not granted to the nations of the world."

Some of them interpreted this law of Moses (as by right they ought to interpret it), of the case of adultery only. "The school of Shamaai said, A wife is not to be divorced, unless for filthiness [that is, adultery] only, because it is said, *Because he hath found filthy nakedness in her*," that is, adultery.

"Rabh Papa said, If he find not adultery in her, what then? Rabba answered, When the merciful God revealed concerning him that corrupted a maid, that it was not lawful for him to put her away in his whole life ([Deut 22:29](#)), you are thence taught concerning the matter propounded, that it is not lawful to put her away, if he shall not find filthiness in his wife."

With the like honesty have some commented upon those words cited out of the prophet, *For he hateth putting away*. "R. Jochanan saith, The putting away of a wife is odious." Which others also have granted, indeed, of the first wife, but not of those that a man took

to himself over and above. For this is approved among them for a canon, "Let no man put away his first wife unless for adultery." And "R. Eliezer saith, For the divorcing of the first wife, even the altar itself sheds tears." Which Gloss they fetch from thence, where it is said, "Let no man deal treacherously towards the wife of his youth"; [Malachi 2:15](#).

The Jews used polygamy, and the divorcing of their wives, with one and the same license: and this, that they might have change, and all for the sake of lust. "It is lawful (say they) to have many wives together, even as many as you will: but our wise men have decreed, That no man have above four wives." But they restrained this, not so much out of some principles of chastity, as that lest a man, being burdened with many wives, might not be able to afford them food and clothing, and due benevolence: for thus they comment concerning this bridle of polygamy.

For what causes they put away their wives there is no need to inquire; for this they did for any cause of their own free will.

I. "It is commanded to divorce a wife that is not of good behavior, and who is not modest as becomes a daughter of Israel." So they speak in Maimonides and Gittin in the place above specified: where this also is added in the Gemarists: "R. Meir saith, As men have their pleasures concerning their meat and their drink, so also concerning their wives. This man takes out a fly found in his cup, and yet will not drink: after such a manner did Papus Ben Judah carry himself: who, as often as he went forth, bolted the doors and shut in his wife. Another takes out a fly found in his cup, and drinks up his cup; that he doth, who sees his wife talking freely with her neighbours and kinsfolk, and yet allows of it. And there is another, who, if he find a fly in his basket, eats it: and this is the part of an evil man, who sees his wife going out, without a veil upon her head, and with a bare neck, and sees her washing in the baths, where men are wont to wash, and yet cares not for it; whereas by the law he is bound to put her away."

II. "If any man hate his wife, let him put her away": excepting only that wife that he first married. In like manner, R. Judah thus interprets that of the prophet, *If he hate her, let him put her away*. Which sense some versions, dangerously enough, have followed. R. Solomon expresses the sense of that place thus: "It is commanded to put away one's wife, if she obtain not favour in the eyes of her husband."

III. "The school of Hillel saith, If the wife cook her husband's food illy, by over-salting or over-roasting it, she is to be put away."

IV. Yea, "If, by any stroke from the hand of God, she become dumb or sottish," &c.

V. But not to relate all the things for which they pronounce a wife to be divorced (among which they produce some things that modesty allows not to be repeated), let it be enough to mention that of R. Akibah instead of all: "R. Akibah said, If any man sees a woman handsomer than his own wife, he may put her away; because it is said, 'If she find not favour in his eyes.'"

[*Bill of divorce.*] And, *A bill of divorce*, [Matthew 19:7](#); and in the Septuagint, [Deuteronomy 24:1](#). Of which Beza thus; "This bill may seem to be called a bill of divorce [as much as, *departing away*], not in respect of the wife put away, as of the husband departing away from his wife." Something hard, and diametrically contrary to the canonical doctrine of the Jews: for thus they write, "It is written in the bill, Behold, thou art put away; Behold, thou art thrust away, &c. But if he writes, I am not thy husband, or, I am not thy spouse, &c.; it is not a just bill: for it is said, He shall put *her* away, not, He shall put *himself* away."

This bill is called by the Jews *a bill of cutting off*, and *a bill of expulsion*, and *an instrument*, and *an instrument of dismissal*, and *letters of forsaking*, &c.

I. A wife might not be put away, unless a bill of divorce were given. "Therefore it is called (saith Baal Turim) *A bill of cutting off*, because there is nothing else that cuts her off from the husband. For although a wife were obtained three ways" [of which see the Talmud], "yet there was no other way of dismissing her, besides a bill of divorce."

II. "A wife was not put away, unless the husband were freely willing; for if he were unwilling, it was not a divorce: but whether the wife were willing or unwilling, she was to be divorced, if her husband would."

III. "*A bill of divorce* was written in twelve lines, neither more nor less." R. Mordecai gives the reason of this number, in these words; "Let him that writes a *bill of divorce* comprise it in twelve lines, according to the value of the number of the letters in the word *Get*. But Rabh Saadias interprets, that the *bill of divorce* should be written with the same number of lines wherein the books of the law are separated. For four lines come between the Book of Genesis and the Book of Exodus; four between the Book of Exodus and the Book of Leviticus; four between the Book of Leviticus and the Book of Numbers. But the four between the Book of Numbers and Deuteronomy are not reckoned, because that book is only a repetition of the law," &c.

IV. You have the copy of a bill of divorce in Alphesius upon *Gittin*, in this form:

A Bill of Divorce

"On the day of the week N., of the month of N., of the year of the world's creation N., according to the computation by which we are wont to reckon in the province N.; I, N., the son of N., and by what name soever I am called, of the city N., with the greatest consent of my mind, and without any compulsion urging me, have put away, dismissed, and expelled thee; thee, I say, N., the daughter of N., by what name soever thou art called, of the city N., who heretofore wert my wife. But now I have dismissed thee,--thee, I say, N., the daughter of N., by what name soever thou art called, of the city N. So that thou art free, and in thine own power to marry whosoever shall please thee; and let no man hinder thee, from this day forward even for ever. Thou art free, therefore, for any man. And let this be to thee a bill of rejection from me, letters of divorce, and a schedule of expulsion, according to the law of Moses and Israel.

REUBEN the son of Jacob witness.

ELIEZER the son of Gilead witness."

See also this form varied in some few words in Maimonides (Gerushin).

V. This bill, being confirmed with the husband's seal, and the subscription of witnesses, was to be delivered into the hand of the wife, either by the husband himself, or by some other deputed by him for this office: or the wife might depute somebody to receive it in her stead.

VI. It was not to be delivered to the wife, but in the presence of two, who might read the bill both before it was given into the hand of the wife and after: and when it was given, the husband, if present, said thus, "Behold, this is a bill of divorce to you."

VII. The wife, thus dismissed, might, if she pleased, bring this bill to the Sanhedrim, where it was enrolled among the records, if she desired it, in memory of the thing. The dismissed person likewise might marry whom she would: if the husband had not put some stop in the bill, by some clause forbidding it.

32. But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

[*Whosoever shall put away his wife, &c.*] I. Our Saviour does not abrogate Moses' permission of divorces, but tolerates it, yet keeping it within the Mosaic bounds, that is, in the case of adultery, condemning that liberty in the Jewish canons, which allowed it for any cause.

II. Divorce was not commanded in the case of adultery, but permitted. Israelites were compelled, sometimes even by whipping, to put away their wives, as appears in Maimonides

(Gerushin). But our Saviour, even in the case of adultery, does not impose a compulsion to divorce, but indulgeth a license to do it.

III. "He that puts away his wife without the cause of fornication makes her commit adultery": that is, if she commits adultery: or although she commit not adultery in act, yet he is guilty of all the lustful motions of her that is put away; for he that lustfully desires, is said "to commit adultery," verse 28.

33. Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

[*It hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, &c.*] The law forbids perjury, [Leviticus 19:12](#), &c. To which the Fathers of the Traditions reduced the whole sin of swearing, little caring for a rash oath. In this chapter of oaths they doubly sinned:

I. That they were nothing at all solicitous about an oath, so that what was sworn were not false. They do but little trouble themselves, what, how, how often, how rashly, you swear, so that what you swear be true.

In the Talmudic tract *Shevuoth*, and in like manner in Maimonides, oaths are distributed into these four ranks:

First, *A promissory oath*: when a man swore that he would do, or not do, this or that, &c. And this was one of the *twofold oaths, which were also fourfold*; that is, a negative or affirmative oath; and again, a negative or affirmative oath concerning something past, or a negative or affirmative oath concerning something to come: namely, when any one swears that he hath done this or that, or not done it; or that he will do this or that, or that he will not do it. "Whosoever, therefore, swears any of these four ways, and the thing is not as he swears, (for example, that he hath not cast a stone into the sea, when he hath cast it; that he hath cast it, when he hath not; that he will not eat, and yet eats; that he will eat, and yet eateth not,) behold, this is a false oath, or perjury."

"Whosoever swears that he will not eat, and yet eats some things which are not sufficiently fit to be eaten, this man is not guilty."

Secondly, *A vain or a rash oath*. This also is fourfold, but not in the same manner as the former: 1. When they asserted that with an oath which was contrary to most known truth; as, "If he should swear a man were a woman, a stone-pillar to be a pillar of gold," &c.; or when any swore that was or was not, which was altogether impossible; as, "that he saw a camel flying in the air." 2. When one asserted that by an oath, concerning which there was no reason that any should doubt. For example, that "Heaven is heaven, a stone is a stone," &c. 3. When a man swore that he would do that which was altogether impossible; namely, "that he would not sleep for three days and three nights; that he would taste nothing for a full week," &c. 4. When any swore that he would abstain from that which was commanded; as, "that he would not wear phylacteries," &c. These very examples are brought in the places alleged.

Thirdly, *An oath concerning something left in trust*: namely, when any swore concerning something left in trust with him, that it was stolen or broke or lost, and not embezzled by him, &c.

Fourthly, *A testimonial oath*, before a judge or magistrate.

In three of these kinds of swearing, care is taken only concerning the truth of the thing sworn, not of the vanity of swearing.

They seemed, indeed, to make some provision against a vain and rash oath: namely, 1. That he be beaten, who so swears, and become cursed: which Maimonides hints in the twelfth chapter of the tract alleged: with whom the Jerusalem Gemarists do agree; "He that swears two is two, let him be beaten for his vain oath." 2. They also added terror to it from fearful examples, such as that is in the very same place. "*There were twenty-four assemblies in the south*, and they were all destroyed for a vain oath." And in the same tract, a woman buried her son for an oath, &c. Yet they concluded vain oaths in so narrow a circle, that a man might swear a hundred thousand times, and yet not come within the limits of the caution concerning vain swearing.

II. It was customary and usual among them to swear by the creatures; "If any swear by heaven, by earth, by the sun, &c. although the mind of the swearer be under these words to swear by Him who created them, yet this is not an oath. Or if any swear by some of the prophets, or by some of the books of the Scripture, although the sense of the swearer be to swear by Him that sent that prophet, or that gave that book, nevertheless this is not an oath."

"If any adjure another by heaven or earth, he is not guilty."

They swore by Heaven. *By Heaven so it is.*

They swore by the Temple. "When turtles and young pigeons were sometimes sold at Jerusalem for a penny of gold, Rabban Simeon Ben Gamaliel said, *By this habitation* [that is, *by this Temple*] I will not rest this night, unless they be sold for a penny of silver."

"R. Zechariah Ben Ketsab said, *By this Temple*, the hand of the woman departed not out of my hand." "R. Jochanan said, *By the Temple* it is in our hand," &c.

"Bava Ben Buta swore by the Temple in the end of the tract Cherithuth, and Rabban Simeon Ben Gamaliel in the beginning; *And so was the custom in Israel.*" Note this, "so was the custom."

They swore by the city Jerusalem. "R. Judah saith, He that saith, 'By Jerusalem,' saith nothing, unless with an intent purpose he shall vow towards Jerusalem." Where, also, after two lines coming between those forms of swearing and vowing are added, "*Jerusalem, for Jerusalem, by Jerusalem. The Temple, for the Temple, by the Temple.* The altar, for the altar, by the altar. The lamb, for the lamb, by the lamb. The chambers of the Temple, for the chambers of the Temple, by the chambers of the Temple. The wood, for the wood, by the wood. The sacrifices on fire, for the sacrifices on fire, by the sacrifices on fire. The dishes, for the dishes, by the dishes. By all these things, that I will do this to you."

They swore by their own heads. "One is bound to swear to his neighbour, and he saith, *Vow (or swear) to me by the life of thy head,*" &c.

34. But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

[*Swear not at all.*] In the tract *Demai* are some rules prescribed to a religious man: among others, *That he be not too much in swearing and laughing.* Where the Gloss of R. Solomon is this; "means this, Be not *much in oaths*, although one should swear concerning things that are true: for in much swearing it is impossible not to profane." Our Saviour, with good reason, binds his followers with a straiter bond, permitting no place at all for a voluntary and arbitrary oath. The sense of these words goes in the middle way, between the Jew, who allowed some place for an arbitrary oath; and the Anabaptist, who allows none for a necessary one.

36. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

[*Thou canst not make one hair white or black.*] That is, Thou canst not put on gray hairs, or lay them aside.

37. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

[*Let your communication be, Yea, yea; nay, nay.*] In Hebrew, *Giving and receiving* [that is, *business*] among the disciples of the wise men, *Let it be in truth and faith, by saying, Yes, yes; No, no:* or, according to the very words, *concerning Yes, yes; concerning No, no.*

"If it be said to a lunatic, Shall we write a bill of divorce for your wife? and he nod with his head, they try thrice; and if he answer *to No, no; and to Yes, yes;* they write it, and give it to his wife."

38. Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.

[*Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, &c.*] This law he also cites, as clothed in the Gloss of the scribes, and now received in the Jewish schools. But they resolved the law not into a just retaliation, but into a pecuniary compensation.

"Does any cut off the hand or foot of his neighbour? They value this according to the example of selling a servant; computing at what price he would be sold before he was maimed, and for how much less now he is maimed. And how much of the price is diminished, so much is to be paid to the maimed person, as it is said, 'An eye for an eye,' &c. We have received by tradition, that this is to be understood of pecuniary satisfaction. But whereas it is said in the law, 'If a man cause a blemish in his neighbour, the same shall be done to him' [[Lev 24:19](#)]; it means not that he should be maimed, as he hath maimed another; but when he deserveth maiming, he deserveth to pay the damage to the person maimed." They seemed,

out of very great charity, to soften that severe law to themselves, when, nevertheless, in the mean time, little care was taken of lively charity, and of the forgiving an offence,--an open door being still left them to exaction and revenge, which will appear in what follows.

39. But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

[*Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek.*] That the doctrine of Christ may here more clearly shine out, let the Jewish doctrine be set against it; to which he opposeth his.

"Does any one give his neighbour a box on the ear? let him give him a shilling. R. Judah in the name of R. Josi of Galilee saith, Let him give him a pound."

"*Does he give him a blow upon the cheek? Let him give him two hundred zuzes: if with the other hand, let him give four hundred.*" Compare with this passage verse 39: 'If any shall strike thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.'

"*Does he twitch him by the ear; or does he pull off his hair; or does he spit, so that his spittle falls upon him; or does he take away his coat*" [note this also, and compare verse 40 with it, 'He that will take away thy coat,' &c.]; "*or does he uncover a woman's head in public? Let him give four hundred zuzes.*"

They fetch the reason of so severe a mulct chiefly from the shame done him that is thus injured, and from the disgrace of the thing itself; and, moreover, from the dignity of an Israelite: which is declared at large by the Gemarists upon the words cited, and by Maimonides.

"Those mulcts [say they] are established and inflicted *according to the dignity* of the person injured. But R. Akibah said, 'Even the poorest Israelites are to be esteemed as though they were persons of quality divested of their estates, because they are the sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.'"

Hence the entrance to our Saviour's doctrine lies easy: 1. He cites the law of retaliation, that, by laying one against the other, Christian charity and forgiveness might shine the clearer. 2. He mentions these particulars which seemed to be the most unworthy, and not to be borne by the high quality of a Jew, that he might the more preach up evangelical humility, and patience, and self-denial. But why was the law of retaliation given, if at last it is melted down into this? On the same reason as the law of death was given concerning adultery, namely, for terror, and to demonstrate what the sin was. Both were to be softened by charity; this by forgiveness, that by a bill of divorce: or, if the husband so pleased, by forgiveness also.

40. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

[*And if any will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, &c.*] Coat, that is, *Talith*. So in the words of the Talmud alleged, *he takes his coat* Of this garment, thus the Rauch; *Talith*

is a cloak: and why is it called Talith? Because it is above all the garments; that is, because it is the outermost garment.

In this upper garment were woven those fringes that were to put them in mind of the law, of which there is mention [Numbers 15:38](#). Hence is that, *He that takes care of his skirts deserves a good coat*. Hereupon the disgrace was increased together with the wrong, when that was taken away, concerning which they did not a little boast, nay, and in which they placed no small religion: [Matthew 23:5](#), *an upper and an inward garment...* "If any give a poor man a penny to buy an inward garment, let him not buy a coat, nor an upper garment." *He lends him an inner garment and a coat.*

41. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

[*And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, &c.*] To him that had some corporeal wrong done him were these five mulcts to be paid, according to the reason and quality of the wrong: A mulct for *maiming*, if so be the party were maimed: a mulct for *pain*, caused by the blow or wound given: a mulct for the *cure* of the wound or blow; a mulct for the *reproach* brought upon him: and a mulct for *ceasing*, when, being wounded or beaten, he kept his bed, and could not follow his business.

To the first, the first words of our Saviour, *That ye resist not evil*, seem to relate: Do not so resist or rise up against an injurious person, as to require the law of retaliation against him. The second and fourth, the words following seem to respect, viz. '*Whosoever smiteth thee*, so that it cause pain and shame': and those words also, '*Him that will take away thy coat*.' To the last do these words under our hand refer, and to the second certainly, if "some intolerable kind of service be propounded," which the famous Beza asserts.

The word very usual among the Talmudists, whereby they denote accompanying him that goes elsewhere, out of honour and respect, reaches not the sense of the word *compel*, but is too soft and low for it. It is reckoned for a duty to accompany a dead corpse to the grave, and a Rabbin departing somewhere. Hence is that story, "Germani, the servant of R. Judah Nasi, willing to *conduct* R. Illa going away, met a mad dog," &c. The footsteps of this civility we meet with among the Christians, [Titus 3:13](#); John, [Ep. 3](#) verse 6; they were marks of respect, love, and reverence: but that which was required by the Jewish masters, out of arrogance and a supercilious authority, was to be done to a Rabbin, as a Rabbin.

But to *compel* to go a mile, sounds harsher, and speaks not so much an impulse of duty, as a compulsion of violence: and the Talmudists retain that very word *Angaria*, and do show, by examples not a few, what it means. "It is reported of R. Eliazar Ben Harsum, that his father bequeathed him a thousand cities on the dry land, and a thousand ships on the sea: but yet he, every day carrying along with him a bottle of meal on his shoulder, travelled from city to city, and from country to country, to learn the law. On a certain day his servants met him, and *angariate, compel him*. He saith to them, 'I beseech you, dismiss me, that I may go and learn the law.' They say to him, 'By the life of R. Eliazar Ben Harsum, we will

not dismiss you," &c. Where the Gloss is, "*Angariah is the service of the governor of the city; and he was here to serve himself [for he was the lord of the city]. But they knew him not, but thought him to belong to one of those his cities: for its was incumbent on them to attend on their master.*"

Again; "R. Eliezer saith, 'Why was Abraham our father punished, and why were his sons afflicted in Egypt two hundred and ten years?' *Because he 'angariavit,' 'compelled' the disciples of the wise men to go with him: as it is said he armed his catechumens, or his trained, or instructed,*" [Genesis 14:14](#).

The same almost is said of King Asa: "Rabba asked, Why was Asa punished [*with the gout*]? *Because he compelled the disciples of the wise men to go along with him: as it is said, 'And Asa gathered together all Judah, none excepted,'*" &c., [1 Kings 15:22](#).

We meet with mention also of *angariating* cattle; "An ass is hired for a hilly journey; but he that hireth him travels in the valley: although both be of the like distance, that is, ten miles, if an ass dies, he who hired him is guilty, &c. But *if the ass were angariated*, the hirer saith to the owner, *Behold, take your beast to yourself,*" &c. The Gooss is, "*If he were angariated*, that is, if they take him for some work of the king," &c.

You see, then, whither the exhortation of our Saviour tends: 1. To patience under an open injury, and for which there is no pretence, verse 39. 2. Under an injury, for which some right and equity in law is pretended, verse 40. 3. Under an injury, compulsion, or violence, patronized by the authority of a king, or of those that are above us.

43. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

[*Thou shalt hate thine enemy.*] Here those poisonous canons might be produced, whereby they are trained up in eternal hatred against the Gentiles, and against Israelites themselves, who do not, in every respect, walk with them in the same traditions and rites. Let this one example be instead of very many, which are to be met with everywhere: "The heretical Israelites, that is, they of Israel that worship idols, or who transgress, to provoke God: also Epicurean Israelites, that is, Israelites who deny the law and the prophets, are by precept to be slain, if any can slay them, and that openly; but if not openly, you may compass their death secretly, and by subtilty." And a little after (O! the extreme charity of the Jews towards the Gentiles); "But as to the Gentiles, with whom we have no war, and likewise to the shepherds of smaller cattle, and others of that sort, they do not so plot their death; but it is forbidden them to deliver them from death if they are in danger of it." For instance; "A Jew sees one of them fallen into the sea; let him by no means lift him out thence: for it is written, 'Thou shalt not rise up against the blood of thy neighbour': but this is not thy neighbour." And further; "An Israelite, who alone sees another Israelite transgressing, and admonisheth him, if he repents not, is bound to hate him."

46. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

[*Do not even the publicans the same?*] How odious the publicans were to the Jewish nation, especially those that were sprung of that nation, and how they reckoned them the very worst of all mankind, appears many ways in the evangelists; and the very same is their character in their own writers.

"It is not lawful to use the riches of such men, of whom it is presumed that they were thieves; and of whom it is presumed that all their wealth was gotten by rapine; and that all their business was the business of extortioners, such as publicans and robbers are; nor is their money to be mingled with thine, because it is presumed to have been gotten by rapine."

Among those who were neither fit to judge, nor to give a testimony in judgment, are numbered *the collectors of taxes, and the publicans*.

Publicans are joined with cut-throats and robbers. "*They swear to cut-throats, to robbers and to publicans [invading their goods], This is an offering, &c. He is known by his companion.*"

They were marked with such reproach, and that not without good reason; partly by reason of their rapine, partly, that to the burden laid upon the nation they themselves added another burden.

"When are publicans to be reckoned for thieves? when he is a Gentile; or when of himself he takes that office upon him; or when, being deputed by the king, he doth not exact the set sum, but exacts according to his own will." Therefore the father of R. Zeira is to be reputed for a rare person, who, being a publican for thirteen years, did not make the burdens of the taxes heavier, but rather eased them.

"When the king laid a tax, to be exacted of the Jews, of each according to his estate, these publicans, being deputed to proportion the thing, became respecters of persons, burdening some and indulging others, and so became plunderers."

By how much the more grievous the heathen yoke was to the Jewish people, boasting themselves a free nation, so much the more hateful to them was this kind of men; who, though sprung of Jewish blood, yet rendered their yoke much more heavy by these rapines.

1. Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

[*Take heed, that ye do not your alms, &c.*] It is questioned, whether Matthew writ *alms*, or *righteousness*. I answer;

I. That our Saviour certainly said *righteousness*...I make no doubt at all; but that that word could not be otherwise understood by the common people than of *alms*, there is as little doubt to be made. For although the word *righteousness*, according to the idiom of the Old Testament, signifies nothing else than *righteousness*; yet now, when our Saviour spoke those words, it signified nothing so much as *alms*.

II. Christ used also the same word *righteousness* in the three verses next following, and Matthew used the word *alms*: but by what right, I beseech you, should he call it *righteousness*, in the first verse, and *alms* in the following,--when Christ every where used one and the same word? Matthew might not change in Greek, where our Saviour had not changed in Syriac.

Therefore we must say, that the Lord Jesus used the word *righteousness* in these four first verses: but that, speaking in the dialect of common people, he was understood by the common people to speak of *alms*.

Now they called *alms* by the name of *righteousness*, in that the Fathers of the Traditions taught, and the common people believed, that *alms* conferred very much to *justification*. Hear the Jewish chair in this matter:

"For one farthing, given to a poor man in alms, a man is made partaker of the beatifical vision." Where it renders these words [[Psa 17:15](#)] 'I shall behold thy face in *righteousness*,' after this manner; 'I shall behold thy face *because of alms*.'

One saith, "This money goes for *alms*, that my sons may live, and that I may obtain the world to come."

"A man's table now expiates by *alms*, as heretofore the altar did by sacrifice."

"If you afford *alms* out of your purse, God will keep you from all damage and harm."

"Monobazes the king bestowed his goods liberally upon the poor, and had these words spoke to him by his kinsmen and friends, 'Your ancestors increased both their own riches and those that were left them by their fathers; but you waste both your own and those of your ancestors.' To whom he answered, 'My fathers laid up their wealth on earth; I lay up mine in heaven; as it is written, *Truth shall flourish out of the earth, but righteousness shall look down from heaven*. My fathers laid up treasure that bears no fruit; but I lay up such as bear fruit; as it is said, *It shall be well with the just, for they shall be at the fruit of their works*. My fathers treasured up where power was in their hands; but I where it is not; as it is said, *Justice and judgment is the habitation of his throne*. My fathers heaped up for others; I for myself; as it is said, *And this shall be to thee for righteousness*. They scraped together for this

world; I for the world to come; as it is said, *Righteousness shall deliver from death.*" These things are also recited in the Babylonian Talmud.

You see plainly in what sense he understands *righteousness*, namely, in the sense of *alms*: and that sense not so much framed in his own imagination, as in that of the whole nation, and which the royal catechumen had imbibed from the Pharisees his teachers.

Behold the justifying and saving virtue of *alms* from the very work done, according to the doctrine of the Pharisaical chair. And hence the opinion of this efficacy of *alms* so far prevailed with the deceived people, that they pointed out alms by no other name (confined within one single word) than *righteousness*. Perhaps those words of our Saviour are spoken in derision of this doctrine; "Yea, give those things which ye have in alms, and behold all things shall be clean to you," [Luke 11:41](#). With good reason, indeed, exhorting them to give *alms*, but yet withal striking at the covetousness of the Pharisees, and confuting their vain opinion of being clean by the washing of their hands, from their own opinion of the efficacy of alms. As if he had said, "Ye assert that *alms* justifies and saves; and therefore ye call it by the name of *righteousness*: why, therefore, do ye affect cleanness by the washing of hands, and not rather by the performance of charity?" See the praises of *alms*, somewhat too high for it, in the Talmud.

"R. Jannai saw one giving money openly to a poor man; to whom he said, It is better you had not given at all, than so to have given."

[*Otherwise ye have no reward.*] He therefore seems the rather to speak of a reward, because they expected a reward for their alms-doing without all doubt; and that, as we said, for the mere work done.

"R. Lazar was the almoner of the synagogue. One day going into his house, he said, 'What news?' They answered, 'Some came hither, and ate and drank, and made prayers for thee.' 'Then,' saith he, 'there is no good reward.' Another time going into his house, he said, 'What news?' It was answered, 'Some others came, and ate and drank, and railed upon you.' 'Now,' saith he, 'there will be a good reward.'"

2. Therefore when thou doest *thine* alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

[*Do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues, and in the streets.*] It is a just scruple, whether this sounding a trumpet be to be understood according to the letter, or in a borrowed sense. I have not found, although I have sought for it much and seriously, even the least mention of a trumpet in almsgiving. I would most willingly be taught this from the more learned.

[Please see Court of the Women for Alfred Edersheim's explanation of these trumpets in his book "The Temple: Its Ministry and Services."]

You may divide the ordinary alms of the Jews into three parts:

I. *The alms'-dish*. They gave alms to the public dish or basket: *Tamchui* (according to the definition of the author of Aruch, and that out of Bava Bathra in the place lately cited) was a certain vessel, in which bread and food was gathered *for the poor of the world*. You may not improperly call it *the alms-basket*; he calls it *a dish*. By *the poor of the world* are to be understood any *beggars*, begging from door to door; yea, even heathen beggars. Hence the Jerusalem Talmud in the place above quoted, *The alms-dish was for every man*. And the Aruch moreover, *This alms was gathered daily by three men, and distributed by three*. It was gathered of the townsmen by collectors within their doors; which appears by that caution; *The collection of alms may not separate themselves one from another, unless that one may go by himself to the gate, and another to the shop*. That is, as the Gloss explains it, they might not gather this alms separately and by themselves; that no suspicion might arise, that they privily converted what was given to their own use and benefit. This only was allowed them; when they went to the gate, one might betake himself to the gate, and another to a shop near it, to ask of the dwellers in both places: yet with this proviso, that withal both were within sight of one another. So that at each door it might be seen that this alms was received by the collectors. And here was no probability at all of a trumpet, when this alms was of the lowest degree, being to be bestowed upon vagabond strangers, and they very often heathen.

II. *The poor's-chest*. They gave alms also in the public poor's-box: which was to be distributed to the poor only of that city. *The alms'-dish is for the poor of the world, but the alms'-chest for the poor only of that city*. This was collected of the townsmen by two *Parnasin*, of whom before, to whom also a third was added, for the distributing it. The Babylonian Gemarists give a reason of the number, not unworthy to be marked: "A tradition of the Rabbins. *The alms'-chest is gathered by two, and distributed by three*. It is gathered by two, *because they do not constitute a superior office in the synagogue less than of two, and it is distributed by three, as pecuniary judgments are transacted by three*."

This alms was collected in the synagogue, on the sabbath (compare [1 Corinthians 16:2](#)), and it was distributed to the poor on the sabbath-eve. Hence is that, "*The alms'-chest is from the sabbath-eve to the sabbath-eve*; the alms'-dish, every day."

Whether, therefore, the trumpet sounded in the synagogue when alms were done, it again remains obscure, since the Jewish canonists do not openly mention it, while yet they treat of these alms very largely. Indeed, every synagogue had its trumpet. For,

1. They sounded with the trumpet in every city in which was a judiciary bench, at the coming in of the new year. But this was not used but after the destruction of the Temple.

2. They sounded with the trumpet when any was excommunicated. Hence among the utensils of a judge is numbered a trumpet. For *the instruments of judges*, as appears there, were *a rod, a whip, a trumpet, and a sandal*. "*A trumpet (saith the Gloss) for excommunication and anathematizing*: and a sandal for the taking off of the shoe of the husband's brother."

And in the same place mention is made of the excommunicating of Jesus, four hundred trumpets being brought for that business.

3. The trumpet sounded six times at the coming in of every sabbath: that from thence, by that sign given, all people should cease from servile works. Of this matter discourse is had in the Babylonian Talmud, in the tract of the Sabbath.

Thus, there was a trumpet in every synagogue; but whether it were used while alms were done, I still inquire. That comes into my mind, "*The collectors of alms do not proclaim on a feast-day, as they proclaim on a common day: but collect it privately, and put it up in their bosom.*" But whether this proclamation did publish what was giving by every one, or did admonish of not giving any thing, but what might rightly be given; let the more learned judge by looking upon the place.

III. They gave alms also out of the field, and that was especially fourfold: 1. The corner of the field not reaped. 2. Sheaves left in the field, either by forgetfulness, or voluntarily. 3. The gleanings of the vintage; of which see [Leviticus 19:9,10](#), [Deuteronomy 24:19](#). And, 4. *The poor's tenth*; of which the Talmudists largely in the tracts, Peah, Demai, and Maaseroth. To the gathering of these, the poor were called, "*By three manifestations in the day; namely, in the morning, and at noon, and at Minchah,*" or '*the evening.*' That is, the owner of the field openly shewed himself three times in the day, for this end, that then the poor should come and gather: in the morning, for the sake of nurses; because, in the mean time, while their young children slept, they might the more freely go forth for this purpose: at noon, for the sake of children, who also at that time were prepared to gather: at *Minchah*, for the sake of old men. So the Jerusalem Gemarists, and the Glossers upon the Babylonian Talmud.

There were the ordinary alms of the Jewish people: in the doing which, seeing as yet I cannot find so much as the least sound of a trumpet in their writers, I guess that either our Saviour here spoke metaphorically; or, if there were any trumpet used, that it was used in peculiar and extraordinary alms.

The Jews did very highly approve of alms done secretly; hence *the treasury of the silent* was of famed memory in the Temple; whither "some very religious men brought their alms in silence and privacy, when the poor children of good men were maintained." And hence is that proverb, *He that doth alms in secret is greater than our master Moses himself.* And yet they laboured under such an itch to make their alms public, lest they should not be seen by men, that they did them not without a trumpet; or, which was as good as a trumpet, with a proud desire of making them known: that they might the more be pointed at with the finger, and that it might be said of them, 'These are the men.'

3. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

[*Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth.*] He seems to speak according to the custom used in some other things; for in some actions, which pertained to religion, they admitted not the left hand to meet with the right. "The cup of wine which was used to

sanctify the coming in of the sabbath, was to be taken with the right hand, without the assistance of the left." "Let not man receive into a vessel the blood of the sacrifice, bring it to the altar, or sprinkle it with his left hand." And in the same tract, it is related of Shammai, that he would feed himself only with one hand.

5. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

[*They love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corner of the streets.*] 1. They prayed standing, [Luke 18:11,13](#), [Mark 11:25](#). "It is written, 'And Abraham rose early in the morning at the place where he had stood before the Lord.' *But to stand was nothing else than to pray*: as it is said, *And Phineas stood and judged.*"

"One entereth into the synagogue, *and found them standing in prayer.*" "Let scholar of the wise men look downwards, *when he stands praying.*" And to name no more, the same Maimonides asserts these things are required in prayer; that he that prayeth, *stand*; that he turn his face towards Jerusalem; that he cover his head; and that he fix his eyes downwards.

II. They loved to *pray in the synagogues*. "He goes to the synagogue to pray."

"Why do they recite their phylacteries in the synagogue, when they are not bound to do it? R. Josi saith, They do not recite them in the synagogue for that end, that so the whole office of the phylacteries may be performed, but to persevere in prayer. For this recitation was to be said over again, when they came home."

Rabbenu Asher hath these words: "When any returns home in the evening from the field, let him not say, 'I will go into my house'; but first let him betake himself to the synagogue: and if he can read, let him read something; if he can recite the traditions, let him recite them. And then let him say over the phylacteries, and pray."

But that we be not too tedious, even from this very opinion, they were wont to betake themselves to the synagogues, because they were persuaded that the prayers of the synagogue were certainly heard.

III. They prayed in the streets. So Maimonides; "They prayed in the streets on the feasts and public fasts." "What are the rites of the fasts? They brought out the ark into the streets of the city, and sprinkled ashes upon the ark, and upon the head of the president of the Sanhedrim, and the vice-president; and every one put ashes upon his own head. One of the elders makes this exhortation; 'It is not said, O brethren, of the Ninevites, that God saw their sackcloth, or their fastings; but, that he saw their works,' &c. They stand praying, and they set some fit elder before the ark, and he prays four-and-twenty prayers before them."

But doth our Saviour condemn all prayers in the synagogue? By no means. For he himself prayed in and with the synagogue. Nor did he barely reprove those public prayers in the streets, made by the whole multitude in those great solemnities, but prayers everywhere, both in the synagogues, and the streets, that were made privately, but yet publicly also, and

in the sight of all, that thereby he that prayed might get some name and reputation from those that saw him.

I. While public prayers were uttered in the synagogue, it was customary also for those that hunted after vainglory, to mutter private prayers, and such as were different from those of the synagogue, whereby the eyes of all might be the more fixed upon him that prayed.

"Hath not a man prayed his morning prayers? When he goes into the synagogue, does he find them praying the additional prayer? If he is sure he shall begin and end, so that he may answer 'Amen' after the angel of the church, let him say his prayers."

II. They prayed also by themselves in the streets. "R. Jochanan said, I saw R. Jannai standing and praying in the streets of Tsippor, and going four cubits, and then praying the additional prayer."

Two things especially shew their hypocrisy here:

1. That so much provision is made concerning reciting the phylacteries, and the prayers added (that it might be done within the just time), that wheresoever a man had been, when the set time was come, he presently betakes himself to prayers: "A workman, or he that is upon the top of a tree, he that rides on an ass, must immediately come down, and say his prayers," &c. These are the very instances that the canonists give, which, with more of them, you may find in the tract Beracoth. Hence, therefore, those vainglorious hypocrites got an occasion of boasting themselves. For the hour of the phylacterical prayers being come, their care and endeavour was, to be taken in the streets: whereby the canonical hour compelling them to their prayers in that place, they might be the more seen by all persons, and that the ordinary people might admire and applaud both their zeal and religion. To which hypocritical pride they often added this also, that they used very long pauses, both before they began their prayers, and after they had done them: so that very usually, for three hours together, they were seen in a praying habit and posture. See the Babylonian Talmud. So that the Canonists played the madmen with some reason, when they allowed the space, from the rising of the morning to the third hour of the day, for the phylacterical prayers; because those three-hour praying men scarcely despatched them within less space, pausing one hour before they began prayer, and as much after they were ended.

2. They addicted themselves to ejaculations, prayers, and blessings, upon the sight almost of any thing meeting them either in the streets or in the way. "When one saw a place, wherein some miracle was done for Israel; a place, from whence idolatry was rooted out; or a place, where an idol now was, a short prayer was to be used. When any saw a blackamoor, a dwarf, a crooked, a maimed person, &c. they were to bless. Let him that sees a fair tree, or a beautiful face, bless thus, Blessed be He, who created the beauty of the creature," &c.

7. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

[ROSARY, a chaplet of roses or beads used as an aid to memory in the repeating of prayers, as the Paternosters and Ave Marias. There are various patterns in use; one is a rosary of fifty-five beads, fifty small ones for the Ave Marias, separated into groups of ten by five large ones to mark Paternosters. Hindus, Mohammedans, and Buddhists all employ the rosary. The name is also given to a series of prayers ("Rosary of the Blessed Virgin") consisting of fifteen decades, comprising fifteen paternosters and doxologies, and 150 Ave Marias, divided into three parts.--Universal Standard Encyclopedia

ROSARY. Part of the ritual of the Roman Catholic Church is the rosary, fifteen groups or series of prayers, each series consisting of a Paternoster (Lord's Prayer), ten Aves (salutes to the Virgin Mary), and a Gloria. The string of beads used in counting the prayers is also called a rosary. It is symbolic, for the large beads stand for Paternosters (Our Father's) and Glorias, and the small beads for Aves (Hail Mary's), while the crucifix on the pendant symbolized the Apostles' Creed. The groups of beads are "decades"; generally only five decades are said at one time. Instead of a large bead at the end and at the beginning of each decade, only one bead is used to represent the Gloria and the Paternoster. During the telling of the beads in each decade, the worshiper meditates on one of the fifteen mysteries of the life and death of Christ.

In the Greek Church, the monks, and not the lay members of the congregation, recite their prayers with the rosary, which is composed of a hundred beads of equal size. In the Russian Church, the rosary consists of 103 beads which are divided into groups by four larger ones, representing the Evangelists. Rosaries are also used by Buddhists and Mohammedans.--The Wonderland of Knowledge Encyclopedia, 1965]

[*Use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do*] See the civil *battology* [*vain repetitions*] of the heathen in their supplications: "Let the parricide be dragged: we beseech thee. Augustus, let the parricide be dragged. This is the thing we ask, let the parricide be dragged. Hear us, Caesar. Let the false accusers be condemned to the lion. Hear us, Caesar. Let the false accusers be condemned to the lion. Hear us, Caesar," &c.

"Antoninus the pious, the gods keep thee. Antoninus the merciful, the gods keep thee. Antoninus the merciful, the gods keep thee." See also Capitulinus, in the Maximini.

Those words savour of vain repetition in prayer, [1 Kings 18:26](#); "The priest of Baal called upon the name of Baal from morning to noon, saying, O Baal, hear us."

After the same manner almost as the heathen mixed *vain repetitions*, in their prayers, did the Jews in their *using divers words importing the same thing*: not repeating, indeed, the same thing in varied phrases; which appears sufficiently to him that reads their liturgies through, as well the more ancient as those of a later date. And certainly the sin is equally the same in using different words of the same thing, as in a vain repetition of the same words; if so be there were the same deceit and hypocrisy in both; in words only multiplied, but the heart absent.

And in this matter the Jew sinned little less than the heathen. For this was an axiom with them, *Every one that multiplies prayer is heard*. Christ, therefore, does not so much condemn the bare saying over again the same petitions, either in the same words, or in words of the same import (for he himself spake the same things thrice, when he prayed in the garden), as a false opinion, as if there were some power, or zeal, or piety, in such kind of repetitions; and that they would be sooner heard, and more prevail with God. While he strikes the heathen, he strikes the Jews also, who laboured under the same phrensy: but there is mention only of the heathen, partly because this savoured rather of heathen blindness than of the profession of true religion, which the Jews boasted of; partly, and especially, that he might not condemn the public prayers of the Jews without cause, in which they sinned not at all by using synonymous expressions, if it were done out of a pious and sincere heart.

9. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

[*After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father, &c.*] Some things, which seem more difficult about this divine form of prayer, will perhaps pass into a softer sense, if certain things, very usual in the Jewish church and nation, be observed, to which the apostles could not but have regard when they clearly acknowledged here the highest conformity with them. For that it was customary with our Saviour, for the most part, to conform himself to the church and nation, both in religious and civil matters, so they were lawful, most evidently appears also in this form of prayer. Let these things, therefore, be observed:

I. That the stated prayers of the Jews, daily to be said at that time when Christ prescribed this form to his disciples, were eighteen in number, or in a quantity equalling it. Of this number of their prayers, the Gemarists of both Talmuds treat at large. Whom consult.

Whether they were reduced to the precise number of eighteen, in the order that they afterward appeared in while Christ was upon earth, some scruple ariseth from some things which are said by the Babylonian Talmudists in the place alleged: but it might be plainly proved, if there were need, that little, or indeed nothing at all, wanted of the quantity and bulk of such a number. "The Rabbins have a tradition (say they), that Simeon Pekoli reduced into order the eighteen prayers according to their course, before Rabban Gamaliel in Jafne. Rabban Gamaliel said to the wise men, 'Is there any that knows to compose a prayer against the Sadducees?' Samuel the Little stood forth and constituted one," &c. That Rabban Gamaliel,

which is here spoke of, was Paul's master. For, although Rabban Gamaliel (who was commonly styled 'Jafnensis,' *of Jafne*) was the nephew of Paul's master. Gamaliel, and this thing is mentioned to be done in Jafne; yet Paul's master also lived in Jafne: and that this was he of whom is the story before us, sufficiently appears hence, because his business is with Samuel the Little, who certainly died before the destruction of the city.

Under Gamaliel the elder, therefore, were those daily prayers reduced first into that order wherein they were received by the following ages. Which, however it was done after the death of our Saviour, in regard of their reducing into order, yet so many there were in daily use at that time when he conversed on earth. Now he condemned not those prayers altogether, nor esteemed them of no account; yea, on the contrary, he joined himself to the public liturgy in the synagogues, and in the Temple: and when he delivereth this form to his disciples, he extinguisheth not other forms.

II. When all could not readily repeat by heart those numerous prayers, they were reduced into a brief summary, in which the marrow of them all was comprised; and that provision was made for the memory, that they should have a short epitome of those prayers, whom the weakness of their memory, or sometime the unavoidable necessity of business, permitted not to repeat a longer prayer, or to be at leisure to do it. This summary they called *a fountain*. "Rabban Gamaliel saith, 'Let every one pray the eighteen prayers every day.' R. Joshua saith, *Let him pray the summary of those eighteen*. But R. Akibah saith, *If prayer be free in his mouth, let him pray the eighteen; but if not, let him pray the summary of those eighteen*." That our Saviour comprised the sum of all prayers in this form, is known to all Christians; and it is confessed that such is the perfection of this form, that it is the epitome of all things to be prayed for, as the Decalogue is the epitome of all things to be practised.

III. It was very usual with the doctors of the Jews,

1. To compose forms of short prayers, and to deliver them to their scholars (which is asserted also of John, [Luke 11:1](#)); whereof you will find some examples, and they not a few, in the Babylonian Gemara, in the tract Beracoth, and elsewhere. Not that by those forms they banished or destroyed the set and accustomed prayers of the nation; but they superadded their own to them, and suited them to proper and special occasions.

2. To the stated prayers, and others framed by themselves, it was very usual to add some short prayer over and above, which one may not amiss call 'the concluding prayer.' Take these examples of these prayers: "R. *Eliezer, when he had finished his prayers, was wont to say thus, 'Let it be thy good pleasure, O Lord, that love and brotherhood dwell in our portion,*' &c. R. *Jochanan, when he had finished his prayers, was wont to say thus, 'Let it be thy good pleasure, O Lord, to take notice of our reproach, and to look upon our miseries,*" &c. In like manner,

1. Our Saviour, while he delivers this form to his disciples, does not weaken the set forms of the church; nor does he forbid his disciples not to use private prayers: but he delivers this

most exact summary of all prayers, to be added, over and above, to our prayers; his most perfect to our most imperfect.

2. The apostles, sufficiently accustomed to the manners of the nation, could not judge otherwise of this form. In interpreting very many phrases and histories of the New Testament, it is not so much worth, what we think of them from notions of our own, feigned upon I know not what grounds, as in what sense these things were understood by the hearers and lookers on, according to the usual custom and vulgar dialect of the nation. Some inquire by what authority we do subjoin or superadd the Lord's Prayer to ours; and feign arguments to the contrary out of their own brain. But I ask, whether it was possible that the apostles and disciples, who from their very cradles had known and seen such forms instituted for common use, and added moreover to the set prayers and others, should judge otherwise of this form given by our Lord; which bore so great conformity with those, and with the most received rite and custom of the nation?

IV. That church held it for a just canon, and that indeed no discommendable one neither, *He that prays ought always, when he prays, to join with the church*. Which is not strictly to be understood only of his presence in the synagogue (that is elsewhere and otherwise commanded many times over), but wheresoever in the world he be placed, yea, when he is most alone, that he say his prayers in the plural number: for thus the Gloss explains it, *Let none pray the short prayer (that is, one different from the set prayers) in the singular number, but in the plural*. In which number our Saviour teacheth us also to pray in this form; and that upon very good reason, when, in whatsoever solitude or distance we are, yet we ought to acknowledge ourselves joined with the church, and to pray for her happiness as well as for our own.

[*Our Father which art in heaven.*] I. This epithet of God was very well known among the Jews, and very usual with them:

"*Our Father which art in heaven*, deal so with us as thou hast promised by the prophets." And in another place this is thrice recited; "Whom have we whereon to rely, *besides our Father which is in heaven?*" "Blessed are ye, O Israelites; who cleanseth you? Your *Father, who is in heaven.*" "Ye gave not to your *Father, who is in heaven*, but to me the priest."

II. But in what sense did the Jews call God *their Father in heaven*, when they were altogether ignorant of the doctrine and mystery of adoption, besides that adoption whereby God had adopted them for a peculiar people? I answer, For that very cause they were taught by God himself so to call him, [Exodus 4:22](#), [Deuteronomy 32:6](#), &c. Nor was there any among them who not only might not do this, but also who ought not to do it. While the heathen said to his idol, 'Thou art my father,' [Jeremiah 2:27](#), the Israelite was bound to say, *Our Father which art in heaven*, [Isaiah 63:16](#), [64:8](#).

III. When Christ useth this manner of speech so very well known to the nation, does he not use it in a sense that was known to the nation also? Let them answer who would have

the Lord's Prayer to be prayed and said by none but by those who are indeed believers, and who have partook of true adoption. In what sense was our Saviour, when he spake these words, understood of the hearers? They were thoroughly instructed, from their cradles, to call God *the Father in heaven*: they neither hear Christ changing the phrase, nor curtailing any thing from the latitude of the known and used sense. Therefore let them tell me, Did not Peter, John, and the rest of the apostles, think that it was as lawful for all Christians to say to God, *Our Father which art in heaven*, as it was lawful for all Jews? They called God *Father*, because he had called them into the profession of him, because he took care of them, and instructed them, &c. And what, I beseech you, hinders, but all Christians, obtaining the same privileges, may honour God with the same compellation? There is nothing in the words of Christ that hinders, and there is somewhat in the very phrase that permits it.

9,10. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.

[*Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.*] This obtained for an axiom in the Jewish schools; *That prayer, wherein there is not mention of the kingdom of God, is not a prayer.* Where these words are also added: "Abai saith, Like to this is that of Rabh to be reckoned, that it is a tradition *I have not transgressed thy precepts, nor have I forgotten them*" (they are the words of him that offereth the first-fruits, [Deuteronomy 26:13](#)). "I have not transgressed," that is, by not giving thanks: 'And I have not forgotten them'; that is, I have not forgot to commemorate thy *name*, and thy *kingdom*."

[*Thy will be done, as in heaven, &c.*] "What is the short prayer? R. Eliezer saith, *Do thy will in heaven*, and give quietness of spirit to them that fear thee beneath," or in earth.

11. Give us this day our daily bread.

[*Our daily bread.*] That is, provide *to-morrow's bread*, and give it us to-day, that we be not solicitous for to-morrow...

"The necessities of thy people Israel are many, and their knowledge small, so that they know not how to disclose their necessities; let it be thy good pleasure to give to every man *what sufficeth for food*," &c.

13. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

[*Deliver us from evil.*] "Rabbi [*Judah*] was wont thus to pray: 'Let it be thy good pleasure to *deliver* us from impudent men, and impudence; from an evil man, and from an evil chance; from an evil affection, from an evil companion, from an evil neighbour, from Satan the destroyer, from a hard judgment, and from a hard adversary,'" &c.

[*For thine is the kingdom, &c.*] I. In the public service in the Temple, the commemoration of the *kingdom of God* was the respond; instead of which the people answered *Amen*, when the priests ended their prayers. "For *the tradition is, that they answered not 'Amen' in the house of the sanctuary.* What said they then? *Blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom for ever.*" Hence in the tract Joma (where the rubric of the day of Expiation is), after various prayers recited, which, on that day, the high priest makes, is added, "And the people answered, Blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom for ever and ever." See the places of that tract noted in the margin. There a short prayer of the high priest is mentioned, in which he thus concludes; "Be ye clean before Jehovah"; and these words are added, "But the priests and people standing in the court, when they heard *the name Jehovah* pronounced out in its syllable, adoring, and falling prostrate upon their face, they said, *Blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom for ever and ever.*" See also the tract Taanith, where a reason is given of this doxology in the Gloss there.

II. This also they pronounced softly, and in a gentle whisper, while they were reciting the phylacteries. It is said of the men of Jericho, that *they folded up the Schemah.* It is disputed what this means; "And R. Judah saith, That they made some small pause after the reciting of this period, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord': but they said not, 'Blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom for ever and ever.' But by what reason do we say so? R. Simeon Ben Levi explains the mystery, who saith, Our father Jacob called his sons, and said, 'Gather yourselves together, and I will declare unto you.' It was in his mind to reveal to them the end of days, and the Holy Spirit departed from him: he said, therefore, 'Perhaps there is something profane in my bed, (which God forbid!) as it was to Abraham, from whom proceeded Ishmael; and to Isaac, from whom proceeded Esau.' His sons said unto him, 'Hear, Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord'; as, in thy heart, there is but one; so, in our hearts, there is but one. At that time our father Jacob began, and said, *Blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom for ever and ever.* The Rabbins said, What shall we do? Shall we say this doxology? Our master Moses said it not. Shall we not say it? Our father Jacob said it. Therefore it was appointed to say it softly," &c.

You see how very public the use of this doxology was, and how very private too. Being a response, it was pronounced in the Temple by all with a loud voice; being an ejaculation, it was spoken in the phylacterical prayers, by every single man, in a very low voice. And you see how great an agreement it hath with the conclusion of the Lord's prayer, "*For thine is the kingdom,*" &c.

III. As they answered *Amen*, not at all in the public prayers in the Temple, so they seldom joined it to the end of their private prayers. In the synagogue, indeed, the people answered *Amen* to the prayers made by the minister: and also at home, when the master of the family blessed or prayed; but seldom, or indeed never, any one praying privately joined this to the end of his prayers.

And now, to apply those things which have been said to the matter under our hands, consider the following things:

1. That this prayer was twice delivered by our Saviour: first, in this sermon in the mount, when he was not asked; and afterward, when he was asked, almost half a year after, [Luke 11](#).

2. That this conclusion is added in St. Matthew, "For thine is the kingdom," &c.; but in St. Luke it is not. In St. Matthew is added moreover the word *Amen*; but in St. Luke it is wanting. Upon the whole matter, therefore, we infer,

I. That Christ, in exhibiting this form of prayer, followed a very usual rite and custom of the nation.

II. That the disciples also, receiving this form delivered to them, could not but receive it according to the manner and sense of the nation, used in such cases: since he introduced no exception at all from that general rule and custom.

III. That he scarcely could signify his mind, that this prayer should be universally and constantly used, by any marks or signs more clear than those which he made use of. For,

First, He commanded all, without any exception or distinction, "After this manner pray ye"; and, "When ye pray, say, Our Father," &c.

Secondly, As, according to the ordinary custom of the nation, forms of prayer, delivered by the masters to the scholars, were to be used, and were used by them all indifferently, and without distinction of persons; so also he neither suggested any thing concerning this his prayer, either besides the common custom, or contrary to it.

Thirdly, The form itself carries along with it certain characters, both of its public and private and constant use. It may certainly with good reason be asked, Why, since Christ had delivered this prayer in such plain words in his sermon upon the mount, this command moreover being added, "After this manner pray ye," it was desired again, that he would teach them to pray? What! had they forgotten that prayer that was given them there? Were they ignorant that it was given them for a form of prayer, and so to be used? But his seems rather the cause why they desired a second time a form of prayer, namely, because they might reckon that first for a *public* form of prayer; since this might easily be evinced, both by the addition of the conclusion so like the public response in the Temple, and especially by the addition of *Amen* used only in public assemblies: therefore, they beseech him again, that he would teach them to pray privately; and he repeats the same form, but omits the conclusion, and *Amen*, which savoured of public use. Therefore you have in the conclusion a sign of the *public* use, by the agreement of it to the response in the Temple; and of the *private*, by the agreement of it to the ejaculation in the phylacterical prayers. A sign of the public use was in the addition of *Amen*; a sign of the private use was in the absence of it: a sign of both in the conformity of the whole to the custom of the nation. Christ taught his disciples to

pray, as John had taught his, [Luke 11:1](#): John taught his, as the masters among the Jews had theirs, by yielding them a form to be used by all theirs daily, verbatim, and in terms.

16. Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

[*They disfigure their faces.*] That is, they disguised their faces with ashes; as he heretofore upon another cause, [1 Kings 20:38](#): "In the public fasts every one took ashes, and put upon his head. They say of R. Joshua Ben Ananiah, that, all the days of his life, *his face was black by reason of is fastings*. Why is his name called Ashur? ([1 Chron 4:5](#)). *Because his face was black by fastings.*"

Here let that of Seneca come in; "This is against nature, to hate easy cleanliness, and to affect nastiness."

17. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

[*But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, &c.*] For those that fasted neither anointed themselves nor washed. "On the day of Expiation it was forbidden to eat, to drink, to wash, to anoint themselves, to put on their sandals, to lie with their wives. But the king and the bride may wash their faces, and a midwife may put on her sandals." See the Babylonian Gemara here. See also the Babylonian Talmud in the tract Taanith, concerning other fasts, and the fasts of private men.

They were wont to anoint their bodies and heads upon a threefold reason:

I. *For finer dress.* "Anointing is permitted to be used on the sabbath, whether it be for ornament, or not for ornament. On the day of Expiation both are forbidden. On the ninth day of the month Ab, and in the public fasts, anointing for dress is forbid; anointing not for dress is allowed."

II. They *anointed* themselves often, *not for excess, or bravery, or delight*, but for the healing of some disease, or for the health of the body. *He that is troubled with the head-ache, or on whom scabs arise, let him anoint himself with oil.*

"A tradition of the Rabbins. It is forbidden [*in fasts*] to wash a part of the body, as well as the whole body. But if it be defiled with dirt or dung, let him wash according to the custom, and let him not be troubled. It is also forbidden to anoint a part of the body, as well as the whole body: but if a man be sick, or if a scab arise on his head, let him anoint himself according to the custom."

Hence, when the apostles are said "to anoint the sick with oil, and to heal them," [Mark 6:13](#), they used an ordinary medicine, and obtained an extraordinary and infallible effect.

Hence that of St. James, chapter 5:14: "Let the sick man call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord": that is, to that

ordinary medicine, namely, anointing for recovery of health, let the prayers of the ministers of the church be used.

III. They used sometimes a superstitious anointing of the head, and nothing differing from magical anointing: *He that mutters, let him put oil upon his head, and mutter.* this *muttering* is to be understood concerning the manner of saying a charm upon the wound, or some place of the body that feels pain; *muttering over the wound*; of which mention is made in the tract *Sanhedrim*. Mention also is made in the tract *Schabbath* now alleged, that some used this enchanting muttering in the name of Jesus: "One being sick, a certain person came to him, and muttered upon him in the name of Jesus of Pandira, and he was healed." And a little after; "R. Eliezer Ben Damah was bitten by a serpent. James of Capharsam came to heal him in the name of Jesus: but R. Ismael permitted him not," &c. See [Acts 19:13](#).

If the words of James before alleged be compared with this cursed custom, they may well sound to this sense; 'It is customary for the unbelieving Jews to use anointing of the sick joined with a magical and enchanting muttering; but how infinitely better is it to join the pious prayers of the elders of the church to the anointing of the sick!'

20-24. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

[*If thine eye be single. If thine eye be evil.*] That the business here is about a covetous, or a not covetous mind, may be gathered,

I. From the context on either hand: for, verse 20, 21, the discourse is concerning treasures either earthly or heavenly, and, verse 24, concerning serving either God or Mammon.

II. From a very usual manner of speech of the nation. For a *good eye*, to the Jews, is the same with a *bountiful mind*; and an *evil eye* is the same with a *covetous mind*. "This is the measure of the Truma" (or, of the oblation yielded to the priests), *A good eye yieldeth one out of forty*; that is, the fortieth part. "The school of Shammai saith, One out of thirty. A middling eye, one out of fifty. *And an evil eye, one out of sixty. He that gives a gift, let him give with a good eye*: and he that dedicates any thing, let him dedicate it with a good eye." See [Matthew 20:15](#). Hence covetousness is called *the lust of the eyes*, [1 John 2:16](#). Therefore our Saviour shows here with how great darkness the mind is clouded and dimmed by covetousness, and too much care of worldly things.

26. Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are you not much better than they?

[*The fowls of the air, they sow not, &c.*] "Have you ever seen beasts or fowls that had a workshop? And yet they are fed without trouble of mind," &c. See also Midras Tillin.

30. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

[*O ye of little faith.*] *Small of faith*, a phrase very frequent in the Talmudists. *He that prayed with a loud voice, is to be numbered among those that are little of faith.* The Israelites in the wilderness were of *little faith*. R. Abuhabh in the preface to *Menorath hammaor*; "R. Eliezer saith, 'Whosoever hath but a small morsel in his basket, and saith, What have I to eat to-morrow, behold, he is to be reckoned among *those of little faith.*'"

34. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

[*Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.*] *There is enough of trouble in the very moment.*

2. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

[*With what measure ye mete.*] This is a very common proverb among the Jews: *In the measure that a man measureth, others measure to him.* See also the tract *Sotah*, where it is illustrated by various examples.

4. Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

[*Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye, &c.*] And this also was a known proverb among them: "It is written in the days when they judged the judges, that is, in the generation which judged their judges, When any [*judge*] said to another, *Cast out the mote out of thine eye; he answered, Cast you out the beam out of your own eye,*" &c.

"R. Tarphon said, 'I wonder whether there be any in this age that will receive reproof: but if one saith to another, *Cast out the mote out of thine eye, he will be ready to answer, Cast out the beam out of thine own eye.*'" Where the Gloss writes thus; "*Cast out the mote, that is, the small sin that is in thine hand; he may answer, But cast you out the great sin that is in yours. So that they could not reprove, because all were sinners.*"

9. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

[*Will he give him a stone?*] Here that of Seneca comes into my mind; "*Verrucosus called a benefit roughly given from a hard man, panem lapidosum, 'stony bread.'*"

12. Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

[*Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, &c.*] A certain Gentile came to Shammai, and said, 'Make me a proselyte, that I may learn the whole law, standing upon one foot': Shammai beat him with the staff that was in his hand. He went to Hillel, and he made him a proselyte, and said, *That which is odious to thyself, do it not to thy neighbour: for this is the whole law.*

13. Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

[*Broad is the way.*] In these words, concerning the broad and narrow way, our Saviour seems to allude to the rules of the Jews among their lawyers concerning the public and private ways. With whom, "a private way was four cubits in breadth; a public way was sixteen cubits." See the Gloss in *Peah*.

14. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

[*Gate.*] Under this phrase are very many things in religion expressed in the Holy Scripture, [Genesis 28:17](#), [Psalm 118:19,20](#), [Matthew 16:18](#), &c.; and also in the Jewish writers.

'The gate of repentance' is mentioned by the Chaldee paraphrast upon [Jeremiah 33:6](#); and 'the gate of prayers,' and 'the gate of tears.' "Since the Temple was laid waste, the gates of prayer were shut, but the gates of tears were not shut."

Strait gate, seems to be the Greek rendering of *Pishpesh*, a word very usual among the Talmudists: "With a key he *opened the little door*, and out of Beth-mokad" (*the place of the fire-hearth*) "he entereth into the court." *Pishpesh*, saith the Aruch, *is a little door in the midst of a great door*.

15. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

[*In sheep's clothing.*] Not so much in woolen garments as in the very *skins of sheep*: so that outwardly they might seem sheep, but "inwardly they were ravening wolves." Of the ravenousness of wolves among the Jews, take these two examples besides others. "The elders proclaimed a fast in their cities upon this occasion, because the wolves had devoured two little children beyond Jordan. More than three hundred sheep of the sons of Judah Ben Shamoe were torn by wolves."

16. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

[*By their fruits ye shall know them.*] That is a proverb not unlike it. *A gourd, a gourd, is known by its branch.*

29. For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

[*As one having authority, and not as the scribes.*] It is said with good reason, in the verse going before, that "the multitude were astonished at Christ's doctrine": for, besides his divine truth, depth, and convincing power, they had not before heard any discoursing with that *authority*, that he did. The scribes borrowed credit to their doctrine from traditions, and the fathers of them: and no sermon of any scribe had any authority or value, without *The Rabbins have a tradition*, or *The wise men say*; or some traditional oracle of that nature. Hillel the Great taught truly, and as the tradition was concerning a certain thing; "But, although he discoursed of that matter all day long, *they received not his doctrine*, until he said at last, So I heard from Shemaia and Abtalion."

Chapter 8

2. And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

[*Thou canst make me clean.*] The doctrine in the law concerning leprosy paints out very well the doctrine of sin.

I. It teacheth, that no creature is so unclean by a touch as man. Yea, it may with good reason be asked, whether any creature, while it lived, was unclean to the touch, beside man? That is often repeated in the Talmudists, that "he that takes a worm in his hand, all the waters of Jordan cannot wash him from his uncleanness"; that is, while the worm is as yet in his hand; or the worm being cast away, not until the time appointed for such purification be expired. But whether it is to be understood of a living or dead worm, it is doubted, not without cause, since the law, treating of this matter, speaketh only of those things that died of themselves. See [Leviticus 11:31](#): "Whosoever shall touch them when they be dead," &c.: and verse 32, "Upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, shall fall," &c. But whether he speaks of a living worm, or a dead, uncleanness followed by the touch of it for that day only: for "he shall be unclean (saith the law) until the evening": but the carcase of a man being touched, a week's uncleanness followed. See [Numbers 19](#).

II. Among all the uncleannesses of men, leprosy was the greatest, inasmuch as other uncleannesses separated the unclean person, or rendered him unclean, for a day, or a week, or a month; but the leprosy, perhaps, for ever.

III. When the leper was purified, the leprosy was not healed: but the poison of the disease being evaporated, and the danger of the contagion gone, the leper was restored to the public congregation. Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, was adjudged to perpetual leprosy; and yet he was cleansed, and conversed with the king ([2 Kings 8:5](#)); cleanse, not healed. Thus under justification and sanctification there remain still the seeds and filth of sin.

IV. He that was full of the leprosy was pronounced clean; he that was otherwise, was not. [Leviticus 13:12](#); "If the leprosy shall cover the whole body from head to foot, thou shalt pronounce him clean," &c. A law certainly to be wondered at! Is he not clean, till the whole body be infected and covered with the leprosy? Nor shalt thou, O sinner, be made clean without the like condition. Either acknowledge thyself all over leprous, or thou shalt not be cleansed.

3. And Jesus put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

[*Jesus touched him.*] It was indeed a wonder, that when the leprosy was a creeping infection, the priest, when he judged of it, was not hurt with the infection. It cannot be passed over without observation, that Aaron, being bound under the same guilt with Miriam, bore not the same punishment: for she was touched with leprosy, he not, [Numbers 12](#). And also that Uzziah should be confuted concerning his encroaching upon the priesthood no other way than by the plague of leprosy. In him God would magnify the priesthood, that was to judge of the leprosy; and he would shew the other was no priest, by his being touched with the leprosy. It can scarcely be denied, indeed, that the priests sometimes might be touched with that plague; but certainly they caught not the contagion while they were doing their office in judging of it. This is a noble doctrine of our High Priest, the Judge and Physician

of our leprosy, while he remains wholly untouched by it. How much does he surpass that miracle of the Levitical priesthood! They were not touched by the contagion when they touched the leprous person; he, by his touch, heals him that hath the infection.

4. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

[*Go, shew thyself to the priest, &c.*] I. Our Saviour would not have the extraordinary manner whereby he was healed discovered to the priest, that he might pay the ordinary duty of his cleansing. And surely it deserves no slight consideration, that he sends him to the priest. However now the priesthood was too degenerate both from its institution and its office, yet he would reserve to it its privileges, while he would reserve the priesthood itself. Corruption, indeed, defiles a divine institution, but extinguishes it not.

II. Those things which at that time were to be done in cleansing of the leprosy, according to the Rubric, were these: "Let him bring three beasts: that is, *a sacrifice for sin, a sacrifice for transgression*, and a burnt-offering. But a poor man brought a sacrifice for sin of birds, and a burnt-offering of birds. He stands by the sacrifice for transgression, and lays both his hands upon it, and slays it: and two priests receive the blood; the one in a vessel, the other in his hand. He who receives the blood in his hand goes to the leper in the chamber of the lepers": this was in the corner of the Court of the Women, looking north-west. "He placeth him in the gate of Nicanor," the east gate of the Court of Israel; "he stretcheth forth his head within the court, and puts blood upon the lowest part of his ear: he stretcheth out his hand also within the court, and he puts blood upon his thumb and his foot, and he puts blood also upon his great toe, &c. And the other adds oil to the same members in the same place," &c. The reason why, with his neck held out, he so thrust forth his head and ears into the court, you may learn from the Glosser: "The gate of Nicanor (saith he) was between the Court of the Women and the Court of Israel: but now it was not lawful for any to enter into the Court of Israel for whom there was not a perfect expiation: and, on the contrary, it was not lawful to carry the blood of the sacrifice for transgression out of the court." Hence was that invention, that the leper that was to be cleansed should stand without the court; and yet his ears, his thumbs, and his toes, to which the blood was to be applied, were within the court. We omit saying more; it is enough to have produced these things, whence it may be observed what things they were that our Saviour sent back this healed person to do.

The cure was done in Galilee, and thence he is sent away to Jerusalem; silence and sacrifice are enjoined him: *See thou tell no man, &c.: and offer the gift, &c.* And why all these things?

First, Christ makes trial of the obedience and gratitude of him that was cured, laying upon him the charge of a sacrifice and the labour of a journey.

Secondly, He would have him restored to the communion of the church (from which his leprosy had separated him), after the wonted and instituted manner. He provides that he himself give no scandal, and the person healed make no schism: and however both his words and gestures sufficiently argue that he believed in Christ, yet Christ will by no means draw him from the communion of the church, but restore him to it. Hence is that command of his to him; "See thou tell no man, but offer a gift for a testimony to them": that is, 'Do not boast the extraordinary manner of thy healing; think not thyself freed from the bond of the law, in case of a leper, because of it; thrust not thyself into the communion of the church before the rites of admission be duly performed: but, however you have no business with the priest in reference to the purification and cleansing, go to the priest nevertheless, and offer the gift that is due, for a testimony that you are again restored into communion with them.' This caution of our Saviour hath the same tendency with that, [Matthew 17:27](#), "That we be not an offence to them," &c.

6. And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

[*Lieth*] *Laid forth*. Thus, *A dead man laid forth*, in order to his being carried out. The power and dominion of the disease is so expressed. The weak person lieth so, that he is moved only by others; he cannot move himself, but is, as it were, next door to carrying out. So, verse 14, of Peter's mother-in-law, *was laid, and sick of a fever*.

16. When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:

[*When the even was come.*] Mark adds, *when the sun was now set*, and the sabbath was now gone.

I. The sabbath was ended by the Jews at the supper, or the feast. In which they used a candle (as they did upon the entrance of the sabbath), and wine, and spices; and the form of a blessing over a cup of wine, and then over the candle, and then over the spices: "Does the sabbath end when he is now in the middle of his feast? He puts an end to his eating; washes his hands; and over a cup of wine he gives thanks for his food; and afterward over that cup he useth the form of prayer in the separation of the sabbath from a common day: if he be now drinking when the sabbath goes out, he ceaseth from drinking, and recites the form of separation, and then returns to his drinking."

II. The proper limits of the sabbath were from sun-set to sun-set. This is sufficiently intimated by St. Mark, when he saith, that *when the sun was now set*, they brought the sick to be healed: which they held unlawful to do while the sun was yet going down, and the sabbath yet present.

The Talmudic canons give a caution of some works, that they be not begun on the day before the sabbath, if they may not be ended and finished, *while it is yet day*: that is (as they explain it), *while the sun is not yet set. He that lights a [sabbath] candle, let him light it while*

it is yet day, before sun-set. "On the sabbath-eve it is permitted to work until sun-set." The entrance of the sabbath was at sun-set, and so was the end of it.

III. After the setting of sun, a certain space was called *Bin Hashmashuth*: concerning which these things are disputed; "What is *Bin Hashmashuth*? R. Tanchuma saith, It is like a drop of blood put upon the very edge of a sword, which divides itself every where. What is *Bin Hashmashuth*? It is from that time when the sun sets, whilst one may walk half a mile. R. Josi saith, *Bin Hashmashuth* is like a wink of the eye," &c. *Bin Hashmashuth* properly signifies, *between the suns*: and the manner of speech seems to be drawn thence, that there are said to be two *sun-sets*. Concerning which, read the Glosser upon Maimonides. Where thus also Maimonides himself: "From the time that the sun sets till the three middle stars appear, it is called *between the suns*: and it is a doubt whether that time be part of the day or of the night. However, they every where judge of it *to render the office heavy*. Therefore, between that time they do not light the sabbatical candle: and whosoever shall do any servile work on the sabbath-eve, and in the going out of the sabbath, is bound to offer a sacrifice for sin." So also the Jerusalem Talmudists in the place last cited: "Does one star appear? Certainly, as yet it is day. Do two? It is doubted whether it be day. Do three? It is night without doubt." And a line after; "On the sabbath-eve, if any work after one star seen, he is clear: if after two, he is bound to a sacrifice for a transgression; if after three, he is bound to a sacrifice for sin. Likewise, in the going out of the sabbath, if he do any work after one star is seen, he is bound to a sacrifice for sin; if after two, to a sacrifice for transgression: if after three, he is clear."

Hence you may see at what time they brought persons here to Christ to be healed, namely, in the going out of the sabbath; if so be they took care of the canonical hour of the nation, which is not to be doubted of.

17. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

[*Himself took our infirmities.*] Divers names of the Messias are produced by the Talmudists, among others "The Rabbins say, *His name is, 'The leper of the house of Rabbi'*: as it is said, Certainly he bare our infirmities," &c. And a little after, "Rabh saith, If Messias be among the living, Rabbenu Haccodesh is he." The Gloss is, "If Messias be of them that are now alive, certainly our holy Rabbi is he, as being one that carries infirmities," &c. R. Judah, whom they called 'the Holy,' underwent very many sicknesses (of whom, and of his sicknesses, you have the story in the Talmud, "thirteen years Rabbi laboured under the pain of the teeth," &c.); because of which there were some who were pleased to account him for the Messias; because, according to the prophets, Messias should be 'a man of sorrows': and yet they look for him coming in pomp.

This allegation of Matthew may seem somewhat unsuitable and different from the sense of the prophet: for Isaiah speaks of the Messias carrying our infirmities in himself; but

Matthew speaks concerning him healing them in others: Isaiah of the diseases of the soul (see [1 Peter 2:24](#)); Matthew of the diseases of the body. But in this sense both agree very well, that Christ's business was with our infirmities and sorrows, and he was able to manage that business: his part was to carry and bear them, and in him was strength and power to carry and bear them. In this sense, therefore, is Matthew to be understood; he healed the demoniacs and all diseased persons with his word, that that of Isaiah might be fulfilled, He it is who is able to bear and carry our sorrows and sicknesses. And so, whether you apply the words to the diseases of the mind or the body, a plain sense by an equal easiness does arise. The sense of Isaiah reacheth indeed further; namely, That Messiah himself shall be a man of sorrows, &c., but not excluding that which we have mentioned, which Matthew very fitly retains, as excellently well suiting with his case.

28. And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.

[*Into the country of the Gergesenes.*] In Mark and Luke it is, *of the Gadarenes*, both very properly: for it was the city Gadara, whence the country had its name: there was also Gergasa, a city or a town within that country; which whether it bare its name from the ancient Canaanite stock of the Gergashites, or from the word *Gargushta*, which signifies *clay* or *dirt*, we leave to the more learned to discuss. *Lutetia*, [Paris], a word of such a nature, may be brought for an example.

[*Two possessed with devils coming out of the tombs, &c.*] "These are the signs of a *madman*. He goes out in the night, and lodges among the sepulchres, and teareth his garments, and tramples upon whatsoever is given him. R. Houna saith, But is he only mad in whom all these signs are? I say, Not. He that goes out in the night is *condriacus*, *hypochondriacal*. He that lodgeth a night among the tombs *burns incense to devils*. He that tears his garments is *melancholic*. And he that tramples under his feet whatsoever is given him is *cardiacus*, *troubled in mind*." And a little after, "*one while he is mad, another while he is well*: while he is mad, he is to be esteemed for a madman in respect of all his actions: while he is well, he is to be esteemed for one that is his own man in all respects." See what we say at chapter 17:15.

30. And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding.

[*A herd of many swine feeding.*] Were these Gadarenes Jews, or heathens?

I. It was a matter of infamy for a Jew to keep swine: "R. Jonah had a very red face, which a certain woman seeing said thus, *Seignior, Seignior*, either you are a winebibber, or a usurer, or a keeper of hogs."

II. It was forbidden by the canon: "The wise men forbade to keep hogs anywhere, and a dog, unless he were chained." Hogs upon a twofold account: 1. By reason of the hurt and

damage that they would bring to other men's fields. Generally, "the keeping smaller cattle was forbid in the land of Israel"; among which you may very well reckon hogs even in the first place: and the reason is given by the Gemarists, "That they break not into other men's grounds." 2. The feeding of hogs is more particularly forbidden for their uncleanness. *It is forbidden to trade in any thing that is unclean.*

III. Yea, it was forbid under a curse: "The wise men say, Cursed is he that keeps dogs and swine; because from them ariseth much harm."

"Let no man keep hogs anywhere. The Rabbins deliver: When the Asmonean family were in hostility among themselves, Hyrcanus was besieged within Jerusalem, and Aristobulus was without. The besieged sent money in a box let down by a rope; and they which were without bought with it the daily sacrifices, which were drawn up by those that were within. Among the besiegers there was one skilled in the Greek learning, who said, 'As long as they thus perform the service of the Temple, they will not be delivered into your hands.' The next day, therefore, they let down their money, and these sent them back a hog. When the hog was drawing up, and came to the middle of the wall, he fixed his hoofs to the wall, and the land of Israel was shaken, &c. From that time they said, 'Cursed be he who keeps hogs, and cursed be he who teacheth his son the wisdom of the Greeks.'" This story is cited in Menachoth.

Therefore you will wonder, and not without cause, at that which is related in their Talmud: "They said sometimes to Rabh Judah, There is a plague among the swine. He therefore appointed a fast." What! is a Jew concerned for a plague among swine? But the reason is added: "For Rabh Judah thought that a stroke laid upon one kind of cattle would invade all."

You may not, therefore, improperly guess, that these hogs belonged not to the Jews, but to the heathen dwelling among the Gadarene Jews; for such a mixture was very usual in the cities and countries of the land of Israel. Which we observe elsewhere of the town Susitha or Hippos, but some small distance from Gadara.

Or if you grant that they were Jews, their manners will make that opinion probable, as being persons whose highest law the purse and profit was wont to be. Since brawn and swine's flesh were of so great account with the Romans and other heathens, there is no reason to believe that a Jew was held so straitly by his canons, as to value them before his own profit, when there was hope of gain.

Chapter 9

9. And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

[*He saw a man sitting at the receipt of custom, called Matthew.*] Five disciples of Christ are mentioned by the Talmudists, among whom Matthew seems to be named: "The Rabbins deliver, There were five disciples of Jesus, *Mathai, Nakai, Nezer, and Boni, and Thodah.*" These, they relate, were led out and killed. See the place. Perhaps *five* are only mentioned by them, because five of the disciples were chiefly employed among the Jews in Judea: namely, Matthew who wrote his Gospel there, Peter, James, John, and Judas.

Matthew seems to have sat in the custom-house of Capernaum near the sea, to gather some certain toll or rate of those that sailed over. See Chapter 2:13, 14.

"He that produceth paper [on the Sabbath] in which a publican's note is writ, and he that produceth a publican's note, is guilty." The Gloss is, "When any pays tribute to the lord of the river, or when he excuses him his tribute, he certifies the publican by a note [or some bill of free commerce], that he hath remitted him his duty: and it was customary in it to write two letters greater than ours." See also the Gemara there.

14. Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?

[*We and the Pharisees fast oft.*] Monsters, rather than stories, are related of the Pharisees' fasts:--

I. It is known to all, from [Luke 18:12](#), that they were wont to fast twice every week. The rise of which custom you may fetch from this tradition: "Ezra decreed ten decrees. He appointed the public reading of the law the second and fifth days of the week: and again on the sabbath at the *Mincha* [or *evening service*]. He instituted the session of the judges in cities on the second and fifth days of the week," &c. Of this matter discourse is had elsewhere: "If you ask the reason why the decree was made concerning the second and fifth days, &c., we must answer, saith the Gloss, from that which is said in Midras concerning Moses; namely, that he went up into the mount to receive the second tables on the fifth day of the week, and came down, God being now appeased, the second day. When, therefore, that ascent and descent was a time of grace, they so determined of the second and fifth days. And therefore they were wont to fast also on the second and fifth days."

II. It was not seldom that they enjoined themselves fasts, for this end, to have lucky dreams; or to attain the interpretation of some dream; or to turn away the ill import of a dream. Hence was that expression very usual, *A fast for a dream*; and it was a common proverb, *A fast is as fit for a dream, as fire is for flax*. For this cause it was allowed to fast on the sabbath, which otherwise was forbidden. See the Babylonian Talmud, in the tract *Schabbath*: where also we meet with the story of R. Joshua Bar Rabh Idai, who on the sabbath was splendidly received by R. Ishai, but would not eat because he was *under a fast for a dream*.

III. They fasted often to obtain their desires: "R. Josi fasted eighty fasts, and R. Simeon Ben Lachish three hundred for this end, that they might see R. Chaijah Rubbah." And often

to avert threatening evils; of which fasts the tract Taanith does largely treat. Let one example be enough instead of many; and that is, of R. Zadok, who for forty years, that is, from the time when the gates of the Temple opened of their own accord (a sign of the destruction coming), did so mortify himself with fastings, that he was commonly called *Chalsha*, that is, *The weak*. And when the city was now destroyed, and he saw it was in vain to fast any longer, he used the physicians of Titus to restore his health, which, through too much abstinence, had been wasted.

15. And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

[*The children of the bridechamber.*] *The sons of the bridechamber*, an ordinary phrase. There is no need to relate their mirth in the time of the nuptials: I will relate that only, and it is enough, which is spoke by the Glosser, *They were wont to break glass vessels in weddings* And that for this reason, that they might by this action set bounds to their mirth, lest they should run out into too much excess. The Gemara produceth one or two stories there: "Mar the son of Rabbena made wedding feasts for his son, and invited the Rabbins: and when he saw that their mirth exceeded its bounds, *he brought forth a glass cup worth four hundred zuzees, and brake it before them; whereupon they became sad.*" The like story is also related of Rabh Ishai. And the reason of this action is given; *Because it is forbidden a man to fill his mouth with laughter in this world.*

...the days of the bridechamber, to *the sons of the bridechamber*, that is, to the friends and acquaintance, were seven: hence there is frequent mention of "the seven days of the marriage-feast": but to the bride, the days of the bridechamber were thirty. It is forbidden to eat, drink, wash or anoint oneself on the day of Expiation: *But it is allowed a king and a bride to wash their faces* "For the bride is to be made handsome (saith the Gloss upon the place), that she may be lovely to her husband. *And all the thirty days of her bridechamber she is called The Bride.*"

It is worth meditation, how the disciples, when Christ was with them, suffered no persecution at all; but when he was absent, all manner of persecution overtook them.

18. While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

[*Behold, a ruler.*] Distinction is made between *the bishop of the congregation*, and *the head of the congregation*. For while the discourse is there of the high priest reading a certain portion of the law on the day of Expiation agreeable to the day, thus it is said, *The bishop of the synagogue takes the book of the law, and gives it to the ruler of the synagogue*. Where the Gloss thus, "*The synagogue was in the mount of the Temple, near the court [which is worthy*

to be marked]: *The Chazan* [or *bishop*, or *overseer*] *of the synagogue is the minister*: and the ruler of the synagogue is he by whose command the affairs of the synagogue are appointed; namely, who shall read the prophet, who shall recite the phylacteries, who shall pass before the ark."

Of this order and function was Jairus, in the synagogue of Capernaum: so that the word *ruler*, being understood in this sense, admits of little obscurity, although *one*, or *a certain*, be not there: "he speaking these words, 'Behold, the ruler of that synagogue,'" &c.

20. And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind *him*, and touched the hem of his garment:

[*Diseased with an issue of blood.*] *Zeba*, in Talmudic language. The Talmudic tract may serve for a commentary here.

These things were acted in the streets of Capernaum: for there Matthew lived, and there Jairus also: and in his passage from the house of the one to the house of the other, this diseased woman met him. Weigh the story well, and you will easily judge what is to be thought of that story concerning the statues of this woman and Christ, set up at Paneas, or Caesarea Philippi: of which Eusebius speaks.

23. And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise,

[*Seeing the minstrels.*] Dion Cassius concerning the funeral of Augustus: "Tiberius, and Drusus his son,...sacrificed frankincense themselves; but they used not a minstrel.

Even the poorest among the Israelites [his wife being dead], *will afford her not less than two pipes, and one woman to make lamentation.*

"He that hireth an ass-keeper, or a waggoner, to bring *pipes*, *either for a bride, or for a dead person*": that is, either for a wedding, or a funeral.

"The husband is bound to bury his dead wife, and to make lamentations and mournings for her, according to the custom of all countries. And also the very poorest among the Israelites will afford her not less than two pipes and one lamenting woman: but if he be rich, let all things be done according to his quality."

"If an idolater bring pipes on the sabbath to the house where anyone is dead, an Israelite shall not lament at those pipes."

This multitude was got together on a sudden: neighbours, for civility's sake; *minstrels*, perhaps for the sake of gain; both the more officious in this business, as we may guess, by how much the parents of the deceased maid were of more eminent quality. She died, when Christ, together with Jairus, was going forward to the house ([Mark 5:35](#)); and yet, behold what a solemn meeting and concourse there was to lament her. There were two things which, in such cases, afforded an occasion to much company to assemble themselves to the house of mourning:

First, some, as it is very probable, resorted thither to eat and drink: for at such a time some banqueting was used. "A tradition. They drink ten cups in the house of mourning; two before meat, five while they are eating, and three after meat." And a little after: "When Rabban Simeon Ben Gamaliel died, they added three more. But when the Sanhedrim saw that hence they became drunk, they made a decree against this."

Secondly, others came to perform their duty of charity and neighbourhood: for they accounted it the highest instance of respect to lament the dead, to prepare things for the burial, to take care of the funeral, to put themselves under the bier, and to contribute other things needful for that solemnity with all diligence. Hence they appropriated *The rendering* [or *bestowing*] of *mercies* to this duty, in a peculiar sense, above all other demonstrations of charity; "*One of the disciples of the wise men died, and mercy was not yielded him*": that is, no care was taken of his funeral. "But a certain publican died, *and the whole city left off work to yield him mercy.*"

Mourning for the dead is distinguished by the Jewish schools into *Aninuth*, and *Ebluth*. *Aninuth* was on the day of the funeral only, or until the corpse was carried out; and then began *Ebluth*, and lasted for thirty days. Of these mournings take these few passages: "He that hath his dead laid out before him, and it is not in his power to bury him, useth not *Aninuth* [that kind of *mourning*]. For example: If any die in prison, and the magistrate [or governor of the place], permits not his burial, he that is near of kin to him is not bound to that mourning which is called *Aninuth*," &c. And the reason is given a little after; namely, because he who hath his dead laid out before him, or upon whom the care of his burial lies, is forbidden to eat flesh, to drink wine, to eat with others, to eat in the same house (under which prohibition, thou, Jairus, now art), and he was free from reciting his phylacteries, and from prayer, and from all such-like precepts of the law. "*But when the funeral is carried out of the door of the house, then presently begins the mourning called Ebluth.*" From thence he is free from the foregoing prohibitions, and now is subject to others. Hence,

1. *The bending down of the beds*; of which the Talmudists speak very much: "From what time (say they) are the beds bended? from that time the dead body is carried out of the gate of the court of the house; or, as R. Josua, From such time, as the *grave-stone* is stopped up": for so it is commonly rendered; but the Gloss somewhere, the *cover*, or the *uppermost board* of the bier. What this *bending of the beds* should mean, you may observe from those things which are spoken in the tract Beracoth: "Whence is the bending of the beds? R. Crispa, in the name of R. Jochanan saith, From thence, because it is said, *And they sat with him to the earth* (Job 2:13). It is not said, '*upon* the earth,' but '*to* the earth': it denotes a thing not far from the earth. Hence it is that they sat upon beds bended down."

2. "*He that laments all the thirty days is forbidden to do his work*; and so his sons, and his daughters, and servants, and maids, and cattle," &c.

These things concerned him to whom the dead person did belong. His friends and neighbours did their parts also, both in mourning, and in care of the funeral, employing themselves in that affair by an officious diligence, both out of duty and friendship. "*Whosoever sees a dead corpse* (say they), *and does not accommodate* [or *accompany*] him to his burial, is guilty of that which is said, 'He that mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker,' &c. But now (say they) no man is so poor as the dead man," &c.

24. He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.

[*The maid is not dead, but sleepeth.*] It was very ordinary among them to express the death of any one by the word which properly signifies *to sleep*. *When N. slept*; that is, *when he died*: a phrase to be met with hundreds of times in the Talmudists. And this whole company would say, *The daughter of Jairus sleeps*; that is, *she is dead*. Therefore it is worthy considering what form of speech Christ here used. The Syriac hath, *She is not dead, but asleep*.

33. And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

[*It was never so seen in Israel.*] These words seem to refer, not to that peculiar miracle only that was then done, but to all his miracles. Consider how many were done in that one day, yea, in the afternoon. Christ dines at Capernaum with Matthew: having dined, the importunity of Jairus calls him away: going with Jairus, the woman with the issue of blood meets him, and is healed: coming to Jarius' house, he raiseth his dead daughter: returning to his own house (for he had a dwelling at Capernaum), two blind men meet him in the streets, cry out *Messias* after him, follow him home, and they are cured. As they were going out of the house, a dumb demoniac enters, and is healed. The multitude, therefore, could not but cry out, with very good reason, "Never had any such thing appeared in Israel."

34. But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

[*Through the prince of the devils, &c.*] See the notes at chapter 12:24.

1. And when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

[*And when he had called to him the twelve disciples.*] Concerning the number of twelve, corresponding to the tribes of Israel, see [Luke 22:30](#), [Revelation 21:12,14](#). These were called the twelve *apostles*...under which title Moses and Aaron are marked by the Chaldee paraphrast, [Jeremiah 2:1](#): a word that does not barely speak *a messenger*, but *such a messenger as represents the person of him that sends him*. For 'The *'apostle'* of any one is as he himself from whom he is deputed. See the fortieth verse of this chapter. If you read over the tract of Maimonides here, entitled *messengers and companions*, perhaps you will not repent your labour.

For these ends were these twelve chosen, as the evangelists relate:

I. That they might be with him, eyewitnesses of his works, and students of his doctrine. For they did not presently betake themselves to preach, from the time they were first admitted disciples, no, nor from the time they were first chosen; but they sat a long while at the feet of their Master, and imbibed from his mouth that doctrine which they were to preach.

II. That they might be his prophets, both to preach and to do miracles. Thence it comes to pass, that the gift of miracles, which of a long time had ceased, is now restored to them.

The 'seven shepherds, and eight principal men,' [Micah 5:5](#), are the disciples of the Messias, according to Kimchi.

[*Power of unclean spirits.*] That is, '*over, or upon unclean spirits*': which therefore are called *unclean spirits* that by a clearer antithesis they might be opposed to *the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of purity*.

More particularly *the unclean spirit*, [Zechariah 13:2](#); and *unclean spirits*, [Revelation 16:13,14](#), are diabolical spirits in false prophets, deceiving Pythons.

By a more particular name yet, according to the Talmudists concerning this business: "There shall not be with thee *a necromancer*, [Deuteronomy 18:11](#). He is *a necromancer* who mortifies himself with hunger, and goes and lodges a-nights among the burying-places for that end, that *the unclean spirit* may dwell upon him. When R. Akibah read that verse he wept. Does *the unclean spirit*, saith he, come upon him that fasts for that very end, that *the unclean spirit* may come upon him? Much more would the Holy Spirit come upon him that fasts for that end, that the Holy Spirit might come upon him. But what shall I do, when our sins have brought that on us which is said, 'Your sins separate between you and your God?'" Where the Gloss thus; "*That the unclean spirit dwell upon him*: that is, that the demon of the burial-place may love him, and may help him in his enchantments."

When I consider with myself that numberless number of demoniacs which the evangelists mention, the like to which no history affords, and the Old Testament produceth hardly one or two examples, I cannot but suspect these two things especially for the cause of it:--

First, That the Jewish people, now arriving to the very top of impiety, now also arrived to the very top of those curses which are recited, [Leviticus 26](#) and [Deuteronomy 28](#).

Secondly, That the nation, beyond measure addicted to magical arts, did even affect devils and invited them to dwell with them.

2. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James *the son of Zebedee*, and John his brother;

[*Simon.*] *Simon* is a name very usual among the Talmudists for *Simeon*. By which name our apostle is also called, [Acts 15:14](#).

Let these words be taken notice of, "*R. Eliezer inquired of R. Simon concerning a certain thing; but he answered him not. He inquired of R. Joshua Ben Levi, and he answered. R. Eliezer was enraged that R. Simeon answered him not.*"

[*Peter.*] Christ changed the names of three disciples with whom he held more inward familiarity, Simon, James, and John. Simon was called by him *Peter*, or *Petrosus*, that is, referring to a *rock*, because he should contribute not only very much assistance to the church that was to be built on a *rock*, but the very first assistance, when, the keys being committed to him, he opened the door of faith to Cornelius, and so first let in the gospel among the Gentiles. Of which matter afterward.

[*Andrew.*] this also was no strange name among the Talmudists. *Andrew Bar Chinna*.

3. Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James *the son of Alphaeus*, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus:

[*Bartholomew.*] Compare the order wherein the disciples are called ([John 1](#)) with the order wherein they are for the most part reckoned, and you will find *Bartholomew* falling in at the same place with *Nathanael*: so that one may think he was the same with him: called *Nathanael* by his own name, and *Bartholomew* by his father's; that is, *the son of Talmai*: for the Greek interpreters render *Talmai*, *Tolmi*, [2 Samuel 13:37](#). And *Tholomaeus* occurs in Josephus.

[*Of Alphaeus.*] The name occurs also in the Talmudists: a word that may admit a doubt pronunciation; namely, either to sound *Alphai*, or *Cleophi*. Hence that *Alphaeus*, who was the father of four apostles, is also called *Cleopas*, [Luke 24](#); which sufficiently appears from hence, that she who is called "Mary, the mother of James the Less, and Joses," [Mark 15:40](#), by John is called, "Mary the wife of Cleopas," [John 19:25](#).

[*Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus.*] *Thaddai* was a name known also to the Talmudists: *R. Jose the son of Thaddeus. Eliezer Ben Thaddeus*. It is a warping of the name *Judas*, that this apostle might be the better distinguished from *Iscaiot*, He was called *Lebbeus*, I suppose, from the town *Lebba*, a sea-coast town of Galilee: of which Pliny speaks; "The promontory Carmel, and in the mountain a town of the same name, heretofore called Ecbatana: near by Getta *Lebba*," &c.

4. Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

[*Simon the Canaanite.*] In Luke it is *Zealot*. See who are called *Zealots* in Josephus. Of whose sect, if you should say this Simon was before his conversion, perhaps you would do him no more wrong than you would do his brother Matthew, when you should say that he was a *publican*.

[*Iscariot.*] It may be inquired whether this name was given him while he was alive, or not till after his death. If while he was alive, one may not improperly derive it from *Skortja*, which is written also *Iskortja*: where, while the discourse is of a man vowing that he would not use this or that garment, we are taught these things;... "These are garments, some, of leather, and some of a certain kind of clothing." The Gemara asketh, "What is *Iskortja*? Bar Bar Channah answered, *A Tanner's garment*" The Gloss is, "A leathern apron that tanners put on over their clothes." So that *Judas Iscariot* may perhaps signify as much as *Judas with the apron*. But now in such *aprons* they had purses sewn, in which they were wont to carry their money, as you may see in Aruch...which we shall also observe presently. And hence, it may be, Judas had that title of *the purse-bearer*, as he was called *Judas with the apron*.

Or what if he used the art of a tanner before he was chose into discipleship? Certainly we read of one Simon a tanner, [Acts 9:43](#); and that this Judas was the son of Simon, [John 12:4](#).

But if he were not branded with this title till after his death, I should suppose it derived from *Iscara*: which word what it signifies, let the Gemarists speak: "Nine hundred and three kinds of death were created in the world, as it is said, *and the issues of death*, [Psalm 68:21](#). The word *issues* arithmetically ariseth to that number. Among all those kinds, *Iscara* is the roughest death..." Where the Gloss is, '*Iscara*' *in the mother-tongue is estrangulament*. By learned men for the most part it is rendered *angina, the quinsy*. The Gemara sets out the roughness of it by this simile, "The *Iscara* is like to branches of thorns in a fleece of wool; which if a man shake violently behind, it is impossible but the wool will be pulled off by them." It is thus defined in the Gloss, '*The Iscara*' *begins in the bowels, and ends in the throat*. See the Gemara there.

When Judas therefore perished by a most miserable strangling, being strangled by the devil (which we observe in its place), no wonder if this infamous death be branded upon his name, to be commonly stiled *Judas Iscariot*, or 'that Judas that perished *by strangling*.'

[*Who also betrayed him.*] Let that of Maimonides be observed: "It is forbidden to betray an Israelite into the hands of the heathen, either as to his person, or as to his goods," &c. "And whosoever shall so betray an Israelite shall have no part in the world to come." Peter spake agreeably to the opinion of the nation, when he said concerning Judas, "He went unto his own place," [Acts 1:25](#). And so doth Baal Turim concerning Balaam; "'Balaam went to his place,' [Numbers 24:25](#); that is (saith he), *he went down to hell*."

5. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

[*Into any city of the Samaritans, enter ye not.*] Our Saviour would have the Jews' privileges reserved to them, until they alienated and lost them by their own perverseness and sins. Nor does he grant the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles or Samaritans, before it was offered to the Jewish nation. The Samaritans vaunted themselves sons of the patriarch Jacob, [John 4:12](#) (which, indeed, was not altogether distant from the truth); they embraced also the law of Moses; and being taught thence, expected the Messias as well as the Jews: nevertheless, Christ acknowledges them for his sheep no more than the heathen themselves.

I. Very many among them were sprung, indeed, of the seed of Jacob, though now become renegades and apostates from the Jewish faith and nation, and hating them more than if they were heathens, and more than they would do heathens. Which also, among other things, may perhaps be observed in their very language. For read the Samaritan version of the Pentateuch; and, if I mistake not, you will observe that the Samaritans, when, by reason of the nearness of the places, and the alliance of the nations, they could not but make use of the language of the Jews, yet used such a variation and change of the dialect, as if they scorned to speak the same words that they did, and make the same language not the same.

II. In like manner they received the Mosaic law, but, for the most part, in so different a writing of the words, that they seem plainly to have propounded this to themselves, that retaining indeed the law of Moses, they would hold it under as much difference from the Mosaic text of the Jews as ever they could, so that they kept something to the sense. "R. Eliezer Ben R. Simeon said, 'I said to the scribes of the Samaritans, Ye have falsified your law without any manner of profit accruing to you thereby. For ye have written in your law, *near the oaken groves of Moreh, which is Sychem,*'" &c....Let the Samaritan text at [Deuteronomy 11:30](#) be looked upon.

III. However they pretended to study the religion of Moses, yet, in truth, there was little or no difference between them and idolaters, when they knew not what they worshipped; which our Saviour objects against them, [John 4:22](#): and had not only revolved as apostates from the true religion of Moses, but set themselves against it with the greatest hatred. Hence the Jewish nation held them for heathens, or for a people more execrable than the heathens themselves. A certain Rabbin thus reproaches their idolatry: "R. Ismael Ben R. Josi went to Neapolis [that is, Sychem]: the Samaritans came to him, to whom he spake thus; 'I see that you adore not this mountain, but the idols which are under it: for it is written, Jacob hid the strange gods under the wood, which is near Sychem.'"

It is disputed whether a Cuthite ought to be reckoned for a heathen, which is asserted by Rabbi, denied by Simeon; but the conclusion, indeed, is sufficiently for the affirmative.

IV. The metropolis of the Samaritans laboured under a second apostasy, being brought to it by the deceit and witchcraft of Simon Magus, after the receiving of the gospel from the mouth of our Saviour himself. Compare [Acts 8:9](#) with [John 4:41](#).

From all these particulars, and with good reason for the thing itself, and to preserve the privileges of the Jews safe, and that they might not otherwise prove an offence to that nation, the Samaritans are made parallel to the heathen, and as distant as they from partaking of the gospel.

9. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

[*In your purses, &c.*] these things, which are forbidden the disciples by our Saviour, were the ordinary provision of travellers; to which the more religious added also the book of the law.

"Some Levites travelled to Zoar, the city of palm-trees: and when one of them fell sick by the way, they brought him to an inn. Coming back, they inquired of the hostess concerning their companion. 'He is dead,' said she, 'and I have buried him.'" And a little after, *she brought forth to them his staff, and his purse, and the book of the law, which was in his hand.* So the Babylonian Misna: but the Jerusalem adds also *shoes*: and instead of that which in the Misna is *his purse*, in the Gemara is...an *inner garment*, with pockets to hold money and necessaries.

That also is worthy mention; *Let no man enter into the mount of the Temple with his staff, nor with his shoes, nor with his purse, nor with dust on his feet.* Which words are thus rendered by the Gemara: "Let no man enter into the mount of the Temple, neither with his staff in his hand, nor with his shoes upon his feet, nor with money bound up in his linen, nor with a purse hanging on his back." Where the Gloss thus: '*Ponditho*' is a hollow girdle [or a hollow belt], in which they put up their money. See the Aruch in *Aponda*, and *Ponda*.

10. Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

[*Nor scrip for your journey.*] The Syriac version reads, *No purse...*

A proselyte is brought in thus speaking; "If an Israelite approaching to the holy things shall die, how much more a stranger, *who comes with his staff and his pouch!*"

[*Nor two coats.*] A single coat bespake a meaner condition; a double, a more plentiful. Hence is that counsel of the Baptist, [Luke 3:11](#), "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none." It is disputed by the Babylonian Talmudists, how far it is lawful to wash garments *on the common days of a festival-week*; and the conclusion is, "It is lawful for him *that hath one coat only*, to wash it."

[*Neither shoes.*] That *shoes* are here to be understood, and not *sandals*, appears from [Mark 6:9](#): and that there was a difference between these, sufficiently appears from these very places. The contrary to which I read in Beza, not without wonder: "But then from this place

(saith he), as also from [Acts 12:8](#), it appears that the evangelists put no difference between *shoes* and *sandals* as Erasmus hath rightly observed."

Let the Jewish schools be heard in this matter: "The pulling off of *the shoe* [of the husband's brother, [Deuteronomy 25:9](#)] is right: and of *the sandal* if it hath a heel, is right; but if not, it is not right."

"R. Josi saith, I went to Nisibin, and I saw there a certain elder, and I said to him, 'Are you well acquainted with R. Judah Ben Betira?' And he answered, 'I am a money changer in my city; and he came to my table very often.' I said, 'Did you ever see him putting off *the shoe*? What did he put off, *shoe* or *sandal*?' He answered, 'O Rabbi, are there *sandals* among us?' Whence therefore, say I, did R. Meir say, *They do not put off the shoe*? Rabbi Ba, Rabh Judah say, in the name of Rabh, If Elias should come, and should say, 'They pull off the *shoe* of the husband's brother, let them hearken to him': if he should say, 'They pull off the *sandal*,' let them not hearken to him. And yet, for the most part, the custom is to pull off the *sandal*: and custom prevails against tradition." See more there, and in the Babylonian tract *Jevamoth*.

Shoes were of more delicate use; *sandals* were more ordinary, and more for service. A *shoe* was of softer leather, a *sandal* of harder, &c. There were *sandals* also, whose sole, or lower part, was of wood, the upper of leather; and these were fastened together by nails. There were some *sandals* also made of rushes, or of the bark of palm-trees, &c. Another difference also between *shoes* and *sandals* is illustrated by a notable story in the tract *Schabbath*, in the place just now cited: "In a certain time of persecution, when some were hidden in a cave, they said among themselves, 'He that will enter, let him enter; for he will look about him before he enters, that the enemies see him not: but let none go out; for perhaps the enemies will be near, whom he sees not when he goes out, and so all will be discovered.' One of them by chance put on his *sandals* the wrong way: for *sandals* were open both ways, so that one might put in his foot either before or behind: but he putting on his the wrong way, his footsteps, when he went out, seemed as if he went in, and so their hiding-place was discovered to the enemies," &c.

Money therefore in the girdle, and provision in the scrip, were forbidden the disciples by Christ; first, that they might not be careful for temporal things, but resign themselves wholly to the care of Christ; secondly, they ought to live of the gospel, which he hints in the last clause of this verse, "The workman is worthy of his hire."

That, therefore, which he had said before, "Freely ye have received, freely give," forbade them to preach the gospel for gain: but he forbade not to take food, clothing, and other necessaries for the preaching of the gospel.

Two coats and *shoes* are forbidden them, that they might not at all affect pride or worldly pomp, or to make themselves fine; but rather, that their habit and guise might bespeak the greatest humility.

11. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

[*Who in it is worthy.*] In the Talmudic language, *who deserves*.

14. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

[*Shake off the dust of your feet.*] The schools of the scribes taught that *the dust* of the heathen land defiled by the touch. "The *dust* of Syria defiles, as well as the *dust* of other heathen countries."

"A tradition-writer saith, "They bring not herbs into the land of Israel out of a heathen land: but our Rabbins have permitted it.' *What difference is there between these?* R. Jeremiah saith, *The care of their dust is among them.*" The Gloss is, "They take care, lest, together with the herbs, something of *the dust* of the heathen land be brought, which defiles in the tent, and defiles the purity of the land of Israel."

"By reason of six doubts, they burn the *truma*: the doubt of a field, in which heretofore might be a sepulchre; the doubt of *dust* brought from a heathen land," &c. Where the Gloss is this; "Because it may be doubted of all the *dust* of a heathen land, whether it were not from the sepulchre of the dead."

"Rabbi saw a certain priest standing in a part of the city Aco, which part was without the bounds of the land of Israel: he said to him, 'Is not that heathen land concerning which they have determined that it is as unclean as a burying-place?'"

Therefore that rite of *shaking the dust off the feet*, commanded the disciples, speaks thus much; "Wheresoever a city of Israel shall not receive you, when ye depart, shew, by *shaking off the dust from your feet*, that ye esteem that city, however a city of Israel, for a heathen, profane, impure city; and, as such, abhor it."

17. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

[*They shall scourge you in their synagogues.*] Beza here, as he does very often when he cannot explain a case, suspects it: for thus he writes; "When I neither find synagogues elsewhere to have their names from *houses of judgment*, as the Hebrews speak, nor that civil punishments were taken in synagogues, I suspect this place." But without any cause, for,

I. In every synagogue there was a civil triumvirate, that is, three magistrates, who judged of matters in contest arising within that synagogue; which we have noted before.

II. *Scourging was by that bench of three*. So that fivefold scourging of St. Paul (2 Cor 11:24) was in the synagogue; that is, *By that bench of three magistrates*, such as was in every synagogue.

It is something obscure that is said, *But beware of men*. Of whom else should they beware? But perhaps the word *men* may occur in that sense, as *men* in these forms of speech;...*the*

men of the great assembly, and, the men of the house of judgment &c. But we will not contend about it.

23. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

[*Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, &c.*] "Ye shall not have travelled through the cities of Israel preaching the gospel, before the Son of man is revealed by his resurrection," (Romans 1:4. Lay to this Acts 3:19,20, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, *that* the times of refreshment *may come*" (for ye expect refreshment and consolation under the Messiah); "and he may send Jesus Christ first preached to you." And verse 26, "To you first God, raising up his Son, sent him to bless you," &c. The epoch of the Messiah is dated from the resurrection of Christ.

25. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

[*Beelzebub.*] See chapter 12:24.

27. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.

[*What ye hear in the ear.*] We have observed before, that allusion is here made to the manner of the schools, where the doctor whispered, out of the chair, into *the ear* of the interpreter, and he with a loud voice repeated to the whole school that which was *spoken in the ear*.

"They said to Judah Bar Nachmani, *the interpreter of Resh Lachish, Do you stand for his expositor.*" The Gloss is, "To tell out the exposition to the synagogue, *which he shall whisper to you.*" We cannot here but repeat that which we produced before, *The doctor whispered him in the ear in Hebrew.* And we cannot but suspect that that custom in the church of Corinth which the apostle reproves, of speaking in the synagogue in an unknown tongue, were some footsteps of this custom.

We read of whispering in the ear done in another sense, namely, to a certain woman with child, which longed for the perfumed flesh; "Therefore Rabbis said, *Go whisper her* that it is the day of Expiation. *They whispered to her, and she was whispered*": that is, she was satisfied and at quiet.

[*Preach ye upon the housetops.*] Perhaps allusion is made to that custom when the minister of the synagogue on the sabbath-eve sounded with a trumpet six times upon the roof of an exceeding high house, that thence all might have notice of the coming in of the sabbath. The first sound was, that they should cease from their works in the fields; the second, that they should cease from theirs in the city; the third, that they should light the sabbath candle, &c.

34. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

[*Think not that I am come to send peace, &c.*] Although these words may be understood truly of the difference between believers and unbelievers by reason of the gospel, which all interpreters observe; yet they do properly and primarily point out, as it were with the finger, those horrid slaughters and civil wars of the Jews among themselves, such as no other age ever saw, nor story heard.

"R. Eliezer saith, The days of the Messias are forty years, as it is said, 'Forty years was I provoked by this generation.'" And again; "R. Judah saith, In that generation, when the Son of David shall come, the schools shall be harlots; Galilee shall be laid waste; Gablan shall be destroyed; and the inhabitants of the earth [the Gloss is 'the Sanhedrim'] shall wander from city to city, and shall not obtain pity; the wisdom of the scribes shall stink; and they that fear to sin shall be despised; and the faces of that generation shall be like the faces of dogs; and truth shall fail, &c. Run over the history of these forty years, from the death of Christ to the destruction of Jerusalem (as they are vulgarly computed), and you will wonder to observe the nation conspiring to its own destruction, and rejoicing in the slaughters and spoils of one another beyond all example, and even to a miracle. This phrensy certainly was sent upon them from heaven. And first, they are deservedly become mad who trod the wisdom of God, as much as they could, under their feet. And secondly, the blood of the prophets and of Christ, bringing the good tidings of peace, could not be expiated by a less vengeance. Tell me, O Jew, whence is that rage of your nation towards the destruction of one another, and those monsters of madness beyond all examples? Does the nation rave for nothing, unto their own ruin? Acknowledge the Divine vengeance in thy madness, more than that which befell thee from men. He that reckons up the difference, contentions, and broils of the nation, after the dissension betwixt the Pharisees and the Sadducees, will meet with no less between the scholars of Shammai and Hillel, which increased to that degree, that at last it came to slaughter and blood.

"The scholars of Shammai and Hillel came to the chamber of Chananiah Ben Ezekiah Ben Garon, to visit him: that was a woeful day, like the day wherein the golden calf was made. The scholars of Shammai stood below, and slew some of the scholars of Hillel. The tradition is, That six of them went up, and the rest stood there present with swords and spears."

It passed into a common proverb, that "Elias the Tishbite himself could not decide the controversies between the scholars of Hillel and the scholars of Shammai." They dream they were determined by a voice from heaven; but certainly the quarrels and bitternesses were not at all decided.

"Before the *Bath Kol* [in Jabneh] went forth, it was lawful equally to embrace either the decrees of the school of Hillel, or those of the school of Shammai. At last the *Bath Kol* came

forth, and spake thus; 'The words, both of the one party and the other, are the words of the living God; but the certain decision of the matter is according to the decrees of the school of Hillel.' And from thenceforth, whosoever shall transgress the decrees of the school of Hillel is guilty of death."

And thus the controversy was decided; but the hatreds and spites were not so ended. I observe, in the Jerusalem Gemarists, the word *Shamothi*, used for a scholar of *Shammai*: which I almost suspect, from the affinity of the word *Shammatha*, which signifies *Anathema*, to be a word framed by the scholars of Hillel, in hate, ignominy, and reproach of those of *Shammai*. And when I read more than once of R. Tarphon's being in danger by robbers, because in some things he followed the custom and manner of the school of *Shammai*; I cannot but suspect snares were daily laid by one another, and hostile treacheries continually watching to do each other mischief.

"R. Tarphon saith, 'As I was travelling on the way, I went aside to recite the phylacteries, according to the rite of the school of *Shammai*, and I was in danger of thieves.' They said to him, and deservedly too, 'Because thou hast transgressed the words of the school of Hillel.'" This is wanting in the Jerusalem Misna.

"R. Tarphon went down to eat figs of his own, according to the school of *Shammai*. The enemies saw him, and kicked against him: when he saw himself in danger, 'By your life,' saith he, 'carry word unto the house of Tarphon, that graveclothes be made ready for him.'"

Thus, as if they were struck with a phrensy from heaven, the doctors of the nation rage one against another; and from their very schools and chairs flow not so much doctrines, as animosities, jarrings, slaughters, and butcheries. To these may be added those fearful outrages, spoils, murders, devastations of robbers, cut-throats, zealots, and amazing cruelties, beyond all example. And if these things do not savour of the divine wrath and vengeance, what ever did?

Chapter 11

3. And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

[*Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?*] The reason of the message of John to Christ is something obscure:

First, That it was not because he knew not Christ, is without all controversy, when he had been fully instructed from heaven concerning his person, when he was baptized; and when *he had* again and again most evidently *borne witness to him*, in those words, "This is the Lamb of God," &c.

Secondly, Nor was that message certainly, that the disciples of John might receive satisfaction about the person of Christ: for, indeed, the disciples were most unworthy of such a

master, if they should not believe him without further argument, when he taught them concerning him.

Thirdly, John therefore seems in this matter to respect his own imprisonment, and that his question, "Art thou he which should come," &c. tends to that. He had heard that miracles of all sorts were done by him, that the blind received their sight, the dead were raised, devils were cast out, &c. And why, therefore, among all the rest, is not John set at liberty? This scruple, as it seems, stuck with the good man; 'Why do all receive benefit and comfort from Christ, but only I?' Perhaps he laboured under that dim-sightedness which the disciples of Christ and the whole nation did concerning his earthly kingdom, victories, and triumphs: from which how distant (alas!) was this, that his forerunner and the chief minister should lie in chains! 'If thou art he, concerning whose triumphing the prophets declare so much, why am I so long detained in prison? Art thou he, or is another to be expected, from whom these things are to be looked for?'

First, "That I am he that should come, these things which I do bear witness, 'The blind receive their sight, the lame walk,'" &c.

Secondly, "As to the present case of John, who expects somebody to come to deliver him out of bonds, and to free the people from the yoke of men, Let him (saith he) acquiesce in my divine dispensation, and, 'Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me,' however all things are not according to his mind, which he hath expected to fall out, for his present and bodily advantage."

And the words of our Saviour, verse 11, seem to express some secret reproof of this error in John, "He that is less in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he." The Vulgar version renders well the word *less*, not *least*: as if he should say, "When ye went out into the desert to John, ye neither looked for trifles nor earthly pomp, neither 'a reed shaken with the wind,' nor 'a man clothed in soft raiment'; but ye looked in good earnest for a prophet: and in that ye did very well; for he was the greatest of prophets, nay, of men, as to his office; honoured in this above all others, that he is the forerunner of the Messiah. howbeit, there are some, which, indeed, in respect of office, are much less than he in the kingdom of heaven, or in the commonwealth of Christ, who yet are greater than he in respect of the knowledge of the state and condition of his kingdom." A comparison certainly is not here made, either in respect of office, or in respect of dignity, or in respect of holiness, or in respect of eternal salvation; for who, I pray, exceeded the Baptist in all these, or in any of them? but in respect of clear and distinct knowledge, in judging of the nature and quality of the kingdom of heaven.

Let the austerity of John's life, and the very frequent fasts which he enjoined his disciples, be well considered, and what our Saviour saith of both, and you will easily believe that John also, according to the universal conceit of the nation, expected temporal redemption by the Messiah, not so clearly distinguishing concerning the nature of the kingdom and redemption

of Christ. And you will the more easily give credit to this, when you shall have observed how the disciples of Christ themselves, that conversed a long time with him, were dim-sighted, likewise, in this very thing.

12. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

[*The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence.*] And these words also make for the praise of John. That he was a very eminent prophet, and of no ordinary mission or authority, these things evince; that from his preaching, the kingdom of heaven took its beginning, and it was so crowded into by infinite multitudes, as if they would take and seize upon the kingdom by violence. The divine warmth of the people in betaking themselves thither by such numberless crowds, and with so exceeding a zeal, sufficiently argued the divine worth both of the teacher and of his doctrine.

14. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.

[*If ye will receive it, this is Elias.*] *If ye will receive it.* The words hint some suspicion, that they would not receive his doctrine; which the obstinate expectation of that nation unto this very day, that Elias is personally to come, witnesseth also. Upon what ground some Christians are of the same opinion, let themselves look to it. See the notes on chapter 17:10.

21. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

[*In Tyre and Sidon.*] He compares the cities of the Jews with the cities of the Canaanites, who were of a cursed original; "but yet these cities, of a cursed seed and name, if they had been partakers of the miracles done among you, had not hardened themselves to such a degree of madness and obstinacy as you have done: but had turned from their heathenism and Canaanitism unto the knowledge of the gospel; or, at least, had betook themselves to such a repentance as would have prevented vengeance." So the repentance of the Ninevites, however it were not to salvation, yet it was such as preserved them, and freed their city from the wrath and scourge that hung over them. The most horrid stiffness of the Jews is here intimated, of all impious men the most impious, of all cursed wretches the most cursed.

22. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

[*At the day of judgment.*] *In the day of judgment:* and *In the day of the great judgment:* a form of speech very usual among the Jews.

**29. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart:
and ye shall find rest unto your souls.**

[*My yoke.*] So *The yoke of the law: The yoke of the precept: The yoke of the kingdom of heaven.*

1. At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were a hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.

[*At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn.*] The time is determined by Luke in these words, *on the sabbath from the second-first*.

I. Provision was made by the divine law, that the sheaf of firstfruits should be offered on the second day of the Passover-week, [Leviticus 23:10,11](#): *On the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall shake [orwave] it*. Not on the morrow after the ordinary sabbath of the week, but the morrow after the first day of the Passover week, which was a sabbatic day, [Exodus 12:16](#); [Leviticus 23:7](#). Hence the Seventy, *the morrow of the first day*; the Chaldee, *after the holy-day*. The Rabbins Solomon and Menachem, *on the morrow after the first day of the Passover-feast*: of which mention had been made in the verses foregoing.

II. But now, from that second day of the Passover-solemnity, wherein the sheaf was offered, were numbered seven weeks to Pentecost. For the day of the sheaf and the day of Pentecost did mutually respect each other. For on this second day of the Passover, the offering of the sheaf was supplicatory, and by way of prayer, beseeching a blessing upon the new corn, and leave to eat it, and to put in the sickle into the standing corn. Now the offering of the first fruit loaves on the day of Pentecost ([Lev 23:15-17](#)) did respect the giving of thanks for the finishing and inning of barley harvest. Therefore, in regard of this relation, these two solemnities were linked together, that both might respect the harvest: that, the harvest beginning; this, the harvest ended: this depended on that, and was numbered seven weeks after it. Therefore, the computation of the time coming between could not but carry with it the memory of that second day of the Passover-week; and hence Pentecost is called the 'Feast of weeks' ([Deut 16:10](#)). The true calculation of the time between could not otherwise be retained as to sabbaths, but by numbering thus: This is *the first sabbath after the second day of the Passover*. This is *the second sabbath after that second day*. And so of the rest. In the Jerusalem Talmud, the word *the sabbath of the first marriage*, is a composition not very unlike.

When they numbered by days, and not by weeks, the calculation began on the day of the sheaf: "A great number of certain scholars died between the Passover and Pentecost, by reason of mutual respect not given to one another. There is a place where it is said that they died fifteen days before Pentecost, that is, thirty-three days after the sheaf."

At the end of the Midrash of Samuel which I have, it is thus concluded; "This work was finished the three-and-thirtieth day after the sheaf."

III. Therefore by this word *the second-first*, added by St. Luke, is shown, first, that this *first sabbath* was *after the second day of the Passover*; and so, according to the order of evangelic history, either that very sabbath wherein the paralytic man was healed at the pool of Bethesda, [John 5](#), or the sabbath next after it. Secondly, that these ears of corn plucked by the disciples were of barley: how far, alas! from those dainties wherewith the Jews are

wont to junket, not out of custom only, but out of religion also! Hear their Gloss, savouring of the kitchen and the dish, upon that of the prophet Isaiah, chapter 58:13: "'Thou shalt call the sabbath a delight':--It is forbidden," say they, "to fast on the sabbath; but, on the contrary, men are bound to delight themselves with meat and drink. For we must live more delicately on the sabbath than on other days: and he is highly to be commended who provides the most delicious junkets against that day. We must eat thrice on the sabbath, and all men are to be admonished of it. And even the poor themselves who live on alms, let them eat thrice on the sabbath. For he that feasts thrice on the sabbath shall be delivered from the calamities of the Messiah, from the judgment of hell, and from the war of Gog and Magog." 'Whose god is their belly,' [Philippians 3:19](#).

IV. But was the standing corn ripe at the feast of the Passover? I answer,

I. The seed-time of barley was presently after the middle of the month Marchesvan; that is, about the beginning of our November: "He heard that the seed sown at the first rain was destroyed by hail; he went and sowed at the second rain, &c.: and when the seed of all others perished with the hail, his seed perished not." Upon which words the Gloss writes thus; "The first rain was the seventeenth day of the month Marchesvan; the second rain, the three-and-twentieth day of the same month; and the third was in the beginning of the month Chisleu. When, therefore, the rain came down, that which was sown at the first rain was now become somewhat stiff, and so it was broken by the hail; but that which was sown at the second rain, by reason of its tenderness, was not broken, &c. Therefore the barley was sown at the coming in of the winter, and growing by the mildness of the weather, in winter, when the Passover came in, it became ripe: so that from that time (the sheaf being then offered) barley-harvest took its beginning.

2. But if, when the just time of the Passover was come, the barley were not ripe, the intercalary month was added to that year, and they waited until it ripened: "For, for three things they intercalated the year; for the equinox, for the new corn, and for the fruit of the trees. For the elders of the Sanhedrim do compute and observe if the vernal equinox will fall out on the sixteenth day of the month Nisan, or beyond that; then they intercalate that year, and they make that Nisan the second Adar; so that the Passover might happen at the time of new corn. Or if they observe that there is no new corn, and that the trees sprouted not when they were wont to sprout, then they intercalate the year," &c.

You have an example of this thing: "Rabban Gamaliel to the elders of the great Sanhedrim, our brethren in Judea and Galilee, &c.; health. Be it known unto you, that since the lambs are too young, and the doves are not fledged, and there is no young corn, we have thought good to add thirty days to this year," &c.

[*And his disciples were an hungered.*] The custom of the nation, as yet, had held them fasting; which suffered none, unless he were sick, to taste any thing on the sabbath before the morning prayers of the synagogue were done. And on common days also, and that in

the afternoon, provision was made by the canons, "That none, returning home from his work in the evening, either eat, or drink, or sleep, before he had said his prayers in the synagogue."

Of the public or private ways that lay by the corn-fields, let him that is at leisure read Peah, chapter 2.

2. But when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day.

[*They do that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath day.*] They do not contend about the thing itself, because it was lawful, [Deuteronomy 23:25](#); but about the thing done on the sabbath. Concerning which the Fathers of the Traditions write thus; "He that reaps on the sabbath, though never so little, is guilty. And to pluck the ears of corn is a kind of reaping; and whosoever plucks any thing from the springing of his own fruit is guilty, under the name of a reaper." But under what guilt were they held? He had said this before, at the beginning of chapter 7, in these words: "The works whereby a man is guilty of stoning and cutting off, if he do them presumptuously; but if ignorantly, he is bound to bring a sacrifice for sin, *are either primitive or derivative*" Of 'primitive,' or of the general kinds of works, are nine-and-thirty reckoned; "To plough, to sow, to reap, to gather the sheaves, to thrash, to sift, to grind, to bake, &c.; to shear sheep, to dye wool," &c. The *derivative* works, or the particulars of those generals, are such as are of the same rank and likeness with them. For example, digging is of the same kind with ploughing; chopping of herbs is of the same rank with grinding; and plucking the ears of corn is of the same nature with reaping. Our Saviour, therefore, pleaded the cause of the disciples so much the more eagerly, because now their lives were in danger; for the canons of the scribes adjudged them to stoning for what they had done, if so be it could be proved that they had done it presumptuously. From hence, therefore, he begins their defence, that this was done by the disciples out of necessity, hunger compelling them, not out of any contempt of the laws.

3. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was a hungered, and they that were with him;

[*David, and those that were with him.*] For those words of Ahimelech are to be understood comparatively, "Wherefore art thou alone, and no man with thee?" ([1 Sam 21:1](#)) that is, comparatively to that noble train wherewith thou wast wont to go attended, and which becomes the captain-general of Israel. David came to Nob, not as one that fled, but as one that came to inquire at the oracle concerning the event of war, unto which he pretended to come by the king's command. Dissembling, therefore, that he hastened to the war, or to expedite some warlike design, he dissembles likewise that he sent his army to a certain place; and that he had turned aside thither to worship God, and to inquire of the vent; that he had

brought but a very few of his most trusty servants along with him, for whom, being an hungered, he asketh a few loaves.

[*When he was an hungered.*] Here hearken to Kimchi, producing the opinion of the ancients concerning this story in these words: "Our Rabbins, of blessed memory, say, that he gave him the show-bread, &c. The interpretation also of the clause, *yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel* [v 6] is this; It is a small thing to say, that it is lawful for us to eat these loaves taken from before the Lord when we are hungry; for it would be lawful to eat this very loaf which is now set on, which is also sanctified in the vessel (for the table sanctifieth); it would be lawful to eat even this, when another loaf is not present with you to give us, and we are so hunger-bitten." And a little after; "There is nothing which may hinder taking care of life, beside idolatry, adultery, and murder."

These words do excellently agree with the force of our Saviour's arguments; but with the genuine sense of that clause, methinks they do not well agree. I should, under correction, render it otherwise, only prefacing this beforehand, that it is no improbable conjecture that David came to Nob either on the sabbath itself, or when the sabbath was but newly gone. "For the show-bread was not to be eaten unless for one day and one night; that is, on the sabbath and the going-out of the sabbath; David, therefore, came thither in the going-out of the sabbath." And now I render David's words thus; "Women have been kept from us these three days," [so that there is no uncleanness with us from the touch of a menstruous woman], "and the vessels of the young men were holy, even in the common way," [that is, while we travelled in the common manner and journey]; "therefore, much more are they holy as to their vessels this [sabbath] day." And to this sense perhaps does that come: "But there was there one of the servants of Saul *detained that day before the Lord,*" [v 8]. The reverence of the sabbath had brought him to worship, and as yet had detained him there.

5. Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?

[*The priests in the Temple profane the sabbath, and are guiltless.*] "*The servile work which is done in the holy things is not servile.* The same works which were done in the Temple on the other days were done also on the sabbath." And *There is no sabbatism at all in the Temple.*

8. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.

[*For the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.*] I. He opposed this very argument against their cavils before the Sanhedrim, [John 5](#). When he was summoned into the court concerning his healing the paralytic man on this very sabbath, or on the sabbath next before, he shews his dominion over the sabbath from this very thing, that he, the Son, was invested and honoured with the same authority, power, and dignity, in respect of the administration of the New Testament, as the Father was in regard of the Old.

II. The care of the sabbath lay upon the first Adam under a double law, according to his double condition: 1. Before his fall, under the law of nature written in his heart: under which

he had kept the sabbath, if he had remained innocent. And here it is not unworthy to be observed, that although the seventh day was not come before his fall, yet the institution of the sabbath is mentioned before the history of his fall. 2. After his fall, under a positive law. For when he had sinned on the sixth day, and the seventh came, he was not now bound under the bare law of nature to celebrate it; but according as the condition of Adam was changed, and as the condition of the sabbath was not a little changed also, a new and positive law concerning the keeping the sabbath was superinduced upon him. It will not be unpleasant to produce a few passages from the Jewish masters of that first sabbath:--

"Circumcision," saith R. Judah, "and the sabbath, were before the law." But how much backward before the law? Hear Baal Turim: "The Israelites were redeemed (saith he) out of Egypt, because they observed circumcision and the sabbath-day." Yea, and further backward still: "The inheritance of Jacob is promised to those that sanctify the sabbath, because he sanctified the sabbath himself." Yea, and more backwards yet, even to the beginning of the world: "The first psalm in the world was, when Adam's sin was forgiven: and when the sabbath entered, he opened his mouth and uttered the psalm of the sabbath." So also the Targum upon the title of [Psalm 92](#): "The psalm or song which Adam composed concerning the sabbath-day." Upon which psalm, among other things, thus Midrash Tillin: "What did God create the first day? Heaven and earth. What the second? The firmament, &c. What the seventh? The sabbath. And since God had not created the sabbath for servile works, for which he had created the other days of the week, therefore it is not said of that as of the other days, 'And the evening and the morning was the seventh day.'" And a little after, "Adam was created on the eve of the sabbath: the sabbath entered when he had now sinned, and was his advocate with God," &c.

"Adam was created on the sabbath-eve, that he might immediately be put under the command."

III. Since, therefore, the sabbath was so instituted after the fall, and that by a law and condition which had a regard to Christ now promised, and to the fall of man, the sabbath could not but come under the power and dominion of *the Son of man*, that is, of the promised seed, to be ordered and disposed by him as he thought good, and as he should make provision, for his own honour and the benefit of man.

10. And, behold, there was a man which had *his* hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him.

[*Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days?*] These are not so much the words of inquirers, as deniers. For these were their decisions in that case; "Let not those that are in health use physic on the sabbath day. Let not him that labours under a pain in his loins, anoint the place affected with oil and vinegar; but with oil he may, so it be not oil of roses, &c. He that hath the toothache, let him not swallow vinegar to spit it out again; but he may swallow it, so he swallow it down. He that hath a sore throat, let him not gargle it with oil: but he may

swallow down the oil, whence if he receive a cure it is well. Let no man chew mastich, or rub his teeth with spice for a cure; but if he do this to make his mouth sweet, it is allowed. They do not put wine into a sore eye. They do not apply fomentations or oils to the place affected," &c. All which things, however they were not applicable to the cure wrought by Christ (with a word only), yet they afforded them an occasion of cavilling: who, indeed, were sworn together thus to quarrel him; that canon affording them a further pretence, "This certainly obtains, that whatsoever was possible to be done on the sabbath eve driveth not away the sabbath." To which sense he speaks, [Luke 13:14](#).

Let the reader see, if he be at leisure, what diseases they judge dangerous, and what physic is to be used on the sabbath.

11. And he saith unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?

[*If a sheep fall into a ditch on the sabbath days, &c.*] It was a canon, *We must take a tender care of the goods of an Israelite*. Hence,

"If a beast fall into a ditch, or into a pool of waters, let [*the owner*] bring him food in that place if he can; but if he cannot, let him bring clothes and litter, and bear up the beast; whence, if he can come up, let him come up," &c.

"If a beast, or his foal, fall into a ditch on a holy-day, R. Lazar saith, 'Let him lift up the former to kill him, and let him kill him: but let him give fodder to the other, lest he die in that place.' R. Joshua saith, 'Let him lift up the former, with the intention of killing him, although he kill him not: let him lift up the other also, although it be not in his mind to kill him.'"

16. And charged them that they should not make him known:

[*That they should not make him known.*] But this, not that he refused to heal the sick, nor only to shun popular applause; but because he would keep himself hid from those who would not acknowledge him. This prohibition tends the same way as his preaching by parables did, [Matthew 13:13](#); "I speak to them by parables, because seeing they see not." He would not be known by them who would not know him.

20. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

[*A bruised reed shall he not break.*] These words are to be applied, as appears by those that went before, to our Saviour's silent transaction of his own affairs, without hunting after applause, the noise of boasting, or the loud reports of fame. He shall not make so great a noise as is made from the breaking of a reed now already bruised and half broken, or from the hissing of smoking flax only when water is thrown upon it. How far different is the

Messias thus described, from the Messias of the expectation of the Jews! And yet it appears sufficiently that Isaiah, from whom these words are taken, spake of the Messias, and the Jews confess it.

[*Till he send forth judgment unto victory.*] The Hebrew and LXX in Isaiah read it thus, "He shall bring forth judgment unto truth." The words in both places mean thus much, That Christ should make no sound in the world, or noise of pomp, or applause, or state, but should manage his affairs in humility, silence, poverty, and patience, both while he himself was on earth, and by his apostles, after his ascension, labouring under contempt, poverty, and persecution; but at last "he should bring forth judgment to victory"; that is, that he should break forth and show himself a judge, avenger, and conqueror, against that most wicked nation of the Jews, from whom both he and his suffered such things: and then, also, "he sent forth judgment unto truth," and asserted himself the true Messias, and the Son of God, before the eyes of all; and confirmed the truth of the gospel, by avenging his cause upon his enemies, in a manner so conspicuous and so dreadful. And hence it is, that that sending forth and execution of judgment against that nation is almost always called in the New Testament "his coming in glory." When Christ and his kingdom had so long laid hid under the veil of humility, and the cloud of persecution, at last he brake forth a revenger, and cut off that persecuting nation, and shewed himself a conqueror before the eyes of all, both Jews and Gentiles. Let it be observed in the text before us, how, after the mention of that judgment and victory (against the Jews), presently follows, "and in his name shall the Gentiles trust."

24. But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

[*By Beelzebub; the prince of the devils.*] For the searching out the sense of this horrid blasphemy, these things are worthy observing:

I. Among the Jews it was held, in a manner, for a matter of religion, to reproach idols, and to give them odious names.

"R. Akibah saith, Idolatry pollutes, as a menstruous woman pollutes: as it is said, 'Thou shalt cast away the [*idol*] as something that is menstruous, and thou shalt say to it, Get thee hence' (*Isa 30:22*). R. Lazar saith, Thou shalt say to it, Get thee hence: that which they call the face of *God*, let them call the face of a *dog*: that which they call *the fountain of a cup*, let them call *the fountain of toil* [or of *flails*]: that which they call *fortune*, let them call *a stink*, &c. That town which sometimes was called *Beth-el*, was afterward called *Beth-aven*." See also the tract *Schabbath*, where these same words are.

All jeering is forbidden, except the jeering of idolatry. This also is repeated in the tract *Megillah*: where this is added, "It is lawful for a Jew to say to a Cuthite, *Take your idol, and put it under your buttocks.*"

II. Among the ignominious names bestowed upon idols, the general and common one was *Zebul*, *dung*, or a *dunghill*. "Even to them who have stretched out their hands *in a dunghill* [that is, in an idol-temple, or in idolatry], there is hope. Thou canst not bring them [into the church], because they have stretched forth their hands *in a dunghill*: but yet you cannot reject them, because they have repented." And a little after, "*He that sees them 'dunging'* [that is, '*sacrificing*'] to an idol, let him say, Cursed be he that sacrifices to a strange god."

Let them therefore, who dare, form this word in Matthew into *Beelzebub*. I am so far from doubting that the Pharisees pronounced the word *Beelzebub*, and that Matthew so wrote it, that I doubt not but the sense fails if it be writ otherwise.

III. Very many names of evil spirits or devils occur in the Talmudists, which it is needless here to mention. Among all the devils, they esteemed that devil the worst, the foulest, and, as it were, the prince of the rest, who ruled over the idols, and by whom oracles and miracles were given forth among the heathens and idolaters. And they were of this opinion for this reason, because they held idolatry above all other things chiefly wicked and abominable, and to be the prince and head of evil. This demon they called *Baal-zebul*, not so much by a proper name, as by one more general and common; as much as to say, the *lord of idolatry*: the worst devil, and the worst thing; and they called him the "prince of devils," because idolatry is the prince (or chief) of wickedness.

We meet with a story, where mention is made of *the prince of spirits*. Whether it be in this sense, let the reader consult and judge. Also in the Aruch we meet with these words, *the demon Asmodeus, the prince of spirits*.

IV. The Talmudists, being taught by these their fathers, do give out, horribly blaspheming, that Jesus of Nazareth our Lord was a magician, a broacher of strange and wicked worship; and one that did miracles by the power of the devil, to beget his worship the greater belief and honour.

"Ben *Satda* brought magic out of Egypt, by cuttings which he had made in his flesh." By *Ben Satda*, they understand Jesus of Nazareth, as we have said before; whom they dishonour by that name, that they might, by one word and in one breath, reproach him and his mother together. For *Satda*, or *Stada*, sounds as much as an *adulterous wife*, which the Gemara shews after a few lines, *She went aside from her husband*. They feign that Jesus travelled with Joshua Ben Perachiah into Egypt, when the said Joshua fled from the anger and sword of Janneus the king, which we have mentioned at the second chapter; and that he brought thence magical witchcrafts with him, but under the cutting of his flesh, that he might not be taken by the Egyptian magicians, who strictly examined all that went out of that land, that none should transport their magic art into another land. And in that place they add these horrid words, *Jesus practised magic, and deceived, and drove Israel to idolatry*. Those whelps bark, as they were taught by these dogs.

To this, therefore, does this blasphemy of the Pharisees come; as if they should say, "He casts out devils indeed; but he doth this by the help of the devil, the lord of idols, that dwells in him; by him, that is the worst of all devils, who favours him and helps him, because it is his ambition to drive the people from the worship of the true God to strange worship."

25. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:

[*But Jesus knowing their thoughts.*] Behold, O Pharisee, a sign of the true Messias, for a sign you would have: he smells out a wicked man.

"It is written of Messias, The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, *and shall make him smell in the fear of the Lord.* Rabba said, he shall smell and judge; as it is said, he shall not judge by the sight of his eyes, &c. Ben Cozba reigned two years and a half, and said to the Rabbins, I am the Messias: they said to him, It is written of Messias that he shall smell and judge (the Gloss is, he shall smell out the man, and shall judge and know whether he be guilty). Let us see whether thou canst smell and judge. *And when they saw that he could not smell and judge, they slew him.*"

27. And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges.

[*By whom do your children cast them out?*] *By your children,* Christ seems to understand some disciples of the Pharisees; that is, some of the Jews, who using exorcisms seemed to cast out devils such as they, [Acts 19:13](#); and yet they said not to them, "Ye cast out devils by Beelzebub." It is worthy marking, that Christ presently saith, "If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then the kingdom of God is come among you." For what else does this speak, than that Christ was the first who should cast out devils? which was an undoubted sign to them that the kingdom of heaven was now come. But that which was performed by them by exorcisms was not so much a casting out of devils, as a delusion of the people; since Satan would not cast out Satan, but by compact with himself and with his company he seemed to be cast out, that he might the more deceive.

The sense, therefore, of Christ's words comes to this: "That your disciples cast out devils, ye attribute not to Beelzebub, no nor to magic; but ye applaud the work when it is done by them: they, therefore, may in this matter be your judges, that you pronounce these words of my actions out of the rankness and venom of your minds."

In the Gloss mention is made of a devil cast out by a Jew at Rome.

32. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

[*It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.*] They that endeavour hence to prove the remission of some sins after death, seem little to understand to what Christ had respect when he spake these words. Weigh well this common and most known doctrine of the Jewish schools, and judge:

"He that transgresses an affirmative precept, if he presently repent, is not moved until the Lord pardon him. And of such it is said, 'Be ye converted, O backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.' He that transgresses a negative precept and repents, his repentance suspends judgment, and the day of expiation expiates him; as it is said, 'This day shall all your uncleannesses be expiated to you.' He that transgressed to cutting off [*by the stroke of God,*] or to death by the Sanhedrim, and repents, repentance, and the day of expiation do suspend judgment, and the strokes that are laid upon him wipe off sin; as it is said, 'And I will visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquity with scourges.' But he by whom the name of God is profaned [or blasphemed], repentance is of no avail to him to suspend judgment, nor the day of expiation to expiate it, nor scourges [or corrections inflicted] to wipe it off, but all suspend judgment, and death wipes it off." Thus the Babylonian Gemara writes: but the Jerusalem thus; "Repentance and the day of expiation expiate as to the third part, and corrections as to the third part, and death wipes it off: as it is said, and your iniquities shall not be expiated to you until ye die. *Behold, we learn that death wipes off.*" Note this, which Christ contradicts, concerning blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; "It shall not be forgiven, (saith he,) neither in this world, nor in the world to come"; that is, neither before death, nor, as you dream, by death.

[*In the world to come.*] I. Some phrases were received into common use, by which in common speech they opposed the heresy of the Sadducees, who denied immortality. Of that sort were *the world to come: paradise: hell, &c.*

"At the end of all the prayers in the Temple" (as we observed before) "they said *for ever*. But when the heretics brake in and said, 'There was no age but one,' it was appointed to be said, *for ever and ever.*"

This distinction of *this world*, and of *the world to come*, you may find almost in every page of the Rabbins.

"The Lord recompense thee a good reward for this thy good word *in this world*, and let thy reward be perfected *in the world to come.*"

"It [that is, the history of the creation and of the Bible] begins therefore with the letter *Beth* [in the word *Bereshith*], because two worlds were created, this world and a world to come."

II. *The world to come*, hints two things especially (of which see Rambam): 1. The times of the Messias: "Be mindful of the day wherein thou camest out of Egypt, all the days of thy life. The wise men say, By 'the days of thy life,' is intimated 'this world': by 'all the days of thy life,' the days of the Messias are superinduced." In sense the apostle seems to speak, [Hebrews 2:5](#) and 6:5. 2. The state after death, *The world to come is, when a man is departed out of this world.*

39. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

[*An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign.*] I. Their schools also confessed, that signs and miracles were not to be expected but by a fit generation.

"The elders being once assembled at Jericho, the Bath Kol went forth and said, There is one among you who is fit to have the Holy Ghost dwell upon him, *but that [this] generation is not fit.* They fix their eyes upon Hillel the Elder. The elders being assembled again in an upper room in Jabneh, Bath Kol came forth and said, There is one among you who is fit to have the Holy Spirit dwell upon him, *but that the generation is not fit.* They cast their eyes upon Samuel the Little."

II. That *generation* by which and in which the Lord of life was crucified lay, and that deservedly, under an ill report for their great wickedness above all other, from the beginning of the world until that day. Whence that of the prophet, "Who shall declare his *generation*?" [Isaiah 53:2](#); that is, his *generation* (*viz.* that *generation* in which he should live) should proceed to that degree of impiety and wickedness, that it should surpass all expression and history. We have observed before, how the Talmudists themselves confess, that that *generation* in which the Messias should come should exceed all other ages in all kinds of amazing wickedness.

III. That nation and *generation* might be called *adulterous* literally; for what else, I beseech you, was their irreligious polygamy than continual adultery? And what else was their ordinary practice of divorcing their wives, no less irreligious, according to every man's foolish or naughty will?

[*But the sign of Jonah the prophet.*] Here and elsewhere, while he gives them the sign of Jonah, he does not barely speak of the miracle done upon him which was to be equalled in the Son of man, but girds them with a silent check; instructing them thus much, that the Gentiles were to be converted by him, after his return out of the bowels of the earth, as heathen Nineveh was converted, after Jonah was restored out of the belly of the whale. Than which doctrine scarce anything bit that nation more sharply.

40. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

[*The Son of man shall be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*] 1. The Jewish writers extend that memorable station of the unmoving sun at Joshua's prayer to six-

and-thirty hours; for so Kimchi upon that place: "According to more exact interpretation, the sun and moon stood still for six-and-thirty hours: for when the fight was on the eve of the sabbath, Joshua feared lest the Israelites might break the sabbath: therefore he spread abroad his hands, that the sun might stand still on the sixth day, according to the measure of the day of the sabbath, and the moon, according to the measure of the night of the sabbath, and of the going-out of the sabbath; which amounts to six-and-thirty hours."

II. If you number the hours that passed from our Saviour's giving up the ghost upon the cross to his resurrection, you shall find almost the same number of hours; and yet that space is called by him "three days and three nights," when as two nights only came between, and only one complete day. Nevertheless, while he speaks these words, he is not without the consent both of the Jewish schools, and their computation. Weigh well that which is disputed in the tract *Schabbath*, concerning the uncleanness of a woman for three days; where many things are discussed by the Gemarists concerning the computation of this space of three days. Among other things these words occur; "R. Ismael saith, *Sometimes it contains four Onoth* sometimes five, sometimes six. But how much is the space of *an Onah*? R. Jochanan saith either a day or a night." And so also the Jerusalem Talmud; "R. Akiba fixed a day for an *Onah*, and a night for an *Onah*: but the tradition is, that R. Eliezar Ben Azariah said, *A day and a night make an Onah, and a part of an Onah is as the whole.*" And a little after, *R. Ismael computeth a part of the Onah for the whole.*

It is not easy to translate the word *Onah* into good Latin: for to some it is the same with the half of a natural day; to some it is all one with *a whole natural day*. According to the first sense we may observe, from the words of R. Ismael, that sometimes four *Onoth*, or halves of a natural day, may be accounted for three days: and that they also are so numbered that one part or the other of those halves may be accounted for a whole. Compare the latter sense with the words of our Saviour, which are now before us: "A day and a night (saith the tradition) make an *Onah*, and a part of an *Onah* is as the whole." Therefore Christ may truly be said to have been in his grave three *Onoth*, or *three natural days* (when yet the greatest part of the first day was wanting, and the night altogether, and the greatest part by far of the third day also), the consent of the schools and dialect of the nation agreeing thereunto. For, "the least part of the *Onah* concluded the whole." So that according to this idiom, that diminutive part of the third day upon which Christ arose may be computed for the whole day, and the night following it.

45. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

[*So shall it be to this evil generation.*] These words foretell a dreadful apostasy in that nation and generation.

I. It is something difficult so to suit all things in the parable aforegoing, that they may agree with one another: 1. You can hardly understand it of unclean spirits cast out of men by Christ; when through the whole evangelic history there is not the least shadow of probability that any devil cast out by him did return again into him out of whom he had been cast. 2. Therefore our Saviour seems to allude to the casting out of devils by exorcisms: which art, as the Jews were well instructed in, so in practising it there was need of dexterous deceits and collusions. 3. For it is scarcely credible that the devil in truth finds less rest in dry places than in wet: but it is credible that those diabolical artists have found out such kind of figments for the honour and fame of their art. For, 4. It would be ridiculous to think that they could by their exorcisms cast a devil out of a man into whom he had been sent by God. They might, indeed, with a compact with the devil, procure some lucid intervals to the possessed; so that the inhabiting demon might deal gently with him for some time, and not disturb the man: but the demoniacal heats came back again at last, and the former outrages returned. Therefore, here there was need of deceits well put together, that so provision might the better be made for the honour of the exorcistical art; as, that the devil, being sent away into dry and waste places, could not find any rest; that he could not, that he would not always wander about here and there, alone by himself, without rest; that he therefore returned into his old mansion, which he had formerly found so well fitted and prepared for him, &c.

Therefore these words seem to have been spoken by our Saviour according to the capacity of the common people, or rather, according to the deceit put upon them, more than according to the reality or truth of the thing itself; taking a parable from something commonly believed and entertained, that he might express the thing which he propounded more plainly and familiarly.

II. But however it was, whether those things were true indeed, or only believed and conceived so, by a most apt and open comparison is shown that the devil was first cast out of the Jewish nation by the gospel; and then, seeking for a seat and rest among the Gentiles, and not finding it, the gospel everywhere vexing him, came back into the Jewish nation again, fixed his seat there, and possessed it much more than he had done before. The truth of this thing appears in that fearful apostasy of an infinite multitude of Jews, who received the gospel, and most wickedly revolted from it afterward; concerning which the New Testament speaks in abundance of places.

Chapter 13

2. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

[*So that he sat, and the whole multitude stood.*] So was the manner of the nation, that the masters when they read their lectures *sat*, and the scholars *stood*: which honorary custom

continued to the death of Gamaliel the Elder; and then so far ceased, that the scholars *sat* when their masters *sat*. Hence is that passage: "From that time that old Rabban Gamaliel died, the honour of the law perished, and purity and Pharisaism died." Where the Gloss, from *Megillah*, writes us; "Before his death health was in the world, and they learned the law *standing*; but when he was dead sickness came down into the world, and they were compelled to learn the law *sitting*."

3. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow.

[*In parables.*] I. No figure of Jewish rhetoric was more familiarly used than that of *parables*: which perhaps, creeping in from thence, among the heathen ended in fables. It is said, in the place of the Talmud just now cited, *From the time that R. Meir died, those that spake in parables ceased*: not that that figure of rhetoric perished in the nation from that time, but because he surpassed all others in these flowers; as the Gloss there from the tract *Sanhedrim* speaks; *A third part* [of his discourses or sermons] *was tradition, a third part allegory, and a third part parable*. The Jewish books abound everywhere with these figures, the nation inclining by a kind of natural genius to this kind of rhetoric. One might not amiss call their religion *Parabolical*, folded up within the coverings of ceremonies; and their oratory in their sermons was like to it. But it is a wonder indeed, that they who were so given to and delighted in *parables*, and so dextrous in unfolding them, should stick in the outward shell of ceremonies, and should not have fetched out the parabolical and spiritual sense of them; neither should he be able to fetch them out.

II. Our Saviour (who always and everywhere spake with the vulgar) useth the same kind of speech, and very often the same preface, as they did in their parables. *To what is it likened*, &c. But in him, thus speaking, one may both acknowledge the Divine justice, who speaks darkly to them that despise the light; and his Divine wisdom likewise, who so speaks to them that see, and yet see not, that they may see the shell and not see the kernel.

4. And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

[*Some fell by the way side, &c.*] Concerning the husbandry of the Jews, and their manner of sowing, we meet with various passages in the tracts *Peah*, *Demai*, *Kilaim*, *Sheviith*: we shall only touch upon those things which the words of the text under our hands do readily remind us of.

There were ways and paths as well common as more private along the sown fields; see chapter 12:1. Hence in the tract *Peah*, where they dispute what those things are which divide a field so that it owes a double corner to the poor; thus it is determined, "These things divide: a river, an aqueduct, a private way, a common way, a common path, and a private path," &c. See the place and the Gloss.

5. Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

[*Some fell among stony places.*] Discourse is had concerning some laws of the *Kilaim* (or, *of the seeds of different kinds*), and of the seventh year: where, among other things, we meet with these words; "R. Simeon Ben Lachish saith that he is freed [*from those laws*] who sows his seed by the sea, *upon rocks, shelves, and rocky places.*" These words are spoken according to the reason and nature of the land of Israel, which was very rocky; and yet those places that were so were not altogether unfit for tillage.

7. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

[*Others fell among thorns.*] Here the distinction comes into my mind of a *white field*, that is, which is all sown; and of a *woody field*, that is, in which trees and bushes grow here and there: concerning which see the tract *Sheviith*. So there is very frequent mention in the Talmudists of *beds*, in fields and vineyards, which speaks the same thing. And of *baldness in a field*: that is, when some places are left not sown, and some places lying between are.

8. But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

[*And brought forth fruit, some a hundred, &c.*] These words are spoken according to the fruitfulness of the land of Israel; concerning which the Talmudists speak much, and hyperbolically enough: which nevertheless they confess to be turned long since into miserable barrenness; but are dim-sighted as to the true cause of it.

They treat of this matter, and various stories are produced, which you may see: we will only mention these two:--

"R. Jochanan said, The worst fruit which we eat in our youth excelled the best which we now eat in our old age: for in his days the world was changed."

"R. Chaijah Bar Ba said *The Arbelite bushel* formerly yielded a bushel of flour, a bushel of meal, a bushel of bran, and a bushel of coarse bran, and a bushel of coarser bran yet, and a bushel of the coarsest bran also: but now one bushel scarcely comes from one bushel."

13. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

[*They seeing see not.*] Here you may observe this people to have been given up to a reprobate mind, and a spirit of deep sleep, now a great while before the death of Christ. Which being observed, the sense of the apostle will more easily appear, [Romans 11:8](#); where these very words are repeated. If you there state aright the rejection of that people, you will understand more clearly the apostle concerning their call, which is there handled. Pharisaism and the sottishness of traditions had, now a good while ago, thrown them into blindness, stupidity, and hardness of heart; and that for some ages before Christ was born: but when the gospel

came, the Lord had his gleanings among them, and there were some that believed, and unto whom the participation of the promises was granted: concerning them the apostle speaks in that chapter: see verse 5. *At this present time there is a remnant according to election,*" &c., which we have observed before at chapter 3:7.

25. But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

[*Tares.*] *Zunin*, in Talmudic language. *Wheat and 'Zunin' are not seeds of different kinds.* Where the Gloss is this; "Is a kind of wheat, which is changed in the earth, both as to its form, and to its nature." By the best Lexicographers it is rendered *zizania*, in Latin.

So that that field, in this parable, was sown by the lord with good wheat; by the enemy, with bad and degenerate wheat; but all of it was sown with wheat, one or the other. These words do not so barely mean good and bad men, as good and bad Christians; both distinguished from other men, namely, from heathens, as wheat is distinguished from other seeds: but they are distinguished also among themselves, as good wheat is distinguished from that which is degenerate. So chapter 25, all those ten women, expecting the bridegroom, are virgins; but are distinguished into wise and foolish.

32. Which indeed is the least of all seeds [mustard]: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

[*Which, indeed, is the least of all seeds, &c.*] Hence it is passed into a common proverb, *According to the quantity of a grain of mustard:* and *According to the quantity of a little drop of mustard,* very frequently used by the Rabbins, when they would express the smallest thing, or the most diminutive quantity.

[*Is the greatest among herbs.*] "There was a stalk of *mustard* in Sichin, from which sprang out three boughs: of which, one was broke off, and covered the tent of a potter, and produced three cabes of mustard. R. Simeon Ben Chalaphtha said, A stalk of *mustard* was in my field, into which I was wont to climb, as men are wont to climb into a fig-tree."

33. Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

[*In three (sata) measures of meal*] That is, *in an ephah of meal.* [Exodus 16:36](#); "Now an omer is the tenth part of an *ephah*." The Chaldee reads, *The tenth part of three sata.* The LXX reads, *The tenth part of three measures.* And [Ruth 2:17](#), "It was as an *ephah* of barley." Where the Targum reads, *As it were three sata of barley.*

"A *seah* contains a double hin, six cabes, twenty-four *login*, a hundred and forty-four eggs."

52. Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe *which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.*

[*Bringeth forth out of his treasury things new and old.*] These words are spoken according to the dialect of the schools, where the question was not seldom started, What wine, what corn, or fruits were to be used in the holy things, and in some rites, new or more old; namely, *of the present year, or the years past.* But now, a thrifty man, provident of his own affairs, was stored both with the one and the other, prepared for either, which should be required. So it becomes a scribe of the gospel to have all things in readiness, to bring forth according to the condition and nature of the thing, of the place, and of the hearers. "Do ye understand all these things (saith Christ), both the things which I have said, and why I have said them? So a scribe of the gospel ought to bring forth," &c.

2. And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.

[*This is John, &c.*] Was not Herod of the Sadducean faith? For that which is said by Matthew, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees," chapter 16:6, is rendered by Mark, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod," chapter 8:15; that is, 'of their doctrine.'

If, therefore, Herod embraced the doctrine of the Sadducees, his words, "This is John the Baptist, he is risen from the dead," seem to be extorted from his conscience, pricked with the sting of horror and guilt, as though the image and ghost of the Baptist, but newly butchered by him, were before his eyes: so that his mind is under horror; and forgetting his Sadduceism, groaning and trembling, he acknowledgeth the resurrection of the dead, whether he will or no.

Or let it be supposed, that with the Pharisees he owned the resurrection of the dead; yet certainly it was unusual for them that confessed it to dream of the resurrection of one that was but newly dead: they expected there should be a resurrection of the dead hereafter: but this, which Herod speaks, believes, and suspects, is a great way distant from that doctrine, and seems, indeed, to have proceeded from a conscience touched from above.

4. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her. [Herod has taken his brother's wife.]

[*It is not lawful for thee to have her.*] "There are thirty-six cuttings off in the law": that is, sinners who deserve cutting off. And among the rest, *he that lies with his brother's wife.* Philip was now alive, and lived to the twentieth year of Tiberius.

6. But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.

[*And when Herod's birthday was kept.*] The Jewish schools esteem the keeping of *birth-days* a part of idolatrous worship: perhaps they would pronounce more favourably and flatteringly of thine, O tetrarch, because thine.

These are the times of idolaters: *the Kalends; the Saturnalia;...the birthday of the kingdom; and the day of a man's birth...*

[*The daughter of Herodias danced.*] Not so much out of lightness, as according to the custom of the nation, namely, to express joy and to celebrate the day. The Jews were wont in their public and more than ordinary rejoicings, and also in some of their holy festivals, to express their cheerfulness by leaping and dancing. Omitting the examples which occur in the holy Bible, it is reported by the Fathers of the Traditions, that the chief part of the mirth in the feast of Tabernacles consisted in such kind of dancing: the chief men, the aged, and the most religious, dancing in the Court of the Women; and by how much the more vehemently they did it, so much the more commendable it was. The gesture, therefore, or motion of the girl that danced took not so much with Herod, as her mind and affection:

namely, because hereby she shewed honour towards his birthday, and love and respect towards him, and joy for his life and health: from whom, indeed, Herod had little deserved such things, since he had deprived her father Philip of his wife, and defiled her mother with unlawful wedlock and continual incest.

7. Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.

[*He promised her with an oath, &c.*] This kind of oath is called by the Talmudists a *rash oath*: concerning which see Maimonides, and the Talmudic tract under that title. If the form of the oath were "by his head," which was very usual, the request of the maid very fitly, though very unjustly, answered to the promise of the king; as if she should say, 'You swore by your head that you would give me whatsoever I shall ask; give me, then, the head of John Baptist.'

10. And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

[*He beheaded John.*] Josephus relates that John was imprisoned by Herod in Machaerus: *Through the suspicion of Herod he was sent prisoner to Machaerus.* Now Machaerus was the utmost bounds of Perea: and Perea was within Herod's jurisdiction. But now if John lay prisoner there, when the decree went out against his life, the executioner must have gone a long journey, and which could scarcely be performed in two days from Tiberias, where the tyrant's court was, to execute that bloody command. So that that horrid dish, the head of the venerable prophet, could not be presented to the maid but some days after the celebration of his birthday.

The time of his beheading we find out by those words of the evangelist John, "but now the Passover was nigh," by reasoning after this manner: It may be concluded, without all controversy, that the disciples, as soon as they heard of the death of their master, and buried him, betook themselves to Christ, relating his slaughter, and giving him caution by that example to take care of his own safety. He hearing of it passeth over into the desert of Bethsaida, and there he miraculously feeds five thousand men, when the Passover was now at hand, as John relates, mentioning that story with the rest of the evangelists. Therefore we suppose the beheading of the Baptist was a little before the Passover, when he had now been in durance half a year, as he had freely preached by the space of half a year before his imprisonment.

13. When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities.

[*He departed thence by ship into a desert place, &c.*] That is, from Capernaum into the desert of Bethsaida, which is rendered by John, *He went over the sea* Which is to be understood properly, namely, from Galilee into Perea. The chorographical maps have placed Bethsaida in Galilee, on the same coast on which Capernaum is also: so also commentators

feign to themselves a bay of the sea only coming between these two cities, which was our opinion once also with them: but at last we learned of Josephus, that Bethsaida was *in the upper Gaulanitis*, (which we observe elsewhere,) on the east coast of the sea of Gennesaret in Perea.

[*They followed him on foot.*] From hence interpreters argue that Capernaum and Bethsaida lay not on different shores of the sea, but on the same: for how else, say they, could the multitude follow him afoot? Very well, say I, passing Jordan near Tiberias, whose situation I have elsewhere shewn to be at the efflux of Jordan out of the sea of Galilee. They followed him afoot *from the cities*, saith our evangelist: now there were cities of some note very near Capernaum, Tarichea on one side, Tiberias on the other. Let it be granted that the multitude travelled out of these cities after Christ; the way by which they went afoot was at the bridge of Jordan in Chammath: that place was distant a mile or something less from Tiberias, and from Capernaum three miles or thereabouts. Passing Jordan, they went along by the coast of Magdala; and, after that, through the country of Hippo: now Magdala was distant one mile from Jordan, Hippo two; and after Hippo was Bethsaida, at the east shore of the sea; and after Bethsaida was a bay of the sea, thrusting out itself somewhat into the land; and from thence was the desert of Bethsaida. When, therefore, they returned back from thence, he commands his disciples to get into a ship, and to go to Bethsaida, while he sent the multitude away, whence he would afterward follow them on foot, and would sail with them thence to Capernaum.

17. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.

[*Two fishes.*] What kind of *fish* they were we do not determine. That they were brought hither by a boy to be sold, together with the five loaves, we may gather from Chapter 6:9. The Talmudists discourse very much of *salt fish*. I render the word *salt fish*, upon the credit of the Aruch: he citing this tradition out of Beracoth, "*Do they set before him first something salt, and with it a morsel? He blesseth over the salt meat, and omits [the blessing] over the morsel, because the morsel is, as it were, an appendix to it. The salt meat, saith he, is to be understood of fish, as the tradition teacheth, that he that vows abstinence from salt things is restrained from nothing but from salt fish.*" Whether these were *salt fish*, it were a ridiculous matter to attempt to determine; but if they were, the manner of blessing which Christ used is worthy to be compared with that which the tradition now alleged commands.

20. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.

[*And they did all eat, and were filled.*] So *eating, or a repast after food*, is defined by the Talmudists; namely, "*When they eat their fill. Rabh saith, All eating, where salt is not, is not eating.*" The Aruch citing these words, for *salt*, reads *something seasoned*, and adds, "*It is no eating, because they are not filled.*"

22. And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

[*And immediately he compelled his disciples, &c.*] The reason of this compulsion is given by St. John, namely, because the people seeing the miracle were ambitious to make him a king; perhaps that the disciples might not conspire to do the same, who as yet dreamed too much of the temporal and earthly kingdom of the Messias.

23. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

[*When the evening was come.*] So verse 15, but in another sense: for that denotes the lateness of the day; this, the lateness of the night. So *evening*, in the Talmudists, signifies not only the declining part of the day, but the night also: "from what time do they recite the phylacteries *in the evening*? From the time when the priests go in to eat their *Truma*, even to the end of the first watch, as R. Eliezer saith; but, as the wise men say, unto midnight; yea, as Rabban Gamaliel saith, even to the rising of the pillar of the morning." Where the Gloss is, *in the evening, that is, in the night.*

25. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

[*In the fourth watch of the night.*] That is, after cock crowing: the Jews acknowledge only three watches of the night, for this with them was the third; *The watch is the third part of the night.* Thus the Gloss upon the place now cited. See also the Hebrew commentators upon [Judges 7:19](#). Not that they divided not the night into four parts, but that they esteemed the fourth part, or the watch, not so much for the night as for the morning. So [Mark 13:35](#), that space after cockcrowing is called *the morning*. See also [Exodus 14:24](#). There were, therefore, in truth, four watches of the night, but only three of deep night. When, therefore, it is said that Gideon set upon the Midianites in the "middle watch of the night," [Judges 7:19](#), it is to be understood of that watch which was indeed the second of the whole night, but the middle watch of the deep night: namely, from the ending of the first watch to midnight.

Chapter 15

2. Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

[*Why do they transgress the tradition of the elders?*] How great a value they set upon their traditions, even above the word of God, appears sufficiently from this very place, verse 6. Out of infinite examples which we meet with in their writings, we will produce one place only; "*The words of the scribes are lovely above the words of the law: for the words of the law are weighty and light; but the words of the scribes are all weighty.*"

"He that shall say, 'There are no phylacteries, transgressing the words of the law,' is not guilty; but he that shall say, 'There are five *Totaphoth*, adding to the words of the scribes,' he is guilty."

"*The words of the elders are weightier than the words of the prophets.*"

"A prophet and an *elder*, to what are they likened? To a king sending two of his servants into a province. Of one he writes thus, 'Unless he shew you my seal, believe him not': of the other thus, 'Although he shews you not my seal, yet believe him.' Thus it is written of the prophet, 'He shall shew thee a sign or a miracle'; but of the elders thus, 'According to the law which they shall teach thee,'" &c. But enough of blasphemies.

[*For they wash not their hands*, &c.] The undervaluing of the washing of hands is said to be among those things for which the Sanhedrim excommunicates: and therefore that R. Eleazar Ben Hazar was excommunicated by it, *because he undervalued the washing of hands*; and that when he was dead, by the command of the Sanhedrim, a great stone was laid upon his bier. "Whence you may learn (say they) that the Sanhedrim stones the very coffin of every excommunicate person that dies in his excommunication."

It would require a just volume, and not a short commentary, or a running pen, to lay open this mystery of Pharisaism concerning washing of hands, and to discover it in all its niceties: let us gather these few passages out of infinite numbers:

I. *The washing of hands and the plunging of them is appointed by the words of the scribes*: but by whom, and when, it is doubted. Some ascribe the institution of this rite to Hillel and Shammai, others carry it back to ages before them: "Hillel and Shammai decreed concerning the washing of hands. R. Josi Ben Rabbi Bon, in the name of R. Levi, saith, 'That tradition was given before, but they had forgotten it': these second stand forth, and appoint according to the mind of the former."

II. "Although it was permitted to eat unclean meats, and to drink unclean drinks, yet the ancient religious eat their common food in cleanness, and took care to avoid uncleanness all their days; and they were called Pharisees. And this is a matter of the highest sanctity, and the way of the highest religion; namely, that a man separate himself, and go aside from the vulgar, and that he neither touch them, nor eat nor drink with them: for such separation conduceth to the purity of the body from evil works," &c. Hence that definition of a Pharisee which we have produced before, *The Pharisees eat their common food in cleanness*: and the Pharisaical ladder of heaven, "Whosoever hath his seat in the land of Israel, and eateth his common food in cleanness, and speaks the holy language, and recites his phylacteries morning and evening, let him be confident that he shall obtain the life of the world to come."

III. Here that distinction is to be observed between *forbidden meats*, and *unclean meats*. Of both Maimonides wrote a proper tract. *Forbidden meats*, such as fat, blood, creatures unlawful to be eaten ([Lev 2](#)), were by no means to be eaten: but *meats, unclean* in themselves, were lawful indeed to be eaten, but contracted some uncleanness elsewhere: it was lawful

to eat them, and it was not lawful; or, to speak as the thing indeed is, they might eat them by the law of God, but by the canons of Pharisaism they might not.

IV. The distinction also between *unclean*, and *profane* or *polluted*, is to be observed. Rambam, in his preface to *Toharoth*, declares it.

Profane or *polluted* denotes this, that it does not pollute another beside itself. For every thing which uncleanness invades so that it becomes unclean, but renders not another thing unclean, is called *profane*. And hence it is said of every one that eats unclean meats, or drinks unclean drinks, *that his body is polluted*: but he pollutes not another. Note that, "The body of the eater is polluted by unclean meats." To which you may add that which follows in the same Maimonides, in the place before alleged: "Separation from the common people, &c., conduces to the purity of the body from evil works; the purity of the body conduceth to the sanctity of the soul from evil affections; the sanctity of the soul conduces unto likeness to God, as it is said, 'And ye shall be sanctified, and ye shall be holy, because I, the Lord that sanctify you, am holy.'" Hence you may more clearly perceive the force of Christ's confutation, which we have verses 17-20.

V. They thought that clean food was polluted by unclean hands, and that the hands were polluted by unclean meats. You would wonder at this tradition: "Unclean meats and unclean drinks do not defile a man if he touch them not, but if he touch them with his hands, then his hands become unclean; if he handle them with both hands, both hands are defiled; if he touch them with one hand only, one hand only is defiled."

VI. This care, therefore, laid upon the Pharisee sect, that meats should be set on free, as much as might be, from all uncleanness: but especially since they could not always be secure of this, that they might be secure that the meats were not rendered unclean by their hands. Hence were the washings of them not only when they knew them to be unclean, but also when they knew it not.

Rambam in the preface to the tract *of hands*, hath these words; "If the hands are unclean by any uncleanness, which renders them unclean; or if it be hid from a man, and he knows not that he is polluted; yet he is bound to wash his hands in order to eating his common food," &c.

VII. To these most rigid canons they added also bugbears and ghosts to affright them.

It was the business of Shibta. Where the Gloss is, "*Shibta* was one of the demons who hurt them that wash not their hands before meat." The Aruch writes thus, "*Shibta* is an evil spirit which sits upon men's hands in the night: and if any touch his food with unwashed hands, that spirit sits upon that food, and there is danger from it."

Let these things suffice as we pass along: it would be infinite to pursue all that is said of this rite and superstition. Of the quantity of water sufficient for this washing; of the washing of the hands, and of the plunging of them; of the first and second water; of the manner of washing; of the time; of the order, when the number of those that sat down to meat exceeded

five, or did not exceed; and other such like niceties: read, if you have leisure, and if the toil and nauseousness of it do not offend you, the Talmudic tract *of hands*, Maimonides upon the tract *lavers*, and Babylonian *Beracoth*: and this article, indeed, is inserted through the whole volume entitled *cleanness*. Let this discourse be ended with this canon; "For a cake, and for the washing of hands, let a man walk as far as four miles."

5. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;

[*It is a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, &c.*] I. Beside the law alleged by Christ, "Honour thy father and thy mother," &c., they acknowledge this also for law, *A son is bound to provide his father meat and drink, to clothe him, to cover him, to lead him in and out, to wash his face, hands and feet.* Yea, that goes higher, "A son is bound to nourish his father, yea, to beg for him." Therefore it is no wonder if these things which are spoken by our Saviour are not found verbatim in the Jewish pandect; for they are not so much alleged by him to shew that it was their direct design to banish away all reverence and love towards parents, as to show how wicked their traditions were, and into what ungodly consequences they oftentimes fell. They denied not directly the nourishment of their parents, nay, they command it, they exhorted to it; but consequently by this tradition they made all void. They taught openly, indeed, that a father was to be made no account of in comparison of a Rabbim that taught them the law; but they by no means openly asserted that parents were to be neglected: yet openly enough they did by consequence drawn from this foolish and impious tradition.

II. One might readily comment upon this clause, "It is a gift" (or, as Mark, "it is *Corban*") *by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me*, if we have read the Talmudic tracts *Nedarim* and *Nazir*, where the discourse is of vows and oaths; and the phrase which is before us speaks a vow or a form of swearing.

1. Vows were distinguished into two ranks, *vows of consecration*, and *vows of obligation*, or *of prohibition*. A *vow of consecration* was when any thing was devoted to holy uses, namely, to the use of the altar or the Temple: as when a man, by a vow, would dedicate this or that for sacrifice, or to buy wood, salt, wine, &c. for the altar: or *for the reparation of the Temple*, &c. A *vow of obligation* or *prohibition* was, when a man bound himself by a vow from this or that thing, which was lawful in itself; as, that he would not eat, that he would not put on, that he would not do this or that, &c.

2. This went for a noted axiom among them, *All epithets of vows are as the vows themselves*. They added certain short forms, by which they signified a vow, and which carried with it the force of a vow, as if the thing were spoken out in a larger periphrasis: as for example, "If one should say to his neighbour, *Konem, Konah, Kones*, behold, these are epithets of a thing devoted unto sacred uses."

The word *Konem*, Rambam thus explains; *Let it be upon me as a thing devoted*. So also R. Nissim, *Konem, Koneh, are words of devoting*.

We produced before, at chapter 5:33, some forms of oaths, which were only *Assertive*: these under our hands are *Votive* also. In the place from *Beracoth* just now alleged, one saith, *Let the wine be 'Konem,' which I shall taste, for wine is hard to the bowels*: that is, Let the wine which I taste be as devoted wine: as though he had said, I vow that I will not taste wine. "To which others answered, Is not old wine good for the bowels? Then he held his peace."

III. But above all such like forms of vowing, the word *Corban*, was plainest of all; which openly speaks a thing devoted and dedicated to sacred use. And the reader of those tracts which we have mentioned shall observe these forms frequently to occur. *Let it be 'Corban,' whereby I am profitable to thee*; and, *Let it be 'Konem,' whereby I am profitable to thee*. Which words sound the very same thing, unless I am very much mistaken, with the words before us, "Let it be *Corban*, or a *gift*, by which whatsoever thou mayest be profited by me."

Which words that they may be more clearly understood, and that the plain and full sense of the place may be discovered, let these things be considered:

First, That the word a *gift* is rather to be rendered, *Let it be a gift*, than *It is a gift*. For *Konem* and *Corban*, as we have noted, signified not '*It is' as something devoted*, but '*Let it be' as something devoted*. and He, of whom we had mention before...meant not, *The wine which I shall taste is as something devoted*, but *Let whatsoever wine I shall taste be as something devoted*: that is, *To me let all wine be devoted, and not to be tasted*.

Secondly, This form of speech *A gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me*, does neither argue, that he who thus spake devoted his goods to sacred uses, nor obliged him (according to the doctrine of the scribes) to devote them; but only restrained him by an obligation from that thing, for the denying of which he used such a form; that is, from helping him by his goods, to whom he thus spake. He might help others with his wealth, but him he might not.

Thirdly, The words are brought in as though they were pronounced with indignation; as if, when the needy father required food from his son, he should answer in anger and with contempt, *Let it be as a thing devoted, whatsoever of mine may profit thee*. But now, things that were devoted were not to be laid out upon common uses.

Fourthly, Christ not only cites the law, 'Honour thy father and mother,' but adds this also, *He that curseth father or mother*. But now there was no *cursing* here at all; if the son spoke truly and modestly, and as the thing was, namely, that all his estate was devoted before.

Fifthly, Therefore, although these words should have been spoken by the son irreverently, wrathfully, and inhumanly, towards his father, yet such was the folly, together with the impiety, of the traditional doctrine in this case, which pronounced the son so obliged by these his words, that it was lawful by no means to succour his needy father. He was not at all

bound by these words to dedicate his estate to sacred uses; but not to help his father he was inviolably bound. O excellent doctrine and charity!

Sixthly, The words of the verse, therefore, may thus be rendered, without any addition put between, which many interpreters do: *Whosoever shall say to his father or mother, Let it be a [devoted] gift, in whatsoever thou mayest be helped by me: then let him not honour his father and mother at all.*

11. Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

[*Defileth the man.*] Or, *maketh him common*;...because they esteemed *defiled* men for *common* and *vulgar* men: on the contrary, a religious man among them is *a singular man*...

20. These are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

[*With unwashen hands.*] He saith not with *unclean* hands, but *unwashen*; because, as we said before, they were bound to wash, although they were not conscious that their hands were unclean. In Mark it is *with common* or *defiled hands*, [Mark 7:2](#); which seem to be called by the Talmudists *impure* hands, merely because not washed. Judge from that which is said in the tract Challah: "A cake is owing out of that dough which they knead with the juice of fruits: *and it is eaten with unclean hands.*"

22. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

[*A woman of Canaan.*] In Mark it is, *A Greek woman, a Syrophenician by nation*, chapter 7:26.

I. *Of Canaan.* It is worthy observing, that the Holy Bible, reckoning up *the seven nations*, which were to be destroyed by the Israelites, names the Perizzites, who were not at all recited among the sons of Canaan, [Genesis 10](#); and the Canaanites as a particular nation, when all the seven, indeed, were Canaanites. See [Deuteronomy 7:1](#), [Joshua 9:1](#), [11:3](#), [Judges 3:5](#), &c.

The reason of the latter (with which our business is) is to be fetched thence, that Canaan himself inhabited a peculiar part of that (northern) country, with his first-born sons, Sidon and Heth: and thence the name of Canaanites was put upon that particular progeny, distinguished from all his other sons; and that country was peculiarly called by the name of 'Canaan,' distinctly from all the rest of the land of Canaan. Hence Jabin, the king of Hazor, is called the 'king of Canaan,' [Judges 4:2](#), and the kings of Tyre and Sidon, if I mistake not, are called 'the kings of the Hittites,' [1 Kings 10:29](#).

II. *A Greek woman, a Syrophenician* Although Judea, and almost the whole world, had now a long while stooped under the yoke of the Romans, yet the memory of the Syro-Grecian

kingdom, and the name of the nation, was not yet vanished. And that is worthy to be noted, *In the captivity, they compute the years only from the kingdom of the Greeks.* They said before, "That the Romans, for a hundred and fourscore years, ruled over the Jews before the destruction of the Temple"; and yet they do not compute the times to that destruction by the years of the Romans, but by the years of the Greeks. Let the Jews themselves well consider this, and the Christians with them, who reckon the Roman for the fourth monarchy in Daniel.

Therefore that woman that is here spoken of (to reduce all into a short conclusion) was a Syro-Grecian by nation, a Phoenician in respect of her habitation, and from thence called *a woman of Canaan.*

26. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs.

[*To the dogs.*] By this title the Jews, out of spite and contempt, disgraced the Gentiles, whose first care it was to hate, to mock, and to curse, all beside themselves. *The nations of the world* [that is, *the heathen*] *are likened to dogs.* From the common speech of the nation, rather than from his own sense, our Saviour uses this expression, to whom 'the Gentiles' were not so hateful, and whose custom was to speak with the vulgar.

This ignominious name, like a stone cast at the heathen, at length fell upon their own heads; and that by the hand and justice of God directing it: for although they out of pride and contempt fixed that disgraceful name upon the Gentiles, according to their very just desert, the Holy Spirit recoiled it upon themselves. See [Psalm 59:6](#); [Philippians 3:2](#); [Revelation 22:15](#), &c.

36. And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

[*He gave thanks and brake.*] See here the tract *Beracoth*, where it is discoursed of the manner of giving thanks when many ate together: *Three who eat together ought to give thanks together:* that is, one gave thanks for the rest (as the Gloss writes) "in the plural number, saying, Let *us* give thanks." So when there were ten, or a hundred, or a thousand or more, one gave thanks for all, and they answered after him *Amen*, or some words which he had recited.

Chapter 16

3. And in the morning, It will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?

[*Can ye not discern the signs of the times?*] The Jews were very curious in observing the seasons of the heavens, and the temper of the air.

"In the going out of the last day of the feast of Tabernacles, all observed the rising of the smoke. If the smoke bended northward, the poor rejoiced, but the rich were troubled; because there would be much rain the following year, and the fruits would be corrupted: if it bended southward, the poor grieved, and the rich rejoiced; for then there would be fewer rains that year, and the fruit would be sound: if eastward, all rejoiced: if westward, all were troubled." The Gloss is, "They observed this the last day of the feast of Tabernacles, because the day before, the decree of their judgment concerning the rains of that year was signed, as the tradition is, In the feast of Tabernacles they judged concerning the rains."

"R. Acha said, If any wise man had been at Zippor when the first rain fell, he might foretell the moistness of the year by the very smell of the dust," &c.

But they were dim-sighted at the signs of times; that is, at those eminent signs, which plainly pointed, as with the finger and by a visible mark, that now those times that were so much foretold and expected, even the days of the Messias, were at hand. As if he had said, "Can ye not distinguish that the times of the Messias are come, by those signs which plainly declare it? Do ye not observe Daniel's weeks now expiring? Are ye not under a yoke, the shaking off of which ye have neither any hope at all nor expectation to do? Do ye not see how the nation is sunk into all manner of wickedness? Are not miracles done by me, such as were neither seen nor heard before? Do ye not consider an infinite multitude flowing in, even to a miracle, to the profession of the gospel? and that the minds of all men are raised into a present expectation of the Messias? Strange blindness, voluntary, and yet sent upon you from heaven: your sin and your punishment too! They see all things which may demonstrate and declare a Messias, but they will not see."

6. Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

[*Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, &c.*] There were two things, especially, which seem to have driven the disciples into a mistaken interpretation of these words, so that they understood them of *leaven* properly so called.

I. That they had more seldom heard *leaven* used for *doctrine*. The metaphorical use of it, indeed, was frequent among them in an ill sense, namely, for evil affections, and the naughtiness of the heart; but the use of it was more rare, if any at all, for evil doctrine.

Thus one prays: "Lord of ages, it is revealed and known before thy face that we would do thy will; but do thou subdue that which hinders: namely, *the leaven which is in the lump, and the tyranny of [heathen] kingdoms.*" Where the Gloss is thus; "The '*leaven* which is in the lump,' are evil affections, which leavens us in our hearts."

Cyrus was leavened, that is, grew worse. Sometimes it is used in a better sense; "The Rabbins say, Blessed is that judge who leaveneth his judgment." But this is not to be understood concerning doctrine, but concerning deliberation in judgment.

II. Because very exact care was taken by the Pharisaical canons, what leaven was to be used and what not; disputations occur here and there, whether heathen leaven is to be used, and whether Cuthite leaven, &c. With which caution the disciples thought that Christ armed them, when he spake concerning the leaven of the Pharisees: but withal they suspected some silent reproof for not bringing bread along with them.

13. When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

[*Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?*] I. That phrase or title, *the Son of man*, which Christ very often gives himself, denotes not only his humanity, nor his humility (for see that passage, [John 5:27](#), "He hath given him authority of executing judgment, because he is *the Son of man*"); but it bespeaks the 'seed promised to Adam, the second Adam': and it carried with it a silent confutation of a double ignorance and error among the Jews: 1. They knew not what to resolve upon concerning the original of the Messiah; and how he should rise, whether he should be of the living, as we noted before, the manner of his rise being unknown to them; or whether of the dead. This phrase unties this knot and teaches openly, that he, being a seed promised to the first man, should arise and be born from the seed of the women. 2. They dreamed of the earthly victories of the Messiah, and of nations to be subdued by him; but this title, *The Son of man*, recalls their minds to the first promise, where the victory of the promised seed is the bruising of the serpent's head, not the subduing of kingdoms by some warlike and earthly triumph.

II. When, therefore, the opinion of the Jews concerning the person of the Messiah, what he should be, was uncertain and wavering, Christ asketh, not so much whether they acknowledged him the Messiah, as acknowledging the Messiah, what kind of person they conceived him to be. The apostles and the other disciples whom he had gathered, and were very many, acknowledged him the Messiah: yea, those blind men, chapter 9:27, had confessed this also: therefore that question had been needless as to them, "Do they think me to be the Messiah?" but that was needful, "What do they conceive of me, the Messiah?" and to this the answer of Peter has regard, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God": as if he should say, "We knew well enough a good while ago that thou art the Messiah: but as to the question, 'What kind of person thou art,' I say, 'Thou art the Son of the living God.'" See what we note at chapter 17:54.

Therefore the word *whom* asks not so much concerning the person, as concerning the quality of the person. In which sense also is the word *who*, in those words, [1 Samuel 17:55](#), not "The son of *whom*," but the son "of *what kind of man*," is this youth?

14. And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

[*But others, Jeremias.*] The reason why they name Jeremiah only of all the prophets, we give at chapter 27:9. You observe that recourse is here made to the memory of the dead, from whom the Messiah should spring, rather than from the living: among other things, perhaps, this reason might persuade them so to do, that that piety could not in those days be expected in any one living, as had shined out in those deceased persons. (One of the Babylonian Gemarists suspects that Daniel, raised from the dead, should be the Messiah.) And this perhaps persuaded them further, because they thought that the kingdom of the Messiah should arise after the resurrection: and they that were of this opinion might be led to think that the Messiah himself was some eminent person among the saints departed, and that he rising again should bring others with him.

17. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

[*Flesh and blood.*] The Jewish writers use this form of speech infinite times, and by it oppose *men* to *God*.

"If they were about to lead me *before a king of flesh and blood*, &c.; but they are leading me before the King of kings."

"A *king of flesh and blood* forms his picture in a table, &c.; the Holy Blessed One, his, &c." This phrase occurs five times in that one column: "the Holy Blessed God doth not, as *flesh and blood* doth, &c. *Flesh and blood* wound with one thing and heal with another: but the Holy Blessed One wounds and heals with one and the same thing. Joseph was sold for his dreams, and he was promoted by dreams."

18. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

[*Thou art Peter*, &c.] I. There is nothing, either in the dialect of the nation, or in reason, forbids us to think that our Saviour used this very same Greek word, since such Graecizings were not unusual in that nation. But be it granted (which is asserted more without controversy) that he used the Syriac word; yet I deny that he used that very word *Cepha*, which he did presently after: but he pronounced it *Cephas*, after the Greek manner; or he spoke it *Cephai*, in the adjective sense, according to the Syriac formation. For how, I pray, could he be understood by the disciples, or by Peter himself, if in both places he had retained the same word *Thou art a rock*, and upon *this rock* I will build my church? It is readily answered by the Papists, that "Peter was the rock." But let them tell me why Matthew used not the same word in Greek, if our Saviour used the same word in Syriac. If he had intimated that the church should be built upon Peter, it had been plainer and more agreeable to be the vulgar idiom to have said, "Thou art Peter, and upon *thee* I will build my church."

II. The words concerning the *rock* upon which the church was to be built are evidently taken out of Isaiah, chapter 28:16; which, the New Testament being interpreter, in very many places do most plainly speak Christ. When therefore Peter, the first of all the disciples (from the very first beginning of the preaching of the gospel), had pronounced most clearly of the person of Christ, and had declared the mystery of the incarnation, and confessed the deity of Christ, the minds of the disciples are, with good reason, called back to those words of Isaiah, that they might learn to acknowledge who that *stone* was that was set in Sion for a foundation never to be shaken, and whence it came to pass that that foundation remained so unshaken; namely, thence, that he was not a creature, but God himself, the Son of God.

III. Thence, therefore, Peter took his surname; not that he should be argued to be that *rock*, but because he was so much to be employed in building a church upon a *rock*: whether it were that church that was to be gathered out of the Jews, of which he was the chief minister, or that of the Gentiles (concerning which the discourse here is principally of), unto which he made the first entrance by the gospel.

19. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

[*And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.*] That is, *Thou shalt first open the door of faith to the Gentiles.* He had said that he would build his church to endure for ever, against which "the gates of hell should not prevail"... "and to thee, O Peter (saith he), I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that thou mayest open a door for the bringing in the gospel to that church." Which was performed by Peter in that remarkable story concerning Cornelius, [Acts 10](#). And I make no doubt that those words of Peter respect these words of Christ, [Acts 15:7](#); *A good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel by my mouth, and believe.*

[*And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth &c. And whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, &c.*] I. We believe the keys were committed to Peter alone, but the power of binding and loosing to the other apostles also, chapter 18:18.

II. It is necessary to suppose that Christ here spake according to the common people, or he could not be understood without a particular commentary, which is nowhere to be found.

III. But now *to bind and loose*, a very usual phrase in the Jewish schools, was spoken of *things*, not of *persons*; which is here also to be observed in the articles *what* and *whatsoever*, chapter 18.

One might produce thousands of examples out of their writings: we will only offer a double deced; the first, whence the frequent use of this word may appear; the second, whence the sense may:

1. "R. Jochanan said [to those of Tiberias], 'Why have ye brought this elder to me? *Whatsoever I loose, he binds; whatsoever I bind, he looseth.*'"

2. *Thou shalt neither bind nor loose.*

3. "Nachum, the brother of R. Illa, asked R. Jochanan concerning a certain matter. To whom he answered, *Thou shalt neither bind nor loose.*"

4. *This man binds, but the other looseth.*

5. "R. Chaija said, *Whatsoever I have bound to you elsewhere, I will loose to you here.*"

6. *He asked one wise man, and he bound: Do not ask another wise man, lest perhaps he loose.*

7. *The mouth that bindeth is the mouth that looseth.*

8. "Although of the disciples of Shammai, and those of Hillel, *the one bound, and the other loosed*; yet they forbade not but that these might make purifications according to the others."

9. *A wise man that judgeth judgment, defileth and cleanseth* [that is, he declares defiled or clean]; *he looseth and bindeth.* The same also is in Maimonides.

10. Whether it is lawful to go into the necessary-house with the phylacteries only to piss? *Rabbenā looseth, and Rabh Ada bindeth. The mystical doctor, who neither bindeth nor looseth.*

The other decad shall show the phrase applied to things:

1. "In Judea they did [*servile*] works on the Passover-eve" (that is, on the day going before the Passover), "until noon, but in Galilee not. But that which *the school of Shammai binds* until the night, *the school of Hillel looseth until the rising of the sun.*"

2. "A festival-day may teach us this, *in which they loosed by the notion of a* [*servile*] *work,*" killing and boiling, &c., as the Gloss notes. *But in which they bound by the notion of a sabbatism:* that is, as the same Gloss speaks, "The bringing in some food from without the limits of the sabbath."

3. "They do not send letters by the hand of a heathen on the eve of a sabbath, no, nor on the fifth day of the week. *Yea, the school of Shammai binds it, even on the fourth day of the week; but the school of Hillel looseth it.*"

4. "They do not begin a voyage in the great sea on the eve of the sabbath, no, nor on the fifth day of the week. *Yea, the school of Shammai binds it, even on the fourth day of the week; but the school of Hillel looses it.*"

5. "To them that bathe in the hot-baths in the sabbath-day, *they bind washing, and they loose sweating.*"

6. "Women may not look into a looking-glass on the sabbath-day, if it be fixed to a wall, *Rabbi loosed it, but the wise men bound it.*"

7. "Concerning the moving of empty vessels [on the sabbath-day], of the filling of which there is no intention; *the school of Shammai binds it, the school of Hillel looseth it.*"

8. "Concerning gathering wood on a feast-day scattered about a field, the school of Shammai *binds* it, the school of Hillel *looseth* it."

9. *They never loosed to us a crow, nor bound to us a pigeon.*

10. "Doth a *seah* of unclean *Truma* fall into a hundred *seahs* of clean *Truma*? The school of Shammai *binds* it, the school of Hillel *looseth* it." There are infinite examples of this nature.

Let a third decad also be added (that nothing may be left unsaid in this matter), giving examples of the parts of the phrase distinctly and by themselves:

1. *"The things which they bound not, that they might have a hedge to the law."*

2. *"The scribes bound the leaven."*

3. *They neither punished nor bound, unless concerning the leaven itself.*

4. *"The wise men bound the eating of leaven from the beginning of the sixth hour,"* of the day of the Passover.

5. "R. Abhu saith, R. Gamaliel Ben Rabbi asked me. What if I should go into the market? *and I bound it him.*"

1. *The Sanhedrim, which looseth two things, let it not hasten to loose three.*

2. "R. Jochanan saith, *They necessarily loose saluting on the sabbath.*"

3. *The wise men loose all oils, or all fat things.*

4. "The school of Shammai saith, They do not steep ink, colours, and vetches" on the eve of the sabbath, "unless they be steeped before the day be ended: *but the school of Hillel looseth it.*" Many more such like instances occur there.

5. "R. Meir loosed the mixing of wine and oil, to anoint a sick man on the sabbath."

To these may be added, if need were, the *frequent* (shall I say?) or *infinite* use of the phrases, *bound and loosed*, which we meet with thousands of times over. But from these allegations, the reader sees abundantly enough both the frequency and the common use of this phrase, and the sense of it also; namely, first, that it is used in doctrine, and in judgments, concerning things allowed or not allowed in the law. Secondly, That to *bind* is the same with to *forbid*, or to *declare forbidden*. To think that Christ, when he used the common phrase, was not understood by his hearers in the common and vulgar sense, shall I call it a matter of laughter or of madness?

To this, therefore, do these words amount: When the time was come, wherein the Mo-saic law, as to some part of it, was to be abolished and left off; and as to another part of it, was to be continued, and to last for ever: he granted Peter here, and to the rest of the apostles, chapter 18:18, a power to abolish or confirm what they thought good, and as they thought good, being taught this and led by the Holy Spirit: as if he should say, "Whatsoever ye shall *bind* in the law of Moses, that is, *forbid*, it shall be *forbidden*, the Divine authority confirming it; and whatsoever ye shall *loose*, that is, *permit*, or shall *teach*, that it is *permitted* and *lawful*, shall be *lawful* and *permitted*."

Hence they *bound*, that is, *forbade*, circumcision to the believers; eating of things offered to idols, of things strangled, and of blood for a time to the Gentiles; and that which they *bound* on earth was confirmed in heaven. They *loosed*, that is, *allowed* purification to Paul, and to four other brethren, for the shunning of scandal, [Acts 21:24](#): and in a word, by these words of Christ it was committed to them, the Holy Spirit directing that they should make decrees concerning religion, as to the use or rejection of Mosaic rite and judgments, and that either for a time or for ever.

Let the words be applied, by way of paraphrase, to the matter that was transacted at present with Peter: "I am about to build a Gentile church (saith Christ); and to thee, O Peter, do I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that thou mayest first open the door of faith to them; but if thou askest, by what rule that church is to be governed, when the Mosaic rule may seem so improper for it, thou shalt be so guided by the Holy Spirit, that whatsoever of the law of Moses thou shalt *forbid* them shall be *forbidden*; whatsoever thou *grantest* them shall be *granted*, and that under a sanction made in heaven."

Hence in that instant, when he should use his keys, that is, when he was now ready to open the gate of the gospel to the Gentiles, [Acts 10:28](#), he was taught from heaven, that the consorting of the Jew with the Gentile, which before had been *bound*, was now *loosed*; and the eating of any creature convenient for food was now *loosed*, which before had been *bound*; and he, in like manner, *looses* both these.

Those words of our Saviour, [John 20:23](#), "Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted to them," for the most part are forced to the same sense with these before us; when they carry quite another sense. Here the business is of *doctrine* only, not of *persons*; there of *persons*, not of *doctrine*: here of things lawful or unlawful in religion to be determined by the apostles; there of persons obstinate or not obstinate, to be punished by them, or not to be punished.

As to doctrine, the apostles were doubly instructed: 1. So long sitting at the feet of their Master, they had imbibed the evangelical doctrine. 2. The Holy Spirit directing them, they were to determine concerning the legal doctrine and practice; being completely instructed and enabled in both by the Holy Spirit descending upon them. As to their persons, they were endowed with a peculiar gift, so that the same Spirit directing them, if they would retain and punish the sins of any, a power was delivered into their hands of delivering to Satan, of punishing with diseases, plagues, yea, death itself; which Peter did to Ananias and Sapphira; Paul to Elymas, Hymeneus, and Philetus, &c.

2. And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

[*And was transfigured.*] When Christ was baptized, being now ready to enter upon his evangelical priesthood, he is sealed by a heavenly voice for the *High Priest*, and is anointed with the Holy Spirit, as the high priests were wont to be with holy oil.

In this transfiguration, he is sealed for the high priest: for mark, 1. How two of the greatest prophets, Moses and Elias, resort to him. 2. How to those words, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," which also were heard from heaven at his baptism, is added that clause, "hear ye him": which compare with the words of Moses, concerning a prophet to be raised up by God, [Deuteronomy 18:19](#), "Whosoever shall not hearken to my words, which I shall put into his mouth," &c. 3. How the heavenly voice went out of the cloud that overshadowed them, when at his baptism no such cloud appeared. Here that is worthy observing, which some Jews note, and reason dictates, namely, That the cloud of glory, the conductor of Israel, departed at the death of Moses; for while he lived, that cloud was the people's guide in the wilderness; but when he was dead, the ark of the covenant led them. Therefore, as that cloud departed at the death of Moses, that great prophet, so such a cloud was now present at the sealing of the greatest Prophet. 4. Christ here shines with such a brightness, nay, with a greater than Moses and Elias now glorified; and this both for the honour of his person and for the honour of his doctrine; both which surpassed by infinite degrees the persons and the doctrines of both of them. When you recollect the face of Christ transfigured, shining with so great lustre when he talked with Moses and Elias, acknowledge the brightness of the gospel above the cloudy obscurity of the law and of the prophets.

[For an interesting treatise on the subject of the transfiguration please see The Arthur C. Custance Library, The Doorway Papers "The Virgin Birth and the Incarnation, Part III: If Adam Had Not Died, Chapter 3: The Consequences of Immortality"]

4. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

[*Let us make here three tabernacles, &c.*] The transfiguration of Christ was by night. Compare [Luke 9:37](#). The form of his face and garments is changed while he prays; and Moses and Elias come and discourse with him concerning his death (it is uncertain how long), while as yet the disciples that were present were overcharged with sleep. When they awaked, O what a spectacle had they! being afraid, they observe and contemplate, they discover the prophets: whom, now departing, Peter would detain; and being loath that so noble a scene should be dispersed, made this proposition, "Let us make here three tabernacles," &c. Whence he should know them to be prophets, it is in vain to seek, because it is nowhere to be found;

but being known, he was loath they should depart thence, being ravished with the sweetness of such society, however astonished at the terror of the glory; and hence those words, which when he spake he is said by Luke "not to know what he said"; and by Mark, "not to know what he should say"; which are rather to be understood of the misapplication of his words, than of the sense of the words. He knew well enough that he said these words, and he knew as well for what reason he said them; but yet "he knew not what he said"; that is, he was much mistaken when he spake these words, while he believed that Christ, Moses, and Elias, would abide and dwell there together in earthly tabernacles.

5. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

[*While he yet spake, behold, a cloud, &c.*] Moses and Elias now turning their backs, and going out of the scene, Peter speaks his words; and as he speaks them when the prophets were now gone, "Behold, a cloud," &c. They had foretold Christ of his death (such is the cry of the Law and of the Prophets, that "Christ should suffer," [Luke 24:44](#)); he preaches his deity to his disciples, and the heavenly voice seals him for the true Messiah. See [2 Peter 1:16,17](#).

10. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

[*Why therefore say the scribes that Elias must first come?*] I. It would be an infinite task to produce all the passages out of the Jewish writings which one might concerning the expected coming of Elias: we will mention a few things *in passing* which sufficiently speak out that expectation, and the ends also of his expected coming.

I. Let David Kimchi first be heard upon those words of Malachi, "Behold, I send you Elias the prophet": "God (saith he) shall restore the soul of Elias, which ascended of old into heaven, into a created body, like to his former body: for his first body returned to earth when he went up to heaven, each element to its own element. But when God shall bring him to life in the body, he shall send him to Israel before the day of judgment, which is 'the great and terrible day of the Lord': and he shall admonish both the fathers and the children together to turn to God; and they that turn shall be delivered from the day of judgment," &c. Consider whither the eye of the disciples looks, in the question under our hands. Christ had commanded in the verse before, "Tell the vision" of the transfiguration "to no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead." But now, although they understood not what the resurrection from the dead meant, (which Mark intimates,) yet they roundly retort, "Why therefore say the scribes that Elias shall first come?" that is, before there be a resurrection and a day of judgment: for as yet they were altogether ignorant that Christ should rise.

They believed, with the whole nation, that there should be a resurrection at the coming of the Messiah.

2. Let Aben Ezra be heard in the second place: "We find (saith he) that Elias lived in the days of Ahaziah the son of Ahab: we find also, that Joram the son of Ahab and Jehoshaphat, inquired of Elisha the prophet; and there it is written [[2 Kings 3:11](#)], 'This is Elisha the son of Shaphat, *who poured water* upon the hands of Elijah.' And this is a sign that Elias was first gone up into heaven in a whirlwind: because it is not said '*who poureth* water,' but '*who poured.*' Moreover, Elisha departed not from Elijah from the time that he first waited upon him until Elias went up. And yet we find that, after the death of Jehoshaphat, in the days of Ahaziah his son it was written, 'And a letter came to him from Elijah the prophet.' And this proves that he then writ and sent it: for if it had been written before his ascension, it would be said, a letter was found or brought to him, which Elias had left behind him. And it is without controversy, that he was seen in the days of our holy wise men. God of his mercy hasten his prophecy, and the times of his coming." So he upon [Malachi 4](#).

3. The Talmudists do suppose Elias keeping the sabbath in mount Carmel: "Let not the *Trumah* (saith one), of which it is doubted whether it be clean or unclean, be burnt; lest Elias, keeping the sabbath in mount Carmel, come and testify of it on the sabbath that it is clean."

4. The Talmudical books abound with these and the like trifles: "If a man finds any thing that is lost, he is bound to declare it by a public outcry; but if the owners come not to ask for it, let him lay it up by him until Elias shall come." And, "If any find a bill of contract between his countrymen, and knows not what it means, let him lay it up until Elias shall come."

5. That we be not tedious, it shall be enough to produce a few passages out of Babylonian *Erubhin*: where, upon this subject, "If any say, Behold, I am a Nazarite, on the day wherein the Son of David comes, it is permitted to drink wine on the sabbaths and feast-days," it is disputed what day of the week Messiah shall come, and on what day, Elias: where, among other things, these words occur, *Elias came not yesterday*: that is, the same day wherein he comes he shall appear in public; and shall not lie hid to day, coming yesterday. The Gloss thus: "If thou sayest, perhaps he shall come on the eve of the sabbath, and *shall preach the gospel* on the sabbath; you may answer with that text, 'Behold, I send you Elias the prophet, before the day of the Lord come': you may argue, that he shall preach on that very day in which he shall come."

"*The Israelites are certain* that Elias shall come, neither on the sabbath eves, nor on the eves of the feast days, *by reason of labour.*" And again, *Elias cometh not on the sabbath day.* Thus speak the scholars of Hillel: "We are sure Elias will not come on the sabbath, nor on a feast day." The Glossers give the reason, "Not on the sabbath eves, or the eves of the feast days, *by reason of labour*"; that is, by reason of the preparation for the sabbath; namely, lest

they should leave the necessaries for the sabbath unfinished, to go to meet him: "Nor on the sabbaths, by reason of labour" in the banquets; that they omit not those feastings and eatings which were esteemed so necessary to the sabbath, whiles they went out to meet Elias.

Let these three observations out of the Glossers upon the page cited serve for a conclusion:--

1. *Before the coming of the Son of David, Elias shall come to preach of him.*
2. *"Messias cometh not on the first day of the sabbath, because Elias shall not come on the sabbath."* Whence it appears that Elias is expected the day before the Messias' appearing.
3. *Is not Messias Ben Joseph to come first?*

II. We meet with numberless stories in the Talmudists concerning the apparitions of Elias: according to that which was said before by Aben Ezra, "It is without controversy that Elias was seen in the days of our wise men." There is no need of examples, when it may not be so much doubted who of these wise men saw Elias, as who saw him not. For my part I cannot esteem all those stories for mere fables; but in very many of them I cannot but suspect witchcrafts, and the appearances of ghosts, which we also said before concerning the *Bath Kol*. For thus the devil craftily deluded this nation, willing to be deceived; and even the capacity of observing that the coming of the Messias was now past was obliterated, when here and there, in this age and in the other, his forerunner Elias appeared, as if he intended hence to let them know that he was yet to come.

11. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

[*And he shall restore all things.*] The Jews feign many things which Elias shall restore: "*He shall purify the bastards, and restore them to the congregation. He shall render to Israel the pot of manna, the vial of holy oil, the vial of water; and there are some who say, the rod of Aaron.*"

He shall restore, or make up, not into the former state, but into a better. There were times of restitution of all things determined by God, Acts 3:21; wherein all things were to be framed into a gospel-state, and a state worthy of the Messias: a church was to be founded, and the doctrine of the gospel dispersed, the hearts of the fathers, the Jews, to be united to the sons, the Gentiles; and the hearts of the sons, the Gentiles, to the fathers the Jews: which work was begun by the Baptist, and finished by Christ and the apostles. Which term of the restitution of all these expiring, the commonwealth of the Jews expired also; and the gifts of revelation and miracles granted for this purpose, and so necessary to it, failed. "However, therefore, ye have crucified Christ," saith Peter in that place of the Acts now cited, "yet God shall still send you Jesus Christ in the preaching of the gospel to fulfil these things. Him, indeed, as to his person the heavens do contain, and shall contain, until all these things be perfected; expect not, therefore, with the erring nation, his personal presence always on

earth: but he shall make up and constitute all things by us his ministers, until the times determined and prefixed for the perfecting of this restitution shall come."

15. Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is a lunatic, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

[*He is lunatic.*] [Luke 9:39](#), *a spirit taketh him*; [Mark 9:17](#), *hath a dumb spirit*.

I. He that is skilled in the Talmudic writings will here remember what things are said concerning *a deaf and mad man*, concerning whom there is so much mention in their writings.

"There are five who do not pay the *Trumah*; but if they do, their *Trumah* is no *Trumah*: *the deaf and dumb, the lunatic,*" &c. "Any one is fit to sacrifice a beast, except *a dumb and deaf, a lunatic, and a child*": and very many passages of this nature, &c. I have rendered *deaf and dumb*, according to the sense of the masters, who, in the first place cited, do thus interpret the word; "concerning which the wise men speak, is *he who neither heareth nor speaketh.*" See there the Jerusalem Gemara, where, among other things, this occurs not unworthy our noting; "That all the sons of R. Jochanan Ben Gudgoda were *deaf and dumb.*"

II. It was very usual to the Jews to attribute some of the more grievous diseases to evil spirits, specially those wherein either the body was distorted, or the mind disturbed and tossed with a phrensy.

"*If any one, vexed with an evil spirit, shall say, when the disease did first invade him, Write a bill of divorce for my wife,*" &c.

"*If any, whom Kordicus vexeth, say, Write a bill of divorce for my wife,*" &c. "*Kordicus*, say the Glossers, is a demon, which rules over those that drink too much new wine. *What is 'Kordicus?'* Samuel saith, When new wine out of the press hath caught any one." Rambam, upon the place, hath these words; "*Kordicus* is a disease, generated from the repletion of the vessels of the brain, whereby the understanding is confounded; and it is a kind of falling-sickness." Behold the same a demon and a disease! to which the Gemarists applied exorcisms and a diet.

"*Shibta* is an evil spirit, who, taking hold on the necks of infants, dries up and contracts their nerves."

"*He that drinks up double cups, is punished by the devils.*"

From this vulgar opinion of the nation, namely, that devils are the authors of such kind of diseases, one evangelist brings in the father of this child, saying of him *he is lunatic*, another, *he hath a spirit*. He had been dumb and deaf from his birth; to that misery was added a phrensy, or a lycanthropy, which kind of disease it was not unusual with the nation to attribute to the devil; and here, in truth, a devil was present.

17. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.

[*O faithless and perverse generation, &c.*] The edge of these words is levelled especially against the scribes (see [Mark 9:14](#)); and yet the disciples escaped not altogether untouched.

Christ and his three prime disciples being absent, this child is brought to the rest to be healed: they cannot heal him, partly, because the devil was really in him; partly, because this evil had adhered to him from his very birth. Upon this the scribes insult and scoff at them and their master. *A faithless and perverse generation*, which is neither overcome by miracles, when they are done, and vilify, when they are not done! The faith of the disciples (v 20) wavered by the plain difficulty of the thing, which seemed impossible to be overcome, when so many evils were digested into one, deafness, dumbness, phrensy, and possession of the devil: and all these from the cradle.

20. And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

[*Faith as a grain of mustard seed, &c.*] As a seed of mustard, or as a drop of mustard, in Talmudic language. See chapter 13:23.

[*Ye shall say to this mountain, &c.*] See what we note at chapter 21:21.

21. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

[*This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.*] It is not much unlike this, which is said, *By reason of an evil spirit a singular or religious man may afflict himself with fastings.*

24. And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?

[*They that receive the (didrachma) tribute-money.*] Two things persuade me that this is to be understood of the half-shekel, to be yearly paid into the treasury of the Temple:

1. The word itself whereby this tribute is called, Concerning this, thus Josephus writes: "He laid a tax upon all the Jews wheresoever they were, namely, *two drachms*: commanding every one, of whatever age, to bring it into the Capitol, as before they had paid it into the Temple at Jerusalem." And Dion Cassius of the same thus, "He commanded all to bring *the didrachm* yearly to Jupiter Capitolinus."

The Seventy Interpreters, indeed, upon [Exodus 30:13](#), render it *half a didrachm*; but adding this moreover, *which is according to the holy didrachm*. Be it so; the whole shekel was *the holy didrachm*: then let the half shekel be, *the common didrachm*. However, the thing is, he that paid the half-shekel, in the vulgar dialect, was called, *he that paid the shekels*; and that which is here said by Matthew, *they that receive the didrachm*, the Talmudists express

they that demand or collect the shekels. The Targumists render that place, [Exodus 3](#) [13], *the half of the shekel*; the reason of which see, if you please, in Maimonides. "The shekel (saith he) concerning which the Law speaks, did weigh three hundred and twenty grains of barley; but the wise men sometime added to that weight, and made it to be of the same value with the money *Sela*, under the second Temple, that is, three hundred eighty-four middling grains of barley." See the place and the Gloss.

2. The answer of Christ sufficiently argues that the discourse is concerning this tax, when he saith, He is son of that king for whose use that tribute was demanded: for, "from thence were bought the daily and additional sacrifices, and their drink offerings, the sheaf, the two loaves ([Lev 23:17](#)), the shewbread, all the sacrifices of the congregation, the red cow, the scapegoat, and the crimson tongue, which was between his horns," &c.

But here this objection occurs, which is not so easy to answer. The time of the payment of the half shekel was about the feast of the Passover; but now that time was far gone, and the feast of Tabernacles at hand. It may be answered, 1. That Matthew, who recites this story, observed not the course and order of time, which was not unusual with him, as being he among all the evangelists that most disjoins the times of the stories. But let it be granted that the order of the history in him is right and proper here, it is answered, 2. Either Christ was scarcely present at the Passover last past; or if he were present, by reason of the danger he was in by the snares of the Jews, he could not perform this payment in that manner as it ought to have been. Consider those words which John speaks of the Passover last past, chapter 6:4, "The Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near"; and chapter 7:1, "After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for he would not walk any more in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him." 3. It was not unusual to defer the payment of the half shekels of this year to the year following, by reason of some urgent necessity. Hence it was, when they sat to collect and receive this tribute, the collectors had before them two chests placed; in one of which they put the tax of the present year, in the other of the year past.

But it may be objected, Why did the collectors of Capernaum require the payment at that time, when, according to custom, they began not to demand it before the fifteenth day of the month Adar? I answer, 1. It is certain there were, in every city, *moneychangers* to collect it, and, being collected, to carry it to Jerusalem. Hence is that in the tract cited, "The fifteenth day of the month Adar, the collectors sit in the cities," to demand the half shekel; "and the five-and-twentieth they sit in the Temple." 2. The uncertain abode of Christ at Capernaum gave these collectors no unjust cause of demanding this due, whensoever they had him there present; at this time especially, when the feast of Tabernacles was near, and they about to go to Jerusalem, to render an account, perhaps, of their collection.

But if any list to understand this of the tax paid the Romans, we do not contend. And then the words of those that collected the tribute, "Does not your master pay the didrachm?" seem to sound to this effect, "Is your master of the sect of Judas of Galilee?"

Chapter 18

1. At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

[*Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?*] It cannot be passed over without observation, that the ambitious dispute of the disciples concerning primacy, for the most part followed the mention of the death of Christ and his resurrection. See this story in [Mark 9:31-33](#), and [Luke 9:44-46](#): "He said to his disciples, Lay up these discourses in your ears: for the time is coming that the Son of man is delivered into the hands of men. But they knew not that saying, &c.; and there arose a contest between them, who among them should be greatest." Also [Matthew 20:18-20](#): "He said to them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests, &c. Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, saying, Grant that these my two sons may sit, one on thy right hand," &c. And [Luke 22:22-24](#); "The Son of man indeed goeth as it is determined, &c.; and there arose a contention among them, who of them should seem to be the greater."

The dream of the earthly kingdom of the Messiah did so possess their minds (for they had sucked in this doctrine with their first milk), that the mention of the most vile death of the Messiah, repeated over and over again, did not at all drive it thence. The image of earthly pomp was fixed at the bottom of their hearts, and there it stuck; nor by any words of Christ could it as yet be rooted out, no, not when they saw the death of Christ, when together with that they saw his resurrection: for then they also asked, "Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" [Acts 1:6](#).

However, after Christ had oftentimes foretold his death and resurrection, it always follows in the evangelists that "they understood not what was spoken"; yet the opinion formed in their minds by their doctors, that the resurrection should go before the kingdom of the Messiah, supplied them with such an interpretation of this matter, that they lost not an ace of the opinion of a future earthly kingdom.

See more at chapter 24:3.

6. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

[*It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, &c.*] *It is good for him*, in Talmudic language.

A *millstone* seems to be said in distinction from those very small mills wherewith they were wont to grind the spices that were either to be applied to the wound of circumcision, or to be added to the delights of the sabbath. Hence the Gloss of R. Solomon upon [Jeremiah 25:10](#); "The sound of mills and the light of the candle": "The sound of mills (saith he), wherewith spices were ground and bruised for the healing of circumcision."

That Christ here speaks of a kind of death, perhaps nowhere, certainly never used among the Jews; he does it either to aggravate the thing, or in allusion to drowning in the Dead sea, in which one cannot be drowned without some weight hung to him: and in which *to drown* any thing, by a common manner of speech, implied to devote to rejection, hatred, and execration; which we have observed elsewhere.

10. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

[*Their angels in heaven do always behold, &c.*] This one may very well expound by laying to it that which is said, [Hebrews 1:14](#), "The angels are ministering spirits, sent to minister for them who shall be heirs of the salvation to come": as if he should say, "See that ye do not despise one of these little ones, who have been received with their believing parents into the gospel-church: for I say unto you, that after that manner as the angels minister to adult believers, they minister to them also."

12. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

[*If one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety-and-nine, &c.*] A very common form of speech:--"In distributing some grapes and dates to the poor, although *ninety-nine* say, 'Scatter them'; and only *one*, 'Divide them': they hearken to him, because he speaks according to the tradition." "If *ninety-nine* die by an evil eye," that is, by bewitchings; "and but *one* by the hand of Heaven," that is, by the stroke of God, &c. "If *ninety-nine* die by reason of cold, but *one* by the hand of God," &c.

15. Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

[*Tell him his fault between thee and him alone.*] The reason of the precept is founded in that charitable law, [Leviticus 19:17](#); "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; but thou shalt surely reprove him, and shalt not suffer sin in him."

Here the Talmudists speak not amiss: "The Rabbins deliver, 'Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart.' Perhaps he does not beat him, he does not pull off his hair, he does not curse him: the text saith, 'in thy heart,' speaking of hatred in the heart. But whence is it proved that he that sees his brother doing some foul action is bound to reprove him? Because it is said, *In reproving, thou shalt reprove*. He reproves, *but he heareth not*: whence is it proved he is bound to a second reproof? The text saith, 'In reproving, thou shalt reprove.'" And a little after, "How long must we reprove? Rabh saith, 'Even to blows'; that is, until he that is reproved strikes him that reproves him: "Samuel saith, 'Until he is angry.'" See also Maimonides.

16. But if he will not hear *thee*, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

[*Take with thee one or two more, &c.*] The Hebrew lawyers require the same thing of him that sins against his brother: "Samuel saith, 'Whosoever sins against his brother, he must say to him, I have sinned against thee. If he hear, it is well: if not, let him bring others, and let him appease him before them. If perhaps he die, let him appease him at his sepulchre, and say, I have sinned against thee.'"

But our Saviour here requires a higher charity; namely, from him who is the offended party. In like manner, "The great Sanhedrim admonished a city lapsed to idols, by two disciples of the wise men. If they repented, well: if not, all Israel waged war against it." In like manner also, "The jealous husband warned his wife before two witnesses, 'Do not talk with N.'"

17. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.

[*Tell it unto the church.*] That which was incumbent upon him against whom the sin was committed was this, that he should deliver his soul by reproofing his brother, and by not suffering sin in him. This was the reason that he had need of witnesses, for what else could they testify? They could not testify that the brother had sinned against him that reproofed him; for this, perhaps, they were altogether ignorant of: but they might testify this, that he against whom the sin was committed used due reproof, and omitted nothing which was commanded by the law in that case, whereby he might admonish his brother, and, if possible, bring him back into the right way. The witnesses also added their friendly admonition: whom if the offender hearkened not unto, "let it be told the church."

We do not here enter upon that long dispute concerning the sense of the word *church* in this place. However you take it, certainly the business here is not so much concerning the censure of the person sinning, as concerning the vindication of the person reproofing; that it might be known to all that he discharged his duty, and freed his soul.

It was very customary among the Jews to note those that were obstinate in this or that crime after public admonition given them in the synagogue, and to set a mark of infamy upon them.

All these have need of public admonition in the consistory. The business there is about some shepherds, collectors, and publicans; and it is declared how incapable they are of giving evidence in any judiciary matter; but not before public admonition is gone out against them in the consistory.

"If any deny to feed his children, they reprove him, they shame him, they urge him: if he still refuse, they make proclamation against him in the synagogue, saying, 'N. is a cruel man, and will not nourish his children: more cruel than the unclean birds themselves, for they feed their young ones,'" &c.

"A provoking wife who saith, 'I will create vexation to my husband, because he hath done thus or thus to me, or because he hath miscalled me, or because he hath chid me,' &c. The consistory by messengers send these words to her, 'Be it known unto you, if you persist in your perverseness, although your dowry be a hundred pounds, you have lost it all.' *And moreover they set forth a public proclamation against her in the synagogues, and in the divinity schools every day for four sabbaths.*"

[*Let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican.*] He saith, *Let him be to 'thee'*; not, *Let him be to 'the church'*: because the discourse is of peculiar and private scandal against a single man; who, after three admonitions given, and they to no purpose, is freed from the law of brotherly obligation; and he who being admonished does not repent, is not to be esteemed so much for a brother to him, as for a heathen, &c.

I. Christ does not here prescribe concerning every offender, according to the full latitude of that law, [Leviticus 19:17](#); but of him that particularly offends against his brother; and he does particularly teach what is to be done to that brother.

II. Although he, against whom the offence is committed, had a just cause, why he should be loosed from the obligation of the office of a brother towards him, who neither would make satisfaction for the wrong done, nor be admonished of it; yet to others in the church there is not the same reason.

III. The words plainly mean this; "If, after a threefold and just reproof, he that sinned against thee still remains untractable, and neither will give thee satisfaction for the injury, nor, being admonished, doth repent, thou hast delivered thine own soul, and art free from brotherly offices towards him"; just as the Jews reckon themselves freed from friendly offices towards *heathens* and *publicans*. That of Maimonides is not much different: "A Jew that apostatizes, or breaks the sabbath presumptuously, is altogether like a *heathen*."

1. They reckoned not *heathens* for brethren or neighbours: "If any one's ox shall gore his neighbour's ox: his neighbour's, not a *heathen's*: when he saith *neighbour's*, he excludes *heathens*." A quotation which we produced before.

2. They reputed *publicans* to be by no means within religious society: *A religious man, who becomes a publican, is to be driven out of the society of religion.*

3. Hence they ate neither with *heathens* nor with *publicans*: concerning which thing they often quarrel [*with*] our Saviour. Hence that of the apostle, [1 Corinthians 5:11](#); "With such an one no not to eat," is the same with what is spoke here, "Let him be to thee as a *heathen*," &c.

"It is forbidden a Jew to be alone with a *heathen*, to travel with a *heathen*," &c.

4. They denied also brotherly offices to *heathens* and *publicans*: "It is forbidden to bring home any thing of a *heathen's* that is lost." "It is lawful for *publicans* to swear that is an obligation which is not; that you are of the king's retinue when you are not," &c. that is, *publicans* may deceive, and that by oath.

18. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

[*Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, &c.*] These words depend upon the former. He had been speaking concerning being *loosed* from the office of a brother in a particular case: now he speaks of the authority and power of the apostles of *loosing* and *binding* "any thing" whatsoever seemed them good, being guided in all things by the Holy Ghost. We have explained the sense of this phrase at chapter 16; and he gives the same authority in respect of this, to all the apostles here, as he did to Peter there; who were all to be partakers of the same Spirit and of the same gifts.

This power was built upon that noble and most self-sufficient foundation, [John 16:13](#), "The Spirit of truth shall lead you into all truth." There lies an emphasis in those words, "into all truth." I deny that any one, any where, at any time, was led, or to be led, into *all* truth, from the ascension of Christ, unto the world's end, beside the apostles. Every holy man, certainly, is led into all truth necessary to him for salvation: but the apostles were led into all truth necessary both for themselves and the whole church; because they were to deliver a rule of faith and manners to the whole church throughout all ages. Hence, whatsoever they should confirm in the law was to be confirmed; whatsoever they should abolish was to be abolished: since they were endowed, as to all things, with a spirit of infallibility, guiding them by the hand into all truth.

19. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

[*That if two of you shall agree upon earth, &c.*] And these words do closely agree with those that went before: there the speech was concerning the apostles' determination in all things respecting men; here, concerning their grace and power of obtaining things from God.

I. [*Two of you.*] Hence Peter and John act jointly together among the Jews, [Acts 2, 3](#), &c., and they act jointly among the Samaritans, [Acts 8:14](#); and Paul and Barnabas among the Gentiles, [Acts 13:2](#). This bond being broke by Barnabas, the Spirit is doubled as it were upon Paul.

II. [*Agree together.*] That is, to obtain something from God; which appears also from the following words, *touching any thing that they shall ask*: suppose, concerning conferring the Spirit by the imposition of hands, of doing this or that miracle, &c.

20. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

[*For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*] The like do the Rabbins speak of two or three sitting in judgment, that *the divine presence* is in the midst of them.

21. Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

[*Shall I forgive him? till seven times?*] This question of Peter respects the words of our Saviour, verse 15. "How far shall I forgive my brother before I proceed to the extremity? What! seven times?" He thought that he had measured out, by these words, a large charity, being, in a manner, double to that which was prescribed by the schools: "He that is wronged (say they) is forbidden to be difficult to pardon; for that is not the manner of the seed of Israel. But when the offender implores him once and again, and it appears he repents of his deed, let him pardon him: and whosoever is most ready to pardon is most praiseworthy." It is well; but there lies a snake under it; "For (say they) they pardon a man once, that sins against another; secondly, they pardon him; thirdly, they pardon him; fourthly, they do not pardon him," &c.

Chapter 19

1. And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and come into the coasts of Judaea beyond Jordan;

[*He came unto the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan.*] If it were barely said, *the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan*, by *the coasts of Judea* one might understand *the bounds of the Jews beyond Jordan*. Nor does such a construction want its parallel in Josephus; for "Hyrcanus (saith he) built a fortification, the name of which was Tyre, *between Arabia and Judea, beyond Jordan, not far from Essebonitis.*" But see Mark here, chapter 10:1, relating the same story with this our evangelist: *He came, saith he, into the coasts of Judea, (taking a journey from Galilee,) along the country beyond Jordan.*

3. The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

[*Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?*] Of the causes, *ridiculous* (shall I call them?) or *wicked*, for which they put away their wives, we have spoke at chapter 5:31. We will produce only one example here; "*When Rabh went to Darsis* ('whither,' as the Gloss saith, 'he often went'), *he made a public proclamation, What woman will have me for a day?* Rabh Nachman, when he went to Sacnezib, made a public proclamation, *What woman will have me for a day?*" The Gloss is, "Is there any woman who will be my wife while I tarry in this place?"

The question here propounded by the Pharisees was disputed in the schools, and they divided into parties concerning it, as we have noted before. For the school of Shammai permitted not divorces, but only in the case of adultery; the school of Hillel, otherwise.

8. He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

[*Because Moses for the hardness of your hearts suffered, &c.*] Interpreters ordinarily understand this of the unkindness of men towards their wives; and that not illy: but at first sight *hardness of heart* for the most part in Scripture denotes rather obduration against God than against men. Examples occur everywhere. Nor does this sense want its fitness in this place: not to exclude the other, but to be joined with it here.

I. That God delivered that rebellious people for the hardness of their hearts to spiritual fornication, that is, to idolatry, sufficiently appears out of sacred story, and particularly from these words of the first martyr Stephen, [Acts 7:42](#): *God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, &c.* And they seem not less given up to carnal fornication, if you observe the horrid records of their adulteries in the Holy Scripture, and their not less horrid allowances of divorces and polygamies in the books of the Talmudists: so that the particle...carries with it a very proper sense, if you interpret it *to*, according to its most usual signification; "Moses *to* the hardness of your hearts added this, that he permitted divorces; something that savours of punishment in itself, however you esteem it for a privilege."

II. But you may interpret it more clearly and aptly of the inhumanity of husbands towards their wives: but this is to be understood also under restriction: for Moses permitted not divorces, because, simply and generally men were severe and unkind towards their wives; for then, why should he restrain divorces to the cause of adultery? but because, from their fierceness and cruelty towards their wives, they might take hold of and seek occasions from that law which punished adultery with death, to prosecute their wives with all manner of severity, to oppress them, to kill them.

Let us search into the divine laws in case of adultery a little more largely.

1. There was a law made upon the suspicion of adultery, that the wife should undergo a trial by the bitter waters, [Numbers 5](#): but it is disputed by the Jewish schools, rightly and upon good ground, whether the husband was bound in this case by duty to prosecute his wife to extremity, or whether it were lawful for him to connive at and pardon her, if he would. And there are some who say he was bound by *duty*; and there are others who say that it was left to his *pleasure*.

2. There was a law of death made in case of the discovery of adultery, [Deuteronomy 22:21-23](#): "If a man shall be found lying with a married woman, both shall die," &c. Not that this law was not in force unless they were taken in the very act; but the word *shall be found* is opposed to suspicion, and means the same as if it were said, "When it shall be found that a man hath lain," &c.

3. A law of divorce also was given in case of adultery discovered, [Deuteronomy 24:1](#); for in that case only, and when it is discovered, it plainly appears from our Saviour's gloss, and from the concession of some Rabbins also, that divorces took place: for, say they in the

place last cited, "Does a man find something foul in his wife? he cannot put her away, *because he hath not found foul nakedness in her*"; that is, *adultery*.

But now, how do the law of death and that of divorce consist together? It is answered, They do not so consist together that both retain their force; but the former was partly taken off by the latter, and partly not. The Divine Wisdom knew that inhuman husbands would use that law of death unto all manner of cruelty towards their wives: for how ready was it for a wicked and unkind husband to lay snares even for his innocent wife, if he were weary of her, to oppress her under that law of death! And if she were taken under guilt, how cruelly and insolently would he triumph over her, poor woman, both to the disgrace of wedlock and to the scandal of religion! Therefore the most prudent, and withal merciful lawgiver, made provision that the woman, if she were guilty, might not go without her punishment; and if she were not guilty, might go without danger; and that the wicked husband that was impatient of wedlock might not satiate his cruelty. That which is said by one does not please me, "That there was no place for divorce where matrimony was broke off by capital punishment"; for there was place for divorce for that end, that there might not be place for capital punishment. That law indeed of death held the adulterer in a snare, and exacted capital punishment upon him, and so the law made sufficient provision for terror: but it consulted more gently for the woman, the weaker vessel, lest the cruelty of her husband might unmercifully triumph over her.

Therefore, in the suspicion of adultery, and the thing not discovered, the husband might, if he would, try his wife by the bitter waters; or if he would he might connive at her. In case of the discovery of adultery, the husband might put away his wife, but he scarce might put her to death; because the law of divorce was given for that very end, that provision might be made for the woman against the hardheartedness of her husband.

Let this story serve for a conclusion; "Shemaiah and Abtalion compelled Carchemith, a libertine woman-servant, to drink the bitter waters." The husband of this woman could not put her away by the law of Moses, because she was not found guilty of discovered adultery. He might put her away by the traditional law, which permitted divorces without the case of adultery; he might not, if he had pleased, have brought her to trial by the bitter waters; but it argued the hardness of his heart towards his wife, or burning jealousy, that he brought her. I do not remember that I have anywhere in the Jewish pandect read any example of a wife punished with death for adultery. There is mention of the daughter of a certain priest committing fornication in her father's house, that was burnt alive; but she was not married.

13. Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put *his* hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them.

[*Then were little children brought unto him.*] Not for the healing of some disease; for if this had been the end propounded, why did the disciples keep them back above all others, or chide any for their access? Nor can we believe that they were the children of unbelieving

Jews, when it is scarcely probable that they, despising the doctrine and person of Christ, would desire his blessing. Some therefore of those that believe brought their infants to Christ, that he might take particular notice of them, and admit them into his discipleship, and mark them for his by his blessing. Perhaps the disciples thought this an excess of officious religion; or that they would be too troublesome to their Master; and hence they opposed them: but Christ countenanceth the same thing, and favours again that doctrine which he had laid down, chapter 18:3; namely, that the infants of believers were as much disciples and partakers of the kingdom of heaven as their parents.

18. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

[*Thou shalt do no murder, &c.*] It is worthy marking, how again and again in the New Testament, when mention is made of the whole law, only the second table is exemplified, as in this place; so also [Romans 13:8,9](#), and [James 2:8,11](#), &c. Charity towards our neighbour is the top of religion, and a most undoubted sign of love towards God.

21. Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come *and* follow me.

[*Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor.*] When Christ calls it *perfection* to sell all and give to the poor, he speaks according to the idiom of the nation, which thought so: and he tries this rich man, boasting of his exact performance of the law, whether, when he pretended to aspire to eternal life, he would aspire to that *perfection* which his countrymen so praised. Not that hence he either devoted Christians to voluntary poverty, or that he exhorted this man to rest ultimately in a Pharisaical *perfection*; but lifting up his mind to the renouncing of worldly things, he provokes him to it by the very doctrine of the Pharisees which he professed.

"For these things the measure is not stated; for the corner of the field" to be left for the poor; "for the firstfruits for the appearance in the Temple" (according to the law, [Exodus 23:15,17](#), where, what, or how great an oblation is to be brought, is not appointed), "for the shewing mercy, and for the study of the law." The casuists, discussing that point of 'shewing mercy,' do thus determine concerning it: "A stated measure is not indeed prescribed to the shewing of mercy, as to the affording poor men help with thy body," that is, with thy bodily labour; "but as to money there is a stated measure, namely, the fifth part of thy wealth; nor is any bound to give the poor above the fifth part of his estate, *unless he does it out of extraordinary devotion.*" See Rambam upon the place, and the Jerusalem Gemara: where the example of R. Ishbab is produced, distributing all his goods to the poor.

24. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

[*A camel to go through the eye of a needle, &c.*] A phrase used in the schools, intimating a thing very unusual and very difficult. There, where the discourse is concerning dreams and their interpretation, these words are added. *They do not shew a man a palm tree of gold, nor an elephant going through the eye of a needle.* The Gloss is, "A thing which he was not wont to see, nor concerning which he ever thought."

In like manner R. Sheshith answered R. Amram, disputing with him and asserting something that was incongruous, in these words; "Perhaps thou art one of those of Pumbeditha, who can make an elephant pass through the eye of a needle": that is, as the Aruch interprets it, "who speak things that are impossible."

28. And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

[*Ye that have followed me, in the regeneration.*] That the world is to be renewed at the coming of the Messias, and the preaching of the gospel, the Scriptures assert, and the Jews believe; but in a grosser sense, which we observe at chapter 24. Our Saviour, therefore, by the word *regeneration*, calls back the mind of the disciples to a right apprehension of the thing; implying that renovation, concerning which the Scripture speaks, is not of the body or substance of the world; but that it consists in the renewing of the manners, doctrine, and a dispensation conducing thereunto: *men* are to be renewed, regenerated,--not the *fabric* of the world. This very thing he teaches Nicodemus, treating concerning the nature of the kingdom of heaven, [John 3:3](#).

[*When the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit.*] These words are fetched out of Daniel, chapter 7:9,10; which words I wonder should be translated by the interpreters, Aben Ezra, R. Saadia, and others, as well Jews as Christians, *thrones were cast down*. R. Solomon the Vulgar, and others, read it righter, *thrones were set up*: where Lyranus thus, "He saith *thrones* in the plural number, because not only Christ shall judge, but the apostles, and perfect men, shall assist him in judgment, sitting upon *thrones*." The same way very many interpreters bend the words under our hands, namely, that the saints shall at the day of judgment sit with Christ, and approve and applaud his judgment. But, 1. besides, that the scene of the last judgment, painted out in the Scripture, does always represent as well the saints as the wicked standing before the tribunal of Christ, [Matthew 25:32](#), [2 Corinthians 5:10](#), &c.; we have mention here only of "twelve thrones." And, 2, we have mention only of judging the "twelve tribes of Israel." The sense, therefore, of the place may very well be found out by weighing these things following:

I. That those thrones set up in Daniel are not to be understood of the last judgment of Christ, but of his judgment in his entrance upon his evangelical government, when he was

made by his Father chief ruler, king, and judge of all things: [Psalm 2:6](#), [Matthew 28:18](#), [John 5:27](#). For observe the scope and series of the prophet, that, after the four monarchies, namely, the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Syro-Grecian, which monarchies had vexed the world and the church by their tyranny, were destroyed, the kingdom of Christ should rise, &c. Those words, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," that judiciary scene set up [Revelation 4](#) and 5, and those thrones [Revelation 20:1](#), &c. do interpret Daniel to this sense.

II. The throne of glory, concerning which the words before us are, is to be understood of the judgment of Christ to be brought upon the treacherous, rebellious, wicked people. We meet with very frequent mention of the coming of Christ in his glory in this sense; which we shall discourse more largely of at chapter 24.

III. That the sitting of the apostles upon thrones with Christ is not to be understood of their *persons*, it is sufficiently proved; because Judas was now one of the number: but it is meant of their *doctrine*: as if he had said, "When I shall bring judgment upon this most unjust nation, then our doctrine, which you have preached in my name, shall judge and condemn them." See [Romans 2:16](#).

Hence it appears that the gospel was preached to all the twelve tribes of Israel before the destruction of Jerusalem.

1. For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

[*Who went out early in the morning to hire labourers.*] You have such a parable as this, but madly applied, in the Talmud: we will produce it here for the sake of some phrases: "To what was R. Bon Bar Chaija like? *To a king who hired many labourers*; among which there was one hired, who performed his work extraordinary well. What did the king? He took him aside, and walked with him to and fro. *When even was come*, those labourers came, *that they might receive their hire*, and he gave him a complete hire with the rest. *And the labourers murmured*, saying, '*We have laboured hard all the day*, and this man only two hours, yet he hath received as much wages as we': the king saith to them, 'He hath laboured more in those two hours than you in the whole day.' So R. Bon plied the law more in eight-and-twenty years than another in a hundred years."

[*Early in the morning.*] "The time of working is from sunrising to the appearing of the stars, and not from break of day: and this is proved from the chapter *the president of the priests saith to them*; where they say, 'It is light all in the east, and men go out to hire labourers': whence it is argued that they do not begin their work before the sun riseth. It is also proved from the tract *Pesachin*, where it is said that it is prohibited on the day of the Passover to do any servile work after the sun is up; intimating this, that that was the time when labourers should begin their work," &c.

[*To hire labourers.*] Read here, if you please, the tract *Bava Mazia*, cap. 7; which begins thus, *He that hireth labourers*: and Maimonides, a tract entitled *Hiring*.

2. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

[*Agreed for a penny a day.*] A penny of silver, which one of gold exceeded twenty-four times; for *A penny of gold is worth five-and-twenty of silver*. The canons of the Hebrews concerning hiring of labourers distinguish, as reason requires, between *being hired by the day*, and *being hired (only) for some hours*: which may be observed also in this parable: for in the morning they are hired for all the day, and for a penny, but afterward for certain hours; and have a part of a penny allotted them, in proportion to the time they wrought.

8. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

[*Call the labourers.*] For "it is one of the affirmative precepts of the law, that a hired labourer should have his wages paid him when they are due, as it is said, 'You shall pay him his wages in his day': and if they be detained longer, it is a breach of a negative precept; as it is said, 'The sun shall not go down upon him,'" &c.

13. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

[*Didst not thou agree with me for a penny?*] In hiring of labourers, the custom of the place most prevailed; hence came that axiom, *Observe the custom of the city*; speaking of this very thing. There is also an example, "Those of Tiberias that went up to Bethmeon to be hired for labourers, were hired according to the custom of Bethmeon," &c. By the by also we may observe that which is said by the Babylonians in the place cited...as the Gloss renders it, "Notice must be taken whether they come from several places; for at some places they go to work sooner, and at some later."

Hence two things may be cleared in the parable before us: 1. Why they are said to be hired at such different hours; namely, therefore, because they are supposed to have come together from several places. 2. Why there was no certain agreement made with those that were hired at the third, sixth, and ninth hours, as with those that were hired early in the morning; but that he should only say, "Whatsoever is right I will give you": that is, supposing that they would submit to the custom of the place. But, indeed, when their wages were to be paid them, there is, by the favour of the lord of the vineyard, an equality made between those that were hired for some hours, and those that were hired for the whole day; and when these last murmured, they are answered from their own agreement, *You agreed with me*. Note here the canon; "The master of the family saith to his servant, 'Go, hire me labourers for fourpence': he goes and hires them for threepence; although their labour deserves fourpence, they shall not receive but three, *because they bound themselves by agreement, and their complaint is against the servant*."

22. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

[*The baptism that I am baptized with.*] The phrase that goes before this, concerning the *cup*, is taken from divers places of Scripture, where sad and grievous things are compared to draughts of a bitter cup. You may think that *the cup of vengeance*, of which there is mention in Bab. *Beracoth*, means the same thing, but it is far otherwise: give me leave to quote it, though it be somewhat out of our bounds: "Let them not talk (say they) over their cup of blessing; and let them not bless over their *cup of vengeance*. *What is the cup of vengeance?* The second cup, saith R. Nachman Bar Isaac." Rabbena Asher and Piske are more clear: "If he shall drink off two cups, let him not bless over the third." The Gloss, "He that drinks off double cups is punished by devils." But to the matter before us.

So cruel a thing was the baptism of the Jews, being a plunging of the whole body into water, when it was never so much chilled with ice and snow, that, not without cause, partly, by reason of the *burying* as I may call it under water, and partly by reason of the cold, it used to signify the most cruel kind of death. The Jerusalem Talmudists relate, that "in the days

of Joshua Ben Levi, some endeavoured quite to take away the washings [*baptisms*] of women, because the women of Galilee grew barren by reason of the coldness of the waters"; which we noted before at the sixth verse of the third chapter.

Chapter 21

1. And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

[*To the mount of Olives.*] *Mons Olivarum*, [Zechariah 14:4](#).

2. Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.

[*An ass and her foal.*] In the Talmudists we have the like phrase, *an ass and a little colt*. In that treatise Mezia, they speak concerning a hired ass, and the terms that the hired is obliged to. Among other things there, the Babylon Gemara hath these words, *Whosoever transgresses against the will of the owner is called a robber*. For instance, if any one hires an ass for a journey on the plains, and turns up to the mountains, &c. Hence this of our Saviour appears to be a miracle, not a robbery; that without any agreement or terms this ass should be led away; and that the owner and those that stood by should be satisfied with these bare words, "The Lord hath need of him."

5. Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

[*Meek, and sitting upon an ass.*] This triumph of Christ completes a double prophecy: 1. This prophecy of Zechariah here mentioned. 2. The taking to themselves the Paschal lamb, for this was the very day on which it was to be taken, according to the command of the law, [Exodus 12:3](#); "In the tenth day of this month, they shall take to them every man a lamb."

It scarce appears to the Talmudists, how those words of Daniel concerning the Messiah, that "he comes with the clouds of heaven," are consistent with these words of Zechariah, that "he comes sitting upon an ass." "If (say they) the Israelites be good, then he shall come with the clouds of heaven; but if not good, then riding upon an ass." Thou art much mistaken, O Jew: for he comes "in the clouds of heaven," as judge and revenger; but *sitting upon an ass*, not because you are, but because he is, good. "*King Saporess said to Samuel*, 'You say your Messiah will come upon an ass, I will send him a brave horse.' He answers him, 'You have not a horse with a hundred spots as is his ass.'" In the greatest humility of the Messiah they dream of grandeur, even in his very ass.

8. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strowed *them* in the way.

[*Strewed branches in the way.*] Not that they strewed garments and boughs just in the way under the feet of the ass to be trod on; this perhaps might have thrown down the rider; but by the wayside they made little tents and tabernacles of clothes and boughs, according to the custom of the feast of Tabernacles. John also adds, that taking *branches of palm trees* in their hands, they went forth to meet him. That book of Maimonides entitled *Tabernacles and palm branches*, will be an excellent comment on this place, and so will the Talmudic treatise, *Succah*. We will pick out these few things, not unsuitable to the present story: "Doth any one spread his garment on his tabernacle against the heat of the sun, &c.? it is absurd; but if he spread his garment for comeliness and ornament, it is approved." Again, "The boughs of palm trees, of which the law, [Leviticus 23:40](#), speaks, are the young growing sprouts of palms, before their leaves shoot out on all sides; but when they are like small staves, and these are called *young branches of palms*." And a little after, "It is a notable precept, to gather *young branches of palms*, the boughs of myrtle and willow, and to make them up into a small bundle, and to carry them in their hands," &c.

9. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

[*Hosanna to the Son of David.*] Some are at a loss why it is said *to the Son*, and not *O Son*: wherefore they fly to Caninius as to an oracle, who tells us, that those very bundles of boughs are called *Hosanna*; and that these words, *Hosanna to the Son of David*, signify no more than *boughs to the Son of David*. We will not deny that *bundles* are sometimes so called, as seems in these clauses...where it is plain, that a branch of palm is called *Lulab*, and boughs of myrtle and willow bound together are called *Hosanna*: but, indeed, if *Hosanna to the Son of David* signifies *boughs to the Son of David*, what do those words mean, *Hosanna in the highest*? The words therefore here sung import as much as if it were said, *We now sing Hosanna to the Messias*.

In the feast of Tabernacles, the *great Hallel*, as they call it, used to be sung, that is, [Psalm 113-118](#). And while the words of the Psalms were sung or said by one, the whole company used sometimes to answer at certain clauses, *Halleluia*. Sometimes the same clauses that had been sung or said were again repeated by the company: sometimes the bundles of boughs were brandished or shaken. "But when were the bundles shaken?" The rubric of the Talmud saith, "At that clause *Give thanks unto the Lord*, in the beginning of [Psalm 118](#), and at the end. *And at that clause, Save now, I beseech thee*, O Lord, ([Psa 118:25](#)) as saith the school of Hillel: but the school of Shammai saith also, at that clause, *O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity*. R. Akibah said, I saw R. Gamaliel and R. Joshua, when all the company shook

their bundles they did not shake theirs, but only at that clause, *Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord.*"

On every day of the feast, they used once to go round the altar with bundles in their hands, singing this, *Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord; I beseech thee, O Lord, send now prosperity.* But on the seventh day of the feast they went seven times round the altar, &c. "The tossing or shaking of the bundles was on the right hand, on the left hand, upwards and downwards."

"The reason of the bundles was this, because it is written, 'Then let all the trees of the wood sing,' (Psa 96:12). And afterward it is written, 'Give thanks unto the Lord, because he is good,' (Psa 106:1). And afterward, 'Save us, O Lord, O our God,' &c. (Psa 106:47). And the reason is mystical. In the beginning of the year, Israel and the nations of the world go forth to judgment; and being ignorant who are to be cleared and who guilty, the holy and blessed God commanded Israel that they should rejoice with these bundles, as a man rejoiceth who goeth out of the presence of his judge acquitted. Behold, therefore, what is written, 'Let the trees of the wood sing'; as if it were said, Let them sing with the trees of the wood, when they go out justified from the presence of the Lord," &c.

[For more information on feast days, please see "The Temple: Its Ministry and Services" by Alfred Edersheim.]

These things being premised concerning the rites and customs of that feast, we now return to our story:--

I. It is very much worth our observation, that the company receives Christ coming now to the Passover with the solemnity of the feast of Tabernacles. For what hath this to do with the time of the Passover? If one search into the reason of the thing more accurately, these things occur; First, The mirth of that feast above all others; concerning which there needs not much to be said, since the very name of the feast (for by way of emphasis it was called *Festivity* or *Mirth*) sufficiently proves it. Secondly, That prophecy of Zechariah, which, however it be not to be understood according to the letter, yet from thence may sufficiently be gathered the singular solemnity and joy of that feast above all others; and, perhaps, from that same prophecy, the occasion of this present action was taken. For being willing to receive the Messiah with all joyfulness, triumph, and affection of mind (for by calling him the *Son of David*, it is plain they took him for the *Messias*), they had no way to express a more ardent zeal and joy at his coming, than by the solemn procession of that feast. They have the *Messias* before their eyes; they expect great things from him; and are therefore transported with excess of joy at his coming.

II. But whereas the *Great Hallel*, according to the custom, was not now sung, by reason of the suddenness of the present action, the whole solemnity of that song was, as it were, swallowed up in the frequent crying out and echoing back of *Hosanna*; as they used to do

in the Temple, while they went round the altar. And one while they sing *Hosanna to the Son of David*; another while, *Hosanna in the highest*; as if they had said, "Now we sing *Hosanna to the Son of David; save us, we beseech thee, O thou [who dwellest] in the highest, save us by the Messias.*"

12. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves,

[*He cast out all them that sold and bought in the Temple.*] I. There was always a constant market in the Temple in that place which was called *the shops*; where every day was sold wine, salt, oil, and other requisites to sacrifices; as also oxen and sheep, in the spacious Court of the Gentiles.

II. The nearness of the Passover had made the market greater; for innumerable beasts being requisite to this solemnity, they were brought hither to be sold. This brings to mind a story of Bava Ben Buta: "He coming one day into the court found it quite empty of beasts. 'Let their houses,' said he, 'be laid waste, who have laid waste the house of our God.' He sent for three thousand of the sheep of Kedar; and having examined whether they were without spot, brought them into the Mountain of the House"; that is, into the Court of the Gentiles.

[*Overthrew the tables of the moneychangers.*] Who those *moneychangers* were, may be learned very well from the Talmud, and Maimonides in the treatise *Shekalim*:--

"It is an affirmative precept of the law, that every Israelite should give half a shekel yearly: even the poor, who live by alms, are obliged to this; and must either beg the money of others, or sell their clothes to pay half a shekel; as it is said, 'The rich shall give no more, and the poor shall give no less.'"

"In the first day of the month Adar, they made a public proclamation concerning these shekels, that every one should provide his half shekel, and be ready to pay it. Therefore, on the fifteenth day of the same month, *the exchangers* sat in every city, civilly requiring this money: they received it of those that gave it, and compelled those that did not. On the five-and-twentieth day of the same month they sat in the Temple; and then compelled them to give; and from him that did not give they forced a pledge, even his very coat."

"They sat in the cities, with two chests before them; in one of which they laid up the money of the present year, and in the other the money of the year past. They sat in the Temple with thirteen chests before them; the first was for the money of the present year; the second, for the year past; the third, for the money that was offered to buy pigeons," &c. They called these chests *trumpets*, because, like *trumpets*, they had a narrow mouth, and a wide belly.

"It is necessary that every one should have half a shekel to pay for himself. Therefore, when he comes to the exchanger to change a shekel for two half shekels, he is obliged to allow

him some gain, which is called *kolbon*. And when two pay one shekel [between them], *each of them is obliged to allow the same gain or fee.*"

And not much after, "*How much is that gain?* At that time when they paid pence for the half shekel, *a kolbon* [or the fee that was paid to the moneychanger] was half a *mea*, that is, the twelfth part of a penny, and never less. But the *kolbons* were not like the half shekel; but the exchangers laid them by themselves till the holy treasury were paid out of them." You see what these *moneychangers* were, and whence they had their name. You see that Christ did not overturn the chests in which the holy money was laid up, but the tables on which they trafficked for this unholy gain.

[*Of those that sold doves*] *Sellers of doves*. See the Talmudic treatise of that title. "*Doves were at one time sold at Jerusalem for pence of gold*. Whereupon Rabban Simeon Ben Gamaliel said, *By this temple I will not lie down this night, unless they be sold for pence of silver, &c.* Going into the council-house, he thus decreed, *A woman of five undoubted labours, or of five undoubted fluxes, shall be bound only to make one offering; whereby doves were sold that very day for two farthings.*" The offering for women after childbirth, and fluxes, for their purification, were pigeons, &c. But now, when they went up to Jerusalem with their offerings at the feasts only, there was at that time a greater number of beasts, pigeons, and turtles, &c. requisite. See what we have said at the fifth chapter, and the three-and-twentieth verse.

15. And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased.

[*The children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna.*] *Children*, from their first infancy, were taught to manage the bundles, to shake them, and in shaking, to sing Hosanna. *A child, so soon as he knows how to wave the bundle, is bound to carry a bundle* Where the Gemara saith thus; "The Rabbins teach, that so soon as a little child can be taught to manage a bundle, he is bound to carry one: so soon as he knows how to veil himself, he must put on the borders: as soon as he knows how to keep his father's phylacteries, he must put on his own: as soon as he can speak, let his father teach him the law, and to say the phylacteries," &c.

19. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.

[*Found nothing thereon but leaves only.*] This place is not a little obscure, being compared with [Mark 11:13](#), who seems to say, that therefore figs were not found on this tree, because *it was not yet the time of figs*. Why then did our Saviour expect figs, when he might certainly

know that *it was not yet the time of figs*? And why, not finding them, did he curse the tree, being innocent and agreeable to its own nature?

I. We will first consider the situation of this tree. Our evangelist saith, that it was *in the way*. This minds me of a distinction used very often by the Talmudists, between the fruits of trees of *common* right, which did not belong to any peculiar master, but grew in woody places, or in *common* fields; and the fruits of trees which grew in gardens, orchards, or fields, that had a proper owner. How much difference was made between these fruits by the canonists, as to tithing, and as to eating, is in many places to be met with through the whole classes, entitled *Seeds*. This fig-tree seems to have been of the former kind: *a wild fig-tree*, growing in a place or field, not belonging to any one in particular, but *common* to all. So that our Saviour did not injure any particular person, when he caused this tree to wither; but it was such a tree, that it could not be said of it, that it was *mine* or *thine*.

II. *He found nothing thereon but leaves*, because the time of figs was not yet a great while, [Mark 11:13](#).

1. "At what time in the seventh year do they forbear to lop their trees? The school of Shammai saith *All trees from that time, they bring forth* [leaves]." The Gloss, "The beginning of leaves is in the days of Nisan."

2. "Rabban Simeon Ben Gamaliel saith, From the putting forth of leaves, till there be green figs, is fifty days; from the green figs, till the buds fall off, fifty days; and from that time till the figs be ripe are fifty days." If, therefore, the first putting out of the leaves was in the month Nisan, and that was five months' time before the figs came to be ripe, it is plain enough that the figs of that year coming on were not expected by our Saviour, nor could be expected.

That we may pursue the matter somewhat home, and make it appear that the text of Mark, as it is commonly read, *for the time of figs was not yet*, is uncorrupted,

I. We must first observe what is said about the intercalation of the year: "They intercalate the year upon three accounts; for the green year, for the fruit of the tree, and for *Tekupha*." Maimonides is more large; whom see. Now if you ask what means the intercalation for the fruit of the tree, the Gloss answers, "If the fruit be not ripened till Pentecost is past, they intercalate the year; because Pentecost is the time of bringing the firstfruits: and if at that time one should not bring them along with him when he comes to the feast, he would be obliged to make another journey." But now this is not to be understood of all trees, but of some only, which put forth their fruit about the time of the Passover, and have them ripe at the feast of Pentecost. For thus Maimonides in the place cited: "If the council sees that there is not yet any green ear, and that the fruit of the trees which used to bud at the feast of the Passover is not yet budded [mark that, 'used to bud'], moved by these two causes, they intercalate the year." Among these the fig-tree can by no means be reckoned: for since, our Saviour being witness, the putting forth of its leaves is a sign that summer is at hand, you could not

expect any ripe figs, nay (according to the Talmudists), not so much as the putting out of leaves, before the Passover. When it is before said that Pentecost was the time of bringing the firstfruits, it must not be so understood as if the firstfruits of all trees were then to be brought, but that before Pentecost it was not lawful to bring any; for thus it is provided for by a plain canon, "The firstfruits are not to be brought before Pentecost. The inhabitants of mount Zeboim brought theirs before Pentecost, but they did not receive them of them, because it is said in the law, 'And the feast of harvest, the firstfruit of thy labours which thou hast sown in thy field.'"

II. There are several kinds of figs mentioned in the Talmudists besides these common ones; namely, figs of a better sort, which grew in gardens and paradises: 1. *Shithin*. Concerning which the tract *Demai*, among those things which were accounted to *deserve lesser care*, and among those things which were *doubtful as to tithing* were *shithin*: which the Glosser tells us were *wild figs*. 2. There is mention also in the same place of...*a fig mixed with a plane-tree*. 3. But among all those kinds of figs, they were memorable which were called *a kind of fig*; and they yet more, which were called *white figs*; which, unless I mistake, make to our purpose: not that they were more noble than the rest, but their manner of bearing fruit was more unusual. There is mention of these in *Sheviith*, in these words, we will render the words in the paraphrase of the Glossers: "...*white figs*, and *a kind of fig*: the seventh year" (that is, the year of release) "is to those the second" (viz of the seven years following); "to these, the going out of the seventh. *White figs* put forth fruit every year, but it is ripe only every third year: so that on that tree every year one might see three sorts of fruit, namely, of the present year, of the past, and of the year before that. Thus the *kind of fig* bring forth ripe fruit in two years," &c.

Concerning *white figs* thus the Jerusalem Gemara: "Do they bear fruit every year, or once in three years? They bear fruit every year; but the fruit is not ripe till the third year. But how may one know which is the fruit of each year? R. Jona saith, 'By the threads that hang to them.' The tradition of Samuel, 'He makes little strings hang to it,'" &c.

III. The fruit of very many trees hung upon them all the winter, by the mildness of the weather, if they were not gathered or shaken off by the wind: nay, they ripened in winter. Hence came those cautions about tithing: "The tree which puts forth its fruit before the beginning of the year of the world" [that is, before the beginning of the month Tisri, in which month the world was created], "must be tithed for the year past: but if after the beginning of the world, then it must be tithed for the year coming on. R. Judan Bar Philia answered before R. Jonah, 'Behold the tree Charob puts forth its fruits before the beginning of the world, and yet it is tithed for the year following.' R. Jissa saith, 'If it puts forth a third part before the year of the world, it must be tithed for the year past; but if after, then for the year following.' R. Zeira answers before R. Jissa 'Sometimes palm-trees do not bring forth part of their fruit till after the beginning of the year of the world; and yet they must be tithed for

the year before.' Samuel Bar Abba saith, 'If it puts forth the third part of its fruit before the fifteenth day of the month Shebat, it is to be tithed for the year past; if after the fifteenth day of the month Shebat, for the year to come.'" Hence that axiom in Rosh Hashanah, "The first day of the month Shebat is the beginning of the year for trees, according to the school of Shammai; but, according to that of Hillel, the fifteenth day."

However, fig-trees were not among those trees that put forth their fruit after the beginning of Tisri; for you have seen before, out of the Talmudists, that they used to put forth their leaves in the month Nisan: and that their fruit used to be ripe in thrice fifty days after this. Yet, perhaps, it may be objected about them, what we meet with in the Jerusalem Gemara, at the place before cited: "One gathers figs (say they), and knows not at what time they were put forth" (and thereby is at a loss for what year to tithe them). "R. Jonah saith, 'Let him reckon a hundred days backwards; and if the fifteenth day of the month Shebat falls within that number, then he may know when they were put forth.'" But this must be understood of figs of a particular sort, which do not grow after the usual manner, which is plain also from that which follows; for, "they say to him, 'With you at Tiberias there are fig-trees that bear fruit in one year': to which he answers, 'Behold, with you at Zippor there are trees that bear fruit in two years.'" Concerning common fig-trees, their ordinary time of putting out green figs was sufficiently known; as also the year of tithing them: but concerning those trees of another sort, which had ripe fruit only in two or three years, it is no wonder if they were at a loss in both.

IV. Christ, therefore, came to the tree seeking fruit on it, although the ordinary time of figs was not yet; because it was very probable that some fruit might be found there. Of the present year, indeed, he neither expected nor could expect any fruit, when it was so far from being the *time of figs*, that it was almost five months off: and it may be doubted whether it had yet so much as any leaves of the present year. It was now the month Nisan, and that month was the time of the first putting out of leaves; so that if the buds of the leaves had just peeped forth, they were so tender, small, and scarce worth the name of leaves (for it was but the eleventh day of the month), that to expect figs of the same year with those leaves had not been only in vain, but ridiculous. Those words seem to denote something peculiar, *having leaves*; as if the other trees thereabout had been without leaves, or, at least, had not such leaves as promised figs. Mark seems to give the reason why he came rather to that tree than to any other; namely, because he saw leaves on it, and thereby hoped to find figs. "For when he saw (saith he) a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon." From the leaves he had hopes of figs: these, therefore, certainly were not the leaves of the present spring, for those were hardly so much as in being yet: but they were either the leaves of the year past, that had hung upon the tree all winter; or else this tree was of that kind which had figs and leaves together hanging on it for two or three years before the fruit grew ripe. And I rather approve of this latter sense, which both renders the matter

itself more clear, and better solves the difficulties that arise from the words of Mark. This tree, it seems, had leaves which promised fruit, and others had not so; whereas, had they all been of the same kind, it is likely they would all have had leaves after the same manner. But when others had lost all their leaves of the former year by winds and the winter, and those of the present year were not as yet come out, this kept its leaves, according to its nature and kind, both summer and winter. St. Mark, therefore, in that clause, which chiefly perplexes interpreters, *for the time of figs was not yet*, doth not strictly and only give the reason why he found no figs, but gives the reason of the whole action; namely, why on that mountain which abounded with fig trees he saw but one that had such leaves; and being at a great distance when he saw it, he went to it, expecting figs only from it. The reason, saith he, was this, "Because it was not the usual time of figs": for had it been so, he might have gathered figs from the trees about him; but since it was not, all his expectation was from this, which seemed to be the kind of fig or white fig, which never wanted leaves or figs. For to take an instance in the tree: That tree (suppose) bore figs such a summer, which hung upon the boughs all the following winter; it bore others also next summer; and those, together with the former, hung on the boughs all this winter too: the third summer it bore a third degree, and this summer brought those of the first bearing to ripeness, and so onwards continually; so that it was no time to be found without fruit of several years. It is less, therefore, to be wondered at, if that which promised so much fruitfulness by its looks, that one might have expected from it at least the fruit of two years, did so far deceive the hopes it had raised, as not to afford one fig; if that, I say, should suffer a just punishment from our Lord, whom it had so much, in appearance, disappointed: an emblem of the punishment that was to be inflicted upon the Jews for their spiritual barrenness and hypocrisy.

21. Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

[*But if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.*] this is a hyperbolical way of speaking, taken from the common language of the schools of the Jews, and designed after a manner for their refutation. Such a hyperbole concerning this very mountain you have [Zechariah 14:4](#).

The Jews used to set out those teachers among them, that were more eminent for the profoundness of their learning, or the splendour of their virtues, by such expressions as this; *He is a rooter up* (or *a remover*) *of mountains*. "Rabh Joseph is Sinai, and Rabbah is *a rooter up of mountains*." The Gloss; "They called Rabh Joseph *Sinai*, because he was very skilful in clearing of difficulties; and Rabbah Bar Nachmani, *A rooter up of mountains*, because he had a piercing judgment." "Rabba said, I am like Ben Azzai in the streets of Tiberias." The Gloss; "Like Ben Azzai, who taught profoundly in the streets of Tiberias; nor was there in

his days such another *rooter up of mountains as he.*" "He saw Resh Lachish in the school, as if he were *plucking up mountains* and grinding them one upon another."

The same expression with which they sillily and flatteringly extolled the learning and virtue of their men, Christ deservedly useth to set forth the power of faith, as able to do all things, [Mark 9:23](#).

33. Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:

[*Planted a vineyard.*] Concerning vines and their husbandry see Kilaim, where there is a large discourse of the beds of a vineyard, the orders of the vines, of the measure of the winepress, of the hedge, of the trenches, of the void space, of the places within the hedge which were free from vines, whether they were to be sown or not to be sown, &c.

35. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

[*Beat; killed; stoned.*] There seems to be an allusion to the punishments and manners of death in the council: 1. Beat, which properly signifies the *flaying off of the skin*, is not amiss rendered by interpreters *beat*; and the word seems to related to *whipping* where forty stripes save one did miserably *flay off the skin* of the poor man...2. *Killed*, signifies a death by the sword...*Four kinds of death are delivered to the Sanhedrim, stoning, burning, killing, and strangling.*

38. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

[*This is the heir, &c.*] Compare this verse with [John 11:48](#); and it seems to hint, that the rulers of the Jews acknowledged among themselves that Christ was the Messias; but being strangely transported beside their senses, they put him to death; lest, bringing in another worship and another people, he should either destroy or suppress their worship and themselves.

44. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

[*And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, &c.*] Here is a plain allusion to the manner of stoning, concerning which thus *Sanhedrim*: "The place of stoning was twice as high as a man. From the top of this, one of the witnesses striking him on his loins felled him to the ground: if he died of this, well; if not, the other witness threw a stone upon his heart," &c. "R. Simeon Ben Eleazar saith, There was a stone there as much as two could carry: this they threw upon his heart."

Chapter 22

9. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

[*Go ye into the highways, &c.*] That is, 'Bring in hither the travellers.' "What is the order of sitting down to meat? The travellers come in and sit down upon benches or chairs, till all are come that were invited." The Gloss; "It was a custom among rich men to invite poor travellers to feasts."

16. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.

[*With the Herodians.*] Many things are conjectured concerning the *Herodians*. I make a judgment of them from that history which is produced by the author Juchasin, speaking of Hillel and Shammai. "Heretofore (saith he) Hillel and Menahem were (heads of the council); but Menahem withdrew into the family of Herod, together with eighty men bravely clad." These, and such as these, I suppose were called *Herodians*, who partly got into the court, and partly were of the faction both of the father and son. With how great opposition of the generality of the Jewish people Herod ascended and kept the throne, we have observed before. There were some that obstinately resisted him; others that as much defended him: to these was deservedly given the title of *Herodians*; as endeavouring with all their might to settle the kingdom in his family: and they, it seems, were of the Sadducean faith and doctrine; and it is likely had leavened Herod, who was now tetrarch, with the same principles. For (as we noted before) 'the leaven of the Sadducees' in Matthew, is in Mark 'the leaven of Herod.' And it was craftily contrived on both sides that they might be a mutual establishment to one another, they to his kingdom, and he to their doctrine. When I read of Manaem or Menahem, the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, it readily brings to my mind the name and story before mentioned of Menahem, who carried over with him so many eminent persons to the court of Herod.

20. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?

[*Whose is this image and superscription?*] They endeavour by a pernicious subtilty to find out whether Christ were of the same opinion with Judas of Galilee. Which opinion those lewd disturbers of all things, whom Josephus brands everywhere under the name of *zealots*, had taken up; stiffly denying obedience and tribute to a Roman prince; because they persuaded themselves and their followers that it was a sin to submit to a heathen government. What great calamities the outrageous fury of this conceit brought upon the people, both Josephus and the ruins of Jerusalem at this day testify. They chose Caesar before Christ; and yet because they would neither have Caesar nor Christ, they remain sad monuments to all

ages of the divine vengeance and their own madness. To this fury those frequent warnings of the apostles do relate, "That every one should submit himself to the higher powers." And the characters of these madmen, "they contemn dominations," and "they exalt themselves against every thing that is called God."

Christ answers the treachery of the question propounded, out of the very determinations of the schools, where this was taught, "Wheresoever the money of any king is current, there the inhabitants acknowledge that king for their lord." Hence is that of the Jerusalem *Sanhedrim*: "Abigail said to David, 'What evil have I done, or my sons, or my cattle?' He answered, 'Your husband vilifies my kingdom.' 'Are you then,' said she, 'a king?' To which he, 'Did not Samuel anoint me for a king?' She replied, '*The money of our lord Saul as yet is current*': that is, 'Is not Saul to be accounted king, while his money is still received commonly by all?'

23. The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

[*The Sadducees, who say that there is no resurrection.*] "The Sadducees cavil, and say, The cloud faileth and passeth away; so he that goeth down to the grave doth not return." Just after the same rate of arguing as they use that deny infant baptism; because, forsooth, in the law there is no express mention of the resurrection. Above, we suspected that the Sadducees were Herodians, that is to say, courtiers: but these here mentioned were of a more inferior sort.

32. I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

[*God is not the God of the dead.*] Read, if you please, the beginning of the chapter Chelek, where you will observe with what arguments and inferences the Talmudists maintain *the resurrection of the dead out of the law*; namely, by a manner of arguing not unlike this of our Saviour's. We will produce only this one; "R. Eliezer Ben R. Josi said, In this matter I accused the scribes of the Samaritans of falsehood, while they say, That the resurrection of the dead cannot be proved out of the law. I told them, You corrupt your law, and it is nothing which you carry about in your hands; for you say, That the resurrection of the dead is not in the law, when it saith, 'That soul shall be utterly cut off; his iniquity is upon him.' 'Shall be utterly cut off; namely, in this world. 'His iniquity is upon him': when? Is it not in the world to come?" I have quoted this, rather than the others which are to be found in the same place; because they seem here to tax the Samaritan text of corruption; when, indeed, both the text and the version, as may easily be observed, agree very well with the Hebrew. When, therefore, the Rabbin saith, that they have *corrupted their law*, he doth not so much deny the purity of the text, as reprove the vanity of the interpretation: as if he had said, "You interpret your law falsely, when you do not infer the resurrection from those words which speak it so plainly."

With the present argument of our Saviour compare, first, those things which are said by R. Tanchum: "R. Simeon Ben Jochai saith, God, holy and blessed, doth not join his name to holy men while they live, but only after their death; as it is said, 'To the saints that are in the earth.' When are they saints? When they are laid in the earth; for while they live, God doth not join his name to them; because he is not sure but that some evil affection may lead them astray: but when they are dead, then he joins his name to them. But we find that God joined his name to Isaac while he was living: 'I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac.' The Rabbins answer, He looked on his dust as if it were gathered upon the altar. R. Berachiah said, Since he became blind, he was in a manner dead." See also R. Menahem on the Law.

Compare also those words of the Jerusalem Gemara: "The righteous, even in death, are said to live; and the wicked, even in life, are said to be dead. But how is it proved that the wicked, even in life, are said to be dead? From that place where it is said, *I have no delight in the death of the dead*. Is he already dead, that is already here called *dead*? And whence is it proved that the righteous, even in death, are said to live? From that passage, 'And he said to him, This is the land, concerning which I sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob'...He saith to him, Go and tell the fathers, whatsoever I promised to you, I have performed to your children."

The opinion of the Babylonians is the same; "The living know that they shall die. They are righteous who, in their death, are said to live: as it is said, 'And Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, the son of *a living man*,' [*The son of a valiant man*. A.V. [2 Samuel 23:20](#)] " &c. And a little after; "The dead know nothing: They are the wicked who, even in their life, are called *dead*, as it is said, *And thou, dead wicked prince of Israel*." The word which is commonly rendered *profane* in this place, they render it also in a sense very usual, namely, for one *wounded or dead*.

There are, further, divers stories alleged, by which they prove that the dead so far live, that they understand many things which are done here; and that some have spoke after death, &c.

2. Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

[*In Moses' seat, &c.*] this is to be understood rather of the *legislative seat* (or chair), than of the merely *doctrinal*: and Christ here asserts the authority of the magistrate, and persuadeth to obey him in lawful things.

Concerning the chairs of the Sanhedrim there is mention made in Bab. *Succah*: "There were at Alexandria seventy-one golden chairs, according to the number of the seventy-one elders of the great council." Concerning the authority of Moses and his vicegerent in the council, there is also mention in *Sanhedrim*: "The great council consisted of seventy-one elders. But whence was this number derived? From that place where it is said, 'Choose me out seventy men of the elders of Israel: and Moses was president over them.' Behold seventy-one!"

What is here observed by Galatinus from the signification of the aorist *sat* is too light and airy: "He saith, They *sat* and not, They *sit*, that he might plainly demonstrate, that their power was then ceased." But if we would be so curious to gather any thing from this aorist, we might very well transfer it to this sense rather: "The scribes and Pharisees, the worst of men, have long usurped Moses' seat; nevertheless, we ought to obey them, because, by the dispensation of the divine providence, they bear the chief magistracy."

Concerning their authority, thus Maimonides: "The great council of Jerusalem was *the ground* (*the pillar and ground*) of the traditional law, and *the pillar* of doctrine: whence proceeded statutes and judgments for all Israel. And concerning them the law asserts this very thing, saying, 'According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee.' Who-soever, therefore, believes Moses our master and his law, is bound to rely upon them for the things of the law."

Christ teacheth, that they were not to be esteemed as oracles, but as magistrates.

4. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers

[*Heavy burdens.*] ...*a heavy prohibition; Let him follow him that imposeth heavy things.* There are reckoned up four-and-twenty things of *the weighty things of the school of Hillel, and the light things of that of Shammai*. "R. Joshua saith, A foolish religious man, a *crafty wicked man*, a she-pharisee, and the voluntary dashing of the Pharisees, destroy the world." It is disputed by the Gemarists, who is that *crafty wicked man*: and it is answered by some, "He that prescribes light things to himself, and heavy to others."

5. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments.

[*They make broad their phylacteries.*] These four places of the law, [Exodus 13:3-10](#), [Exodus 13:11-16](#), [Deuteronomy 6:5-9](#), [Deuteronomy 11:13-21](#); being writ upon two parchment labels (which they called *tephillin*), were carried about with them constantly with great devotion, being fastened to their forehead and their left arm. To the forehead, in that place

where the pulse of an infant's brain is. This of the forehead was most conspicuous, and *made broad*: hence came that, "Let nobody pass by the synagogue while prayers are saying there. - -But if he hath phylacteries upon his head, he may pass by, because they show that he is studious of the law." --"It is not lawful to walk through burying-places with phylacteries on one's head, and the book of the law hanging at one's arm."

They are called in Greek *phylacteries*, that is, *observatories*; because they were to put them in mind of the law; and perhaps they were also called *preservatories*, because they were supposed to have some virtue in them to drive away devils: "It is necessary that the *phylacteries* should be repeated at home a-nights, to drive away devils."

Concerning the curious writing of the *phylacteries*, see Maimonides on *Tephellin*. Concerning their strings, marked with certain small letters, see *Tosaphoth* on *Megillah*. Concerning the repeating of them, see both the Talmuds in *Beracoth*. How the Jews did swear touching their *phylacteries*, see Maimonides in *Shevuoth*: and how God is brought in swearing by the *phylacteries*, see *Tanchum*.

Our Saviour does not so much condemn the bare wearing of them, as the doing it out of pride and hypocrisy. It is not unlikely that he wore them himself, according to the custom of the country: for the children of the Jews were to be brought up from their infancy in saying the *phylacteries*; that is, as soon as they were capable of being catechised. The scribes and Pharisees made theirs very *broad* and visible, that they might obtain a proportional fame and esteem for their devotion with the people; these things being looked upon as arguments of the study of the law, and signs of devotion.

[*Enlarge the borders of their garments.*] See [Numbers 15:38](#); [Deuteronomy 22:12](#)--"He that takes care of the candle of the sabbath, his children shall be the disciples of wise men. He that takes care to stick up labels against the posts shall obtain a glorious house; and he that takes care of making *borders* to his garment, shall obtain a good coat."

7. And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

[*And to be called Rabbi, Rabbi.*] I. Concerning the original of this title, see Aruch: "The elder times, which were more worthy, had not need of the title either of *Rabban*, or *Rabbi*, or *Rabh*, to adorn either the wise men of Babylon or the wise men of the land of Israel: for, behold, Hillel comes up out of Babylon, and the title of *Rabbi* is not added to his name: and thus it was with those who were noble among the prophets; for he saith, Haggai the prophet [not *Rabbi* Haggai]. Ezra did not come up out of Babylon, &c. [not *Rabbi* Ezra]; whom they did not honour with the titles of *Rabbi* when they spoke their names. And we have heard that this had its beginning only in the presidents [of the council] from Rabban Gamaliel the old man, and Rabban Simeon his son, who perished in the destruction of the second Temple: and from Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai, who were all presidents. And the title also of *Rabbi* began from those that were promoted [to be elders] from that time, *Rabbi* Zadok, and R. Eliezer Ben Jacob: and the thing went forth from the disciples of Rabban Jochanan Ben Za-

ccai, and onwards. Now the order, as all men use it, is this: *Rabbi* is greater than *Rabh*, and *Rabban* is greater than *Rabbi*; and he is greater who is called by his own (single) name, than he who is called *Rabban*."

That this haughty title of *Rabbi* was not in use before the times of Hillel sufficiently appears from thence, that the doctors before that were called by their plain names, and knew nothing of this title. Antigonus Socheus, Shemaiah and Abtalion, Gebahah Ben Pesisa, Calba Savua, Admon and Hanan, Hillel and Shammai, and many others, whose names we meet with in the Jewish story. Yet you shall find these, that were more ancient, sometimes officiously honoured by the writers of their nation with this title, which they themselves were strangers to. They feign that king Jehoshaphat thus called the learned men: "When he saw (say they) a disciple of the wise men, he rose up out of his throne and embraced him, and kissed him, and called him *O Father, Father, Rabbi, Rabbi, Lord, Lord*." And Joshua Ben Perachia is called *Rabbi* Joshua...

II. It was customary, and they loved it, to be saluted with this honourable title, notwithstanding the dissembled axiom among them, *Love the work, but hate the title*.

1. Disciples were thus taught to salute their masters: "R. Eliezer saith, *he that prayeth behind the back of his master, and he that salutes his master,--or returns a salute to his master,--and he that makes himself a separatist from the school of his master,--and he that teaches any thing, which he hath not heard from his master,--he provokes the Divine Majesty to depart from Israel*." The Glossers on these words, 'He that salutes, or returns a salute to his master,' thus comment; "he that salutes his master in the same form of words that he salutes other men, and doth not say to him, *God save you, Rabbi*." It is reported also, that the council excommunicated certain persons four and twenty times, *for the honour of master*; that is, for not having given due honour to the *Rabbins*.

2. The masters saluted one another so. "R. Akibah said to R. Eleazar, *Rabbi, Rabbi*."--"R. Eleazar Ben Simeon, of Magdal Gedor, came from the house of his master, sitting upon an ass: he went forward along the bank of the river rejoicing greatly, and being very much pleased with himself, because he had learned so much of the law. There meets him a very deformed man, and said *Save you, Rabbi*: he did not salute him again, but on the contrary said thus, 'Raca, how deformed is that man! perhaps all your townsmen are as deformed as you.' He answered, 'I know nothing of that, but go you to the workman that made me, and tell him, how deformed is this vessel which thou hast made!'" &c. And a little after, "when that deformed man was come to his own town, his fellow citizens came out to meet him and said, *Save you, O Rabbi, Rabbi, master, master*. He [R. Eleazar] saith to them, 'To whom do you say *Rabbi, Rabbi*?' They answer, 'To him that followeth thee.' He replied, 'If this be a *Rabbi*, let there not be many such in Israel.'"

14. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

[*Ye devour widows' houses.*] The scribes and Pharisees were ingenious enough for their own advantage. Hear one argument among many, forged upon the anvil of their covetousness, a little rudely drawn, but gainful enough: "The Lord saith, 'Make me an ark of shittim wood.' Hence it is decided (say they) *in behalf of a disciple of the wise men, that his fellow citizens are bound to perform his servile work for him.*"--O money, thou mistress of art and mother of wit! So he that was preferred to be president of the council, was to be maintained and enriched by the council! See the Gloss on Babylonian *Taanith*.

They angled with a double hook among the people for respect, and by respect for gain.

I. As doctors of the law: where they, first and above all things, instilled into their disciples and the common people, that a wise man, or a master, was to be respected above all mortal men whatsoever. Behold the rank and order of benches according to these judges! "A wise man is to take place of a king; a king of a high priest; a high priest of a prophet; a prophet of one anointed for war; one anointed for war of a president of the courses; a president of the courses of the head of a family; the head of a family of a counsellor; a counsellor of a treasurer; a treasurer of a private priest; a private priest of a Levite; a Levite of an Israelite; an Israelite of a bastard; a bastard of a Nethinim; a Nethinim of a proselyte; a proselyte of a freed slave. But when is this to be? namely, when they are alike as to other things: but, indeed, if a bastard be a disciple, or a wise man, and the high priest be unlearned, the bastard is to take place of him. A wise man is to be preferred before a king: for if a wise man die, he hath not left his equal; but if a king die, any Israelite is fit for a kingdom."

This last brings to my mind those words of Ignatius the martyr, if indeed they are his, in his tenth epistle: *My son, saith he, honour God and the king: but I say, 'Honour God as the cause and Lord of all: the bishop as the chief priest, bearing the image of God; in respect of his rule bearing God's image, in respect of his priestly office, Christ's; and, after him, we ought to honour the king also.'*

II. Under a pretence of mighty devotion, but especially under the goodly show of long prayers, they so drew over the minds of devout persons to them, especially of women, and among them of the richer widows, that by subtle attractives they either drew out or wrested away their goods and estates. Nor did they want nets of counterfeit authority, when from the chair they pronounced, according to their pleasures, of the dowry and estate befalling a widow, and assumed to themselves the power of determining concerning those things. Of which matter, as it is perplexed with infinite difficulties and quirks, you may read, if you have leisure, the treatises *Jevamoth*, *Chetuboth*, and *Gittin*.

Concerning the length of their prayers, it may suffice to produce the words of the Babylon Gemara in *Beracoth*: "The religious anciently used to tarry an hour [*meditating before they began their prayers*]: whence was this? R. Joshua Ben Levi saith, 'It was because the Scripture saith, *Blessed are they who sit in thy house.*' R. Joshua Ben Levi saith also, 'He that prays ought to tarry an hour after prayers: as it is said, The just shall praise thy name, *the upright*

shall sit before thy face: it is necessary, therefore, that he should stay [*meditating*] an hour before prayers, and an hour after; and the religious anciently used to stay an hour before prayers, an hour they prayed, and an hour they stayed after prayers. Since, therefore, they spent nine hours every day about their prayers, how did they perform the rest of the law? and how did they take care of their worldly affairs? Why herein, in being religious, both the law was performed, and their own business well provided for." And in the same place, "Long prayers make a long life."

15. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

[*To make one proselyte.*] The Talmudists truly speak very ill of proselytes: "Our Rabbins teach, that *proselytes and Sodomites hinder the coming of the Messias. Proselytes are as a scab to Israel.*" The Gloss; "For this reason, that they were not skilled in the commandments, that they brought in revenge, and moreover, that the Israelites perchance may imitate their works," &c.

Yet in making of these they used their utmost endeavours for the sake of their own gain, that they might some way or other drain their purses, after they had drawn them in under the show of religion, or make some use or benefit to themselves by them. The same covetousness, therefore, under a veil of hypocrisy, in devouring widows' houses, which our Saviour had condemned in the former clause, he here also condemns in hunting after *proselytes*; which the scribes and Pharisees were at all kind of pains to bring over to them. Not that they cared for *proselytes*, whom they accounted as "a scab and plague"; but that the more they could draw over to their religion, the greater draught they should have for gain, and the more purses to fish in. These, therefore, being so proselyted, "they made doubly more the children of hell than themselves." For when they had drawn them into their net, having got their prey, they were no further concerned what became of them, so they got some benefit by them. They might perish in ignorance, superstition, atheism, and all kind of wickedness: this was no matter of concern to the scribes and Pharisees; only let them remain in Judaism, that they might lord it over their consciences and purses.

16. Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple; he is a debtor!

[*Whosoever shall swear by the gold of the Temple, he is a debtor.*] These words agree in the same sense with those of the *Corban*, chapter 15:5. We must not understand the *gold of the Temple* here, of that gold which shined all about in the walls and ceilings; but the gold here meant is that which was offered up in the *Corban*. It was a common thing with them, and esteemed as nothing, to swear *by the Temple*, and *by the altar*, which we have observed

at the 31st verse of the fifth chapter: and therefore they thought themselves not much obliged by it; but if they swore *Corban*, they supposed they were bound by an indispensable tie. For example: if any one should swear thus, 'By the Temple, or, By the altar, my money, my cattle, my goods shall not profit you'; it was lawful, nevertheless, for the swearer, if he pleased, to suffer them to be profited by these: but if he should swear thus, '*Corban*, my gold is for the Temple, *Corban*, my cattle are for the altar,' this could noways be dispensed with.

23. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

[*Ye pay tithe of mint.*] I. "This is the general rule about tithes; whatsoever serves for food, whatsoever is kept [*that is, which is not of common right*], and whatsoever grows out of the earth, shall be tithed."

II. According to the law, cattle, corn, and fruit were to be tithed: the way and measure of which, as the scribes teach, was this: "Of bread-corn that is thrashed and winnowed, 1. A fifth part is taken out for the priest; this was called *the great offering*. 2. A tenth part of the remainder belong to the Levite; this was called *the first tenth*, or *tithe*. 3. A tenth part again was to be taken out of the remainder, and was to be eaten at Jerusalem, or else redeemed; this was called *the second tithe*. 4. The Levite gives a tenth part out of his to the priest; this was called *the tithe of the tithe*." These are handled at large in *Peah, Demai, Maaseroth, &c.*

III. *The tithing of herbs is from the Rabbins.* This tithing was added by the scribes, and yet approved of by our Saviour, when he saith, "Ye ought not to have left these undone." Hear this, O thou who opposeth tithes. The tithing of herbs was only of ecclesiastical institution, and yet it hath the authority of our Saviour to confirm it, "Ye ought not to have left these things undone": and that partly on account of the justice of the thing itself, and the agreeableness of it to law and reason, partly that it was commanded by the council sitting in Moses' chair, as it is, verse 2.

IV. [*Mint.*] ...is reckoned among those things which come under the law of the seventh year. Where Rambam saith, "In the Aruch it is *minta*." It is called sometimes *mintha*: where R. Solomon writes, "In the Aruch it is *minta* in the mother tongue, and it hath a sweet smell; therefore they strew it in synagogues for the sake of its scent."

[*Anise.*] ...R. Solomon, "*anise* is a kind of herb, and is tithed, both as to the seed and herb itself." Rambam writes thus: "It is eaten raw after meat, and is not to be boiled; while, therefore, it is not boiled, it comes under the law of tithing." The Gloss "in the Roman language is *anethum* [anise], and is tithed, whether it be gathered green or ripe."

[*Cummin.*] ...It is reckoned among things that are to be tithed.

27. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

[*Ye are like whited sepulchres.*] *Sepulchres* are distinguished by the masters of the Jews into a *deep sepulchre*, which cannot be known to be a sepulchre; *graves that appear not* [Luke 11:44]; and a *painted sepulchre*, such as were all those that were known, and to be seen. Our Saviour compares the Scribes and Pharisees to both; to those, in the place of Luke last mentioned; to these, in the place before us, each upon a different reason.

Concerning the *whiting of sepulchres*, there are these traditions: "In the fifteenth day of the month Adar they mend the ways, and the streets, and the common sewers, and perform those things that concern the public, *and they paint (or mark) the sepulchres.*" The manner is described in *Maasar Sheni*; *They paint the sepulchres with chalk, tempered and infused in water.* The Jerusalem Gemarists give the reason of it in abundance of places: "Do they not mark the sepulchres (say they) before the month Adar? Yes, but it is supposed that the colours are wiped off. For what cause do they paint them so? That this matter may be like the case of the leper. The leprous man crieth out, 'Unclean, unclean'; and here, in like manner, uncleanness cries out to you and saith, 'Come not near.'" R. Illa, in the name of R. Samuel Bar Nachman, allegeth that of Ezekiel; "If one passing through the land seeth a man's bone, he shall set up a burial sign by it."

The Glossers deliver both the reason and the manner of it thus: "From the fifteenth day of the month Adar they began their search; and wheresoever they found a sepulchre whose whiting was washed off with the rain, they renewed it, that the unclean place might be discerned, and the priests who were to eat the *Trumah* might avoid it." Gloss on *Shekalim*, and again on *Maasar Sheni*: "They marked the sepulchres with chalk in the likeness of bones; and mixing it with water, they washed the sepulchre all about with it, that thereby all might know that the place was unclean, and therefore to be avoided." Concerning this matter also, the Gloss speaks; "They made marks like bones on the sepulchres with white chalk," &c. See the place.

28. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

[*Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men.*] Such kind of hypocrites are called *distained*, or *coloured*. Jannai the king, when he was dying, warned his wife that she should take heed of *painted men, pretending to be Pharisees, whose works are as the works of Zimri, and yet they expect the reward of Phineas.* The Gloss is "Those *painted men* are those whose outward show doth not answer to their nature; they are *coloured* without, *but their inward part doth not answer to their outward*; and their works are evil, like the works of Zimri; but they require the reward of Phineas, saying to men, That they should honour

them as much as Phineas." They had forgotten their own axiom, *A disciple of the wise, who is not the same within that he is without, is not a disciple of the wise.*

[*But within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.*] The masters themselves acknowledged this to their own shame. They inquire, what were those sins under the first Temple for which it was destroyed; and it is answered, "Idolatry, fornication, and bloodshed." They inquire, what were the sins under the second; and answer, "Hate without cause, and secret iniquity"; and add these words, "To those that were under the first Temple their end was revealed, because their iniquity was revealed: *but to those that were under the second their end was not revealed, because their iniquity was not revealed.*" The Gloss, "They that were under the first Temple did not hide their iniquity; therefore their end was revealed to them: as it is said, 'After seventy years I will visit you in Babylon': but their iniquity under the second Temple was not revealed: *those under the second Temple were secretly wicked.*"

29. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

[*Ye garnish the sepulchres of the righteous.*] *Let them raise some pillar upon his sepulchre.* The Glossers are divided about the rendering of the word *pillar*. Some understand it of a kind of building or pillar; some of the whitening or marking of a sepulchre above spoken of. The place referred to speaks concerning the remains of the didrachms paid for the redemption of the soul: and the question is, if there be any thing of them due, or remaining from the man now dead, what shall be done with it; the answer is, "Let it be laid up till Elias come: but R. Nathan saith, *Let them raise some pillar [or building] upon his sepulchre.*" Which that it was done for the sake of adorning the sepulchres is proved from the words of the Jerusalem Gemara upon the place; *They do not adorn the sepulchres of the righteous, for their own sayings are their memorial.* Whence those buildings or ornaments that were set on their sepulchres seem to have been sacred to their memory, and thence called as much as *souls*, because they preserved the life and soul of their memory.

These things being considered, the sense of the words before us doth more clearly appear. Doth it deserve so severe a curse, to adorn the sepulchres of the prophets and righteous men? Was not this rather an act of piety than a crime? But according to their own doctrine, O ye scribes and Pharisees, *their own* acts and sayings are a sufficient *memorial for them*. Why do ye not respect, follow, and imitate these? But neglecting and trampling upon these, you persuade yourselves that you have performed piety enough to them, if you bestow some cost in adorning *their* sepulchres, whose words indeed you despise.

33. Ye serpents, ye of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

[*The damnation of hell.*] *The judgment of Gehenna.* See the Chaldee paraphrast on [Ruth 2:12](#); Baal Turim on [Genesis 1:1](#); and Midras Tillin.

34. Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

[*Wise men and scribes.*] Let them observe this, who do not allow the ministers of the word to have a distinct calling. The Jews knew not any that was called *a wise man*, or *a scribe*, but who was both learned, and separated from the common people by a distinct order and office.

35. That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

[*Unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias.*] That the discourse here is concerning Zacharias the son of Jehoiada, killed by king Joash, we make appear by these arguments:

I. Because no other Zacharias is said to have been slain before these words were spoken by Christ. Those things that are spoke of Zacharias, the father of the Baptist, are dreams; and those of Zacharias, one of the twelve prophets, are not much better. The killing of our Zacharias in the Temple is related in express words: and why, neglecting this, should we seek for another, which in truth we shall nowhere find in any author of good credit?

II. The Jews observe, that the death of this Zacharias, the son of Jehoiada, was made memorable by a signal character [*nota*] and revenge: of the martyrdom of the other Zacharias they say nothing at all.

Hear both the Talmuds: "R. Jochanan said, Eighty thousand priests were killed for the blood of Zacharias. R. Judah asked R. Acha, 'Whereabouts they killed Zacharias, whether in the Court of the Women, or in the Court of Israel?' He answered, 'Neither in the Court of Israel nor in the Court of the women, but in the Court of the Priests.' And that was not done to his blood which useth to be done to the blood of a ram or a kid. Concerning these it is written, 'And he shall pour out his blood, and cover it with dust.' But here it is written, 'Her blood is in the midst of her; she set it upon the top of a rock, she poured it not upon the ground.' And why this? 'That it might cause fury to come up to take vengeance. I have set her blood upon a rock, that it should not be covered.' They committed seven wickednesses in that day. They killed a priest, a prophet, and a judge: they shed the blood of an innocent man: they polluted the court: and that day was the sabbath day, and the day of Expiation. When therefore Nebuzar-adan went up thither, he saw the blood bubbling: so he said to them, 'What meaneth this?' 'It is the blood,' say they, 'of calves, lambs, and rams, which we have offered on the altar.' 'Bring then,' said he, 'calves, lambs, and rams, that I may try whether this be their blood.' They brought them and slew them, and that blood still bubbled, but their blood did not bubble. 'Discover the matter to me,' said he, 'or I will tear your flesh with iron rakes.' Then they said to him, 'This was a priest, a prophet, and a judge, who foretold to Israel all these evils which we have suffered from you, and we rose up against

him, and slew him.' 'But I,' saith he, 'will appease him.' He brought the Rabbins, and slew them upon that blood; and yet it was not pacified: he brought the children out of the school, and slew them upon it, and yet it was not quiet: he brought the young priests, and slew them upon it, and yet it was not quiet. So that he slew upon it ninety-four thousand, and yet it was not quiet. He drew near to it himself, and said, 'O Zacharias, Zacharias! thou hast destroyed the best of thy people' [that is, they have been killed for your sake]; 'would you have me destroy all?' Then it was quiet, and did not bubble any more," &c.

The truth of this story we leave to the relators: that which makes to our present purpose we observe: that it was very improbable, nay, next to impossible, that those that heard the words of Christ (concerning Zacharias slain before the Temple and the altar) could understand it of any other but of this, concerning whom and whose blood they had such famous and signal memory; and of any other Zacharias slain in the Temple there was a profound silence. In Josephus, indeed, we meet with the mention of one Zacharias, the son of Baruch, (which is the same thing with Barachias,) killed in the Temple, not long before the destruction of it: whom some conjecture to be prophetically marked out here by our Saviour: but this is somewhat hard, when Christ expressly speaks of time past, *ye slew*; and when, by no art nor arguments, it can be proved that this Zacharias ought to be reckoned into the number of prophets and martyrs.

There are two things here that stick with interpreters, so that they cannot so freely subscribe to our Zacharias: 1. That he lived and died long before the first Temple was destroyed; when the example would have seemed more home and proper to be taken under the second Temple, and that now near expiring. 2. That *he* was plainly and notoriously the son of *Jehoiada*; but *this* is called by Christ "the son of *Barachias*."

To which we, after others who have discoursed at large upon this matter, return only thus much:

I. That Christ plainly intended to bring examples out of the Old Testament; and he brought two, which how much the further off they seemed to be from deriving any guilt to this generation, so much heavier the guilt is if they do derive it. For a Jew would argue, "What hath a Jew to do with *the blood of Abel*, killed almost two thousand years before Abraham the father of the Jews was born? And what hath this generation to do with *the blood of Zacharias*, which was expiated by cruel plagues and calamities many ages since?" Nay, saith Christ, *this generation* hath arrived to that degree of impiety, wickedness, and guilt, that even these remote examples of guilt relate, and are to be applied to it: and while you think that *the blood of Abel*, and the following martyrs doth nothing concern you, and believe that *the blood of Zacharias* hath been long ago expiated with a signal punishment; I say unto you, that the blood both of the one and the other, and of all the righteous men killed in the interval of time between them, *shall be required of this generation*; 1. Because you kill him who is of more value than they all. 2. Because by your wickedness you so much kindle the

anger of God, that he is driven to cut off his old church; namely, the people that hath been of a long time in covenant with him. For when Christ saith, *That on you may come all the righteous blood, &c.*; it is not so much to be understood of their personal guilt as to that blood, as of their guilt for the killing of Christ, in whose death, the guilt of the murder of all those his types and members is in some measure included: and it is to be understood of the horrible destruction of that generation, than which no former ages have ever seen any more woeful or amazing, nor shall any future, before the funeral of the world itself. As if all the guilt of the blood of righteous men, that had been shed from the beginning of the world, had flowed together upon that generation.

II. To the second, which has more difficulty, namely, that *Zacharias* is here called the son of *Barachias*, when he was the son of *Jehoiada*, we will observe, by the way, these two things out of the writings of the Jews, before we come to determine the thing itself:

1. That that very *Zacharias* of whom we speak is by the Chaldee paraphrast called the son of *Iddo*. For thus saith he on [Lamentations 3:20](#): "Is it fit that the daughters of Israel should eat the fruit of their womb?' &c. The rule of justice answered and said, 'Is it also fit that they should slay a priest and prophet in the Temple of the Lord, as ye slew *Zacharias* and the son of *Iddo*, the high priest and faithful prophet, in the house of the Sanctuary, on the day of Expiation?'" &c.

2. In the place of Isaiah, concerning Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah, the Jews have these things: "It is written, 'I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Barachiah,' [Isaiah 8:1](#). But what is the reason that Uriah is joined with Zechariah? for Uriah was under the first Temple; Zechariah under the second: but the Scripture joineth the prophecy of Zechariah to the prophecy of Uriah. By Uriah it is written, 'For your sakes Sion shall be ploughed as a field.' By Zechariah it is written, 'As yet old men and ancient women shall sit in the streets of Jerusalem.' When the prophecy of Uriah is fulfilled, the prophecy of Zechariah shall also be fulfilled." To the same sense also speaks the Chaldee paraphrast upon the place: "'And I took unto me faithful witnesses.' The curses which I foretold I would bring, in the prophecy of Uriah the priest, behold they are come to pass: likewise all the blessings which I foretold I would bring, in the prophecy of Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah, I will bring to pass." See also there RR. Jarchi and Kimchi.

From both these we observe two things: 1. If *Iddo* did not signify the same thing with *Jehoiada* to the Jewish nation, why might not our Saviour have the same liberty to call *Barachias* the father of *Zacharias*, as the Chaldee paraphrast had to call him *Iddo*? 2. It is plain that the Jews looked upon those words of Isaiah as the words of God speaking to Isaiah, not of Isaiah relating a matter of fact historically...

For if it had been to be construed in the preter tense, it should have been pointed by Kamets, *And I caused to witness*. Which being well observed, (as I confess it hath not been by me heretofore,) the difficulty under our hand is resolved, as I imagine, very clearly: and

I suppose that Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah in Isaiah is the very same with our *Zacharias* the son of Jehoiada; and that the sense of Isaiah comes to this: in that and the foregoing chapter there is a discourse of the future destruction of Damascus, Samaria, and Judea. For a confirmation of the truth of this prophecy, God makes use of a double testimony: first, he commands the prophet Isaiah to write, over and over again, in a great volume, from the beginning to the end, "To hasten the spoil, he hastened the prey": and this volume should be an undoubted testimony to them, that God would certainly bring on and hasten the forementioned spoiling and destruction. "And moreover (saith God), I will raise up to myself two faithful martyrs," (or witnesses,) who shall testify and seal the same thing with their words and with their blood, namely, Uriah the priest, who shall hereafter be crowned with martyrdom for this very thing, [Jeremiah 26:20,23](#), and Zechariah the son of Barachiah, or Jehoiada, who is lately already crowned: *he*, the first martyr under the first Temple; *this*, the last. Hear, thou Jew, who taxest Matthew in this place: your own authors assert, that Uriah the priest is to be understood by that Uriah who was killed by Jehoiakim; and that truly. We also assert, that Zechariah the son of Jehoiadah is to be understood by Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah; and that Matthew and Christ do not at all innovate in this name of Barachias, but did only pronounce the same things concerning the father of the martyr Zacharias, which God himself had pronounced before them by the prophet Isaiah.

Objection. But since our Saviour took examples from the Old Testament, why did he not rather say, "from the blood of Abel to the blood of Uriah the priest?" that is, from the beginning of the world to the end of the first Temple? I answer,

1. The killing of Zechariah was more horrible, as he was more high in dignity; and as the place wherein he was killed was more holy.
2. The consent of the whole people as more universal to his death.
3. He was a more proper and apparent type of Christ.
4. The requiring of vengeance is mentioned only concerning Abel and Zechariah: "Behold, the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me." And, "Let the Lord look upon it, and require it."
5. In this the death of Christ agrees exactly with the death of Zechariah; that, although the city and nation of the Jews did not perish till about forty years after the death of Christ, yet they gave themselves their death's wound in wounding Christ. So it was also in the case of Zechariah: Jerusalem and the people of the Jews stood indeed many years after the death of Zechariah, but from that time began to sink, and draw towards ruin. Consult the story narrowly, and you will plainly find, that all the affairs of the Jews began to decline and grow worse and worse, from that time when "blood touched blood," (the blood of the sacrificer mingled with the blood of the sacrifice), and when "the people became contentious and rebellious against the priest."

37. 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!

[*Jerusalem, that killest the prophets.*] R. Solomon on those words, "But now murderers": "They have killed (saith he) Uriah, they have killed Zechariah." Also on these words, "Your sword hath devoured your prophets"; "Ye have slain (saith he) Zechariah and Isaiah." "Simeon Ben Azzai said, 'I have found a book of genealogies at Jerusalem, in which it was written, Manasseh slew Isaiah,'" &c.

1. And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple.

[*To shew him the buildings of the Temple.*] "He that never saw the Temple of Herod never saw a fine building. What was it built of? Rabba saith, Of white and green marble. But some say, Of white, green, and spotted marble. He made the laver to sink and to rise" (that is, the walls were built winding in and out, or indented after the manner of waves), "being thus fitted to receive the plaster, which he intended to lay on; but the Rabbins said to him, 'O let it continue, for it is very beautiful to behold: for it is like the waves of the sea': and Bava Ben Buta made it so," &c. See there the story of Bava Ben Buta and Herod consulting about the rebuilding of the temple.

2. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

[*There shall not be left one stone upon another.*] The Talmudic Chronicles bear witness also to this saying, "On the ninth day of the month Ab the city of Jerusalem was ploughed up"; which Maimonides delivereth more at large: "On that ninth day of the month Ab, fatal for vengeance, the wicked Turnus Rufus, of the children of Edom, ploughed up the Temple, and the places about it, that that saying might be fulfilled, 'Sion shall be ploughed as a field.'" This Turnus Rufus, of great fame and infamy among the Jewish writers, without doubt is the same with Terentius Rufus, of whom Josephus speaks, *Rufus was left general of the army by Titus*; with commission, as it is probable, and as the Jews suppose, to destroy the city and Temple. Concerning which matter, thus again Josephus in the place before quoted, *The emperor commanded them to dig up the whole city and the Temple.* And a little after, "*Thus those that digged it up laid all level*, that it should never be inhabited, to be a witness to such as should come thither."

3. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

[*And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?*] What the apostles intended by these words is more clearly conceived by considering the opinion of that people concerning the times of the Messias. We will pick out this in a few words from Babylonian *Sanhedrin*.

"The tradition of the school of Elias: The righteous, whom the Holy Blessed God will raise up from the dead, shall not return again to their dust; as it is said, 'Whosoever shall be left in Zion and remain in Jerusalem shall be called holy, every one being written in the book of life.' As the Holy (God) liveth for ever, so they also shall live for ever. But if it be objected, What shall the righteous do in those years in which the Holy God will renew his world, as

it is said, 'The Lord only shall be exalted in that day?' the answer is, That God will give them wings like an eagle, and they shall swim (or float) upon the face of the waters." Where the Gloss says thus; "The righteous, whom the Lord shall raise from the dead in the days of the Messiah, when they are restored to life, shall not again return to their dust, neither in the days of the Messiah, nor in the following age: but their flesh shall remain upon them till they return and live *to eternity*. And in those years, when God shall renew his world (or age), *this world shall be wasted for a thousand years*; were, then, shall those righteous men be in those years, when they shall not be buried in the earth?" To this you may also lay that very common phrase, *the world to come*; whereby is signified *the days of the Messiah*: of which we spoke a little at the thirty-second verse of the twelfth chapter: "If he shall obtain (*the favour*) to see the world to come, that is, the exaltation of Israel," namely, in the days of Messiah. "The Holy Blessed God saith to Israel, In this world you are afraid of transgressions; but in the world to come, when there shall be no evil affection, you shall be concerned only for the good which is laid up for you; as it is said, 'After this the children of Israel shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king,'" &c.; which clearly relate to the time of the Messiah. Again, "Saith the Holy Blessed God to Israel, 'In this world, because my messengers (*sent to spy out the land*) were flesh and blood, I decreed that they should not enter into the land: but in the world to come, I suddenly send to you my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before my face.'"

See here the doctrine of the Jews concerning the coming of the Messiah:

1. That at that time there shall be a resurrection of the just: *The Messias shall raise up those that sleep in the dust*.

2. Then shall follow the desolation of this world: *This world shall be wasted a thousand years*. Not that they imagined that a chaos, or confusion of all things, should last the thousand years; but that this world should end and a new one be introduced in that thousand years.

3. After which *eternity should succeed*.

From hence we easily understand the meaning of this question of the disciples:--

1. They know and own the present Messiah; and yet they ask, what shall be the signs of his coming?

2. But they do not ask the signs of his coming (as we believe of it) at the last day, to judge both the quick and the dead: but,

3. When he will come in the evidence and demonstration of the Messiah, raising up the dead, and ending this world, and introducing a new; as they had been taught in their schools concerning his coming.

7. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

[*Nation shall rise against nation.*] Besides the seditions of the Jews, made horribly bloody with their mutual slaughter, and other storms of war in the Roman empire from strangers,

the commotions of Otho and Vitellius are particularly memorable, and those of Vitellius and Vespasian, whereby not only the whole empire was shaken, and *the fortune of the empire changed with the change of the whole world*, (they are the words of Tacitus), but Rome itself being made the scene of battle, and the prey of the soldiers, and the Capitol itself being reduced to ashes. Such throes the empire suffered, now bringing forth Vespasian to the throne, the scourge and vengeance of God upon the Jews.

9. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

[*Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted.*] To this relate those words of [1 Peter 4:17](#), "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God"; that is, the time foretold by our Saviour is now at hand, in which we are to be delivered up to persecution, &c. These words denote that persecution which the Jews, now near their ruin, stirred up almost everywhere against the professors of the gospel. They had indeed oppressed them hitherto on all sides, as far as they could, with slanders, rapines, whippings, stripes, &c. which these and such like places testify; [1 Thessalonians 2:14,15](#); [Hebrews 10:33](#), &c. But there was something that put a rub in their way, that, as yet, they could not proceed to the utmost cruelty; "And now ye know what withholdeth"; which, I suppose, is to be understood of Claudius enraged at and curbing in the Jews. Who being taken out of the way, and Nero, after his first five years, suffering all things to be turned topsy turvy, the Jews now breathing their last (and Satan therefore breathing his last effects in them, because their time was short), they broke out into slaughter beyond measure, and into a most bloody persecution: which I wonder is not set in the front of the ten persecutions by ecclesiastical writers. This is called by Peter (who himself also at last suffered in it) *a fiery trial*; by Christ, dictating the epistles to the seven churches, *tribulation for ten days*; and *the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world* of Christians. And this is "the revelation of that wicked one" St. Paul speaks of, now in lively, that is, in bloody colours, openly declaring himself Antichrist, the enemy of Christ. In that persecution James suffered at Jerusalem, Peter in Babylon, and Antipas at Pergamus, and others, as it is probable, in not a few other places. Hence, [Revelation 6:11,12](#) (where the state of the Jewish nation is delivered under the type of six seals), they are slain, who were to be slain for the testimony of the gospel under the fifth seal; and immediately under the sixth followed the ruin of the nation.

12. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

[*The love of many shall wax cold.*] These words relate to that horrid apostasy which prevailed everywhere in the Jewish churches that had received the gospel. See [2 Thessalonians 2:3](#), &c.; [Galatians 3:1](#); [1 Timothy 1:15](#), &c.

14. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

[*And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world.*] Jerusalem was not to be destroyed before the gospel was spread over all the world: God so ordering and designing it that the world, being first a catechumen in the doctrine of Christ, might have at length an eminent and undeniable testimony of Christ presented to it; when all men, as many as ever heard the history of Christ, should understand that dreadful wrath and severe vengeance which was poured out upon that city and nation by which he was crucified.

15. 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):

[*The abomination of desolation.*] These words relate to that passage of Daniel (chapter 9:27) which I would render thus; "In the middle of that week," namely, the last of the seventy, "he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, even until *the wing or army of abomination shall make desolate,*" &c.; or, *even by the wing of abominations making desolate...*

[*Let him that readeth understand.*] This is not spoken so much for the obscurity as for the certainty of the prophecy: as if he should say, "He that reads those words in Daniel, let him mind well that when the army of the prince which is to come, that army of abominations, shall compass round Jerusalem with a siege, then most certain destruction hangs over it; for, saith Daniel, 'the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary,' &c., verse 26. 'And the army of abominations shall make desolate even until the consummation, and that which is determined shall be poured out upon the desolate.' Flatter not yourselves, therefore, with vain hopes, either of future victory, or of the retreating of that army, but provide for yourselves; and he that is in Judea, let him fly to the hills and places of most difficult access, not into the city." See how Luke clearly speaks out this sense in the twentieth verse of the one-and-twentieth chapter.

20. But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

[*That your flight be not in the winter.*] R. Tanchum observes a favour of God in the destruction of the first Temple, that it happened in the summer, not in winter. For thus he: "God vouch-safed a great favour to Israel; for they ought to have gone out of the land on the tenth day of the month Tebeth, as he saith, 'Son of man, mark this day; for on this very day,' &c. What then did the Lord, holy and blessed? 'If they shall now go out in the winter,' saith he, 'they will all die': therefore he prolonged the time to them, and carried them away in summer."

22. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

[*Those days shall be shortened.*] God lengthened the time for the sake of the elect, before the destruction of the city; and in the destruction, for their sakes he shortened it. Compare

with these words before us [2 Peter 3:9](#), "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise," &c. It was certainly very hard with the elect that were inhabitants of the city, who underwent all kinds of misery with the besieged, where the plague and sword raged so violently that there were not living enough to bury the dead; and the famine was so great, that a mother ate her son (perhaps the wife of Doeg Ben Joseph, of whom see such a story in Babyl. Joma). And it was also hard enough with those elect who fled to the mountains, being driven out of house, living in the open air, and wanting necessaries for food: their merciful God and Father, therefore, took care of them, shortening the time of their misery, and cutting off the reprobates with a speedier destruction; lest, if their stroke had been longer continued, the elect should too far have partaken of their misery.

The Rabbins dream that God shortened the day on which wicked king Ahab died, and that ten hours; lest he should have been honoured with mourning.

24. 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.

[*Shall shew great signs and wonders.*] It is a disputable case, whether the Jewish nation were more mad with superstition in matters of religion, or with superstition in curious arts.

I. There was not a people upon earth that studied or attributed more to dreams than they. Hence

1. They often imposed fastings upon themselves to this end, that they might obtain happy dreams; or to get the interpretation of a dream; or to divert the ill omen of a dream: which we have observed at the fourteenth verse of the ninth chapter.

2. Hence their nice rules for handling of dreams; such as these, and the like: *Let one observe a good dream two-and-twenty years*, after the example of Joseph: "If you go to bed merry, you shall have good dreams," &c.

3. Hence many took upon them the public profession of interpreting dreams; and this was reckoned among the nobler arts. A certain old man (Babyl. Beracoth) relates this story; "There were four-and-twenty interpreters of dreams in Jerusalem: and I, having dreamed a dream, went to them all: every one gave a different interpretation, and yet they all came to pass," &c. You have R. Joses Ben Chelpatha, R. Ismael Ben R. Joses, R. Lazar, and R. Akiba interpreting divers dreams, and many coming to them for interpretation of their dreams. Nay, you see there the disciples of R. Lazar in his absence practising this art. See there also many stories about this business, which it would be too much here to transcribe.

II. There were hardly any people in the whole world that more used, or were more fond of, amulets, charms, mutterings, exorcisms, and all kinds of enchantments. We might here produce innumerable examples; a handful shall serve us out of the harvest: "Let not any one go abroad with his amulet on the sabbath day, unless that amulet be prescribed by an approved physician" (or, "unless it be an approved amulet"; see the Gemara). Now these amulets

were either little roots hung about the necks of sick persons, or, what was more common, bits of paper with words written on them whereby they supposed that diseases were either driven away or cured: which they wore all the week, but were forbid to wear on the sabbath, unless with a caution: "They do not say a charm over a wound on the sabbath, that also which is said over a mandrake is forbid" on the sabbath. "If any one say, Come and say this versicle over my son, or lay the book" of the law "upon him, to make him sleep; it is forbid": that is, on the sabbath, but on other days is usual.

"*They used to say the psalm of meetings* (that is, *against unlucky meetings*) *at Jerusalem.* R. Judah saith, Sometimes after such a meeting, and sometimes when no such meeting had happened. But what is the Psalm of Meetings? The third psalm, 'Lord, how are my foes increased!' even all the psalm: and the ninety-first psalm, 'He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High,' to the ninth verse." There is a discourse of many things, which they used to carry about with them, as remedies against certain ailments; and of mutterings over wounds: and there you may see, that while they avoid the enchantments of the Amorites, they have and allow their own. You have, *Bab. Joma*, fol, 84.1, the form of an enchantment against a mad dog. And, *Avodah Zarah*, fol. 12.2, the form of enchantment against the devil of blindness. You have, *Hieros. Schab.* fol 13.4, and *Avod. Zarah*, fol. 40.4, mutterings and enchantments, even in the name of Jesus. See also the *Babyl. Sanhedr.* fol. 101.1, concerning these kind of mutterings.

III. So skilful were they in conjurings, enchantments, and sorceries, that they wrought *great signs*, many villainies, and more wonders. We pass by those things which the sacred story relates of Simon Magus, Elymas, the sons of Sceva, &c., and Josephus, of others; we will only produce examples out of the Talmud, a few out of many.

You will wonder, in the entrance, at these two things, in order to the speaking of their magical exploits; and thence you will conjecture at the very common practice of these evil arts among that people: 1. That "the senior who is chosen into the council ought to be skilled in the arts of astrologers, jugglers, diviners, sorcerers, &c., that he may be able to judge of those who are guilty of the same." 2. The Masters tell us, that a certain chamber was built by a magician in the temple itself: "The chamber of Happarva was built by a certain magician, whose name was Parvah, by art-magic." "Four-and-twenty of the school Rabbi, intercalating the year at Lydda, were killed by an evil eye": that is, with sorceries. R. Joshua outdoes a magician in magic, and drowns him in the sea. In *Babyl. Taanith*, several miracles are related that the Rabbins had wrought. Elsewhere, there is a story told of eighty women-sorceresses at Ascalon, who were hanged in one day by Simeon Ben Shetah: "and the women of Israel (saith the gloss) had generally fallen to the practice of sorceries": as we have mentioned before. It is related of abundance of Rabbis, that they were *skilful in working miracles*: thus Abba Chelchia, and Chanin, and R. Chanina Ben Dusa; of which R. Chanina Ben Dusa there is

almost an infinite number of stories concerning the miracles he wrought, which savour enough and too much of magic.

And, that we may not be tedious in producing examples, what can we say of the fasting Rabbis causing it to rain in effect when they pleased? of which there are abundance of stories in Taanith. What can we say of the Bath Kol very frequently applauding the Rabbins out of heaven? of which we have spoken before. What can we say of the death or plagues foretold by the Rabbins to befall this or that man? which came to pass just according as they were foretold. I rather suspect some magic art in most of these, than fiction in all.

IV. False Christs broke out, and appeared in public with their witchcrafts, so much the frequenter and more impudent, as the city and people drew nearer to its ruin; because the people believed the Messiah should be manifested before the destruction of the city; and each of them pretended to be the Messiah by these signs. From the words of Isaiah, "Before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child," the doctors concluded, "that the Messiah should be manifested before the destruction of the city." Thus the Chaldee paraphrast upon the place; "She shall be saved before her utmost extremity, and her king shall be revealed before her pains of childbirth." Mark that also; "The Son of David will not come, till the wicked empire [*of the Romans*] shall have spread itself over all the world nine months; as it is said, "Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth."

27. 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.

[*For as the lightning, &c.*] To discover clearly the sense of this and the following clauses, those two things must be observed which we have formerly given notice of:--

1. That the destruction of Jerusalem is very frequently expressed in Scripture as if it were the destruction of the whole world, [Deuteronomy 32:22](#); "A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell" (the discourse there is about the wrath of God consuming that people; see verses 20,21), "and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains." [Jeremiah 4:23](#); "I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void; and the heavens, and they had no light," &c. The discourse there also is concerning the destruction of that nation, [Isaiah 65:17](#); "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered," &c. And more passages of this sort among the prophets. According to this sense, Christ speaks in this place; and Peter speaks in his Second Epistle, third chapter; and John, in the sixth of the Revelation; and Paul, [2 Corinthians 5:17](#), &c.

2. That Christ's taking vengeance of that exceeding wicked nation is called Christ's "coming in glory," and his "coming in the clouds," [Daniel 7](#). It is also called, "the day of the Lord." See [Psalm 1:4](#); [Malachi 3:1,2](#), &c.; [Joel 2:31](#); [Matthew 16:28](#); [Revelation 1:7](#), &c. See what we have said on chapter 12:20; 19:28.

The meaning, therefore, of the words before us is this: "While they shall falsely say, that Christ is to be seen here or there: 'Behold, he is in the desert,' one shall say; another, 'Behold, he is in the secret chambers': he himself shall come, like lightning, with sudden and altogether unexpected vengeance: they shall meet him whom they could not find; they shall find him whom they sought, but quite another than what they looked for."

28. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

[*For wheresoever the carcase is, &c.*] I wonder any can understand these words of pious men flying to Christ, when the discourse here is of quite a different thing: they are thus connected to the foregoing: Christ shall be revealed with a sudden vengeance; for when God shall cast off the city and people, grown ripe for destruction, like a carcase thrown out, the Roman soldiers, like eagles, shall straight fly to it with their eagles (ensigns) to tear and devour it. And to this also agrees the answer of Christ, [Luke 17:37](#); when, after the same words that are spoke here in this chapter, it was inquired, "Where, Lord?" he answered, "Wheresoever the body is," &c.; silently hinting thus much, that Jerusalem, and that wicked nation which he described through the whole chapter, would be the carcase, to which the greedy and devouring eagles would fly to prey upon it.

29. 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:

[*The sun shall be darkened, &c.*] That is, the Jewish heaven shall perish, and the sun and moon of its glory and happiness shall be darkened, and brought to nothing. The *sun* is the religion of the church; the *moon* is the government of the state; and the *stars* are the judges and doctors of both. Compare [Isaiah 13:10](#), and [Ezekiel 32:7,8](#), &c.

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.

[*And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man.*] Then shall *the Son of man* give a proof of himself, whom they would not before acknowledge: as proof, indeed, not in any visible figure, but in vengeance and judgment so visible, that all the tribes of the earth shall be forced to acknowledge him the avenger. The Jews would not know him: now they shall now him, whether they will or no, [Isaiah 26:11](#). Many times they asked of him a *sign*: now a *sign* shall appear, that he is the true Messiah, whom they despised, derided, and crucified, namely, his signal vengeance and fury, such as never any nation felt from the first foundations of the world.

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.

[*And he shall send his angels, &c.*] When Jerusalem shall be reduced to ashes, and that wicked nation cut off and rejected, then shall the Son of man send his ministers with the trumpet of the gospel, and they shall gather together his elect of the several nations from the four corners of heaven: so that God shall not want a church...

34. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

[*This generation shall not pass, &c.*] Hence it appears plain enough, that the foregoing verses are not to be understood of the last judgment, but, as we said, of the destruction of Jerusalem. There were some among the disciples (particularly John), who lived to see these things come to pass. With [Matthew 16:28](#), compare [John 21:22](#). And there were some Rabbins alive at the time when Christ spoke these things, that lived till the city was destroyed, viz. Rabban Simeon, who perished with the city, R. Jochanan Ben Zaccai, who outlived it, R. Zadoch, R. Ismael, and others.

36. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

[*No man knoweth, no, not the angels.*] This is taken from [Deuteronomy 32:34](#): "Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?"

37. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

[*But as the days of Noe were, &c.*] Thus Peter placeth as parallels, the ruin of the old world, and the ruin of Jerusalem, [1 Peter 3:19-21](#); and by such a comparison his words will be best understood. For, see how he skips from the mention of the death of Christ to the times before the flood, in the eighteenth and nineteenth verses, passing over all the time between. Did not the Spirit of Christ preach all along in the times under the law? Why then doth he take an example only from the times before the flood? that he might fit the matter to his case, and shew that the present state of the Jews was like theirs in the times of Noah, and that their ruin should be like also. So, also, in his Second Epistle, chapter 3:6,7.

The age or generation of the flood hath no portion in the world to come: thus Peter saith, that "they were shut up in prison": and here our Saviour intimates that "they were buried in security," and so were surprised by the flood.

Chapter 25

1. Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

[*Ten virgins.*] The nation of the Jews delighted mightily in the number *ten*, both in sacred and civil matters: *A synagogue consisted not but of ten at the least*: which we have observed before, when we spoke about synagogues. This also was current among them, *An order or ring of men consisted not but of ten at the least*. The text is speaking of a company to comfort mourners: which the Gloss thus describes, "When the company was returned from burying a dead body, *they set themselves in order about the mourners*, and comforted them: but now such an order or ring consisted of ten at the least." To this commonly received number there seems to be an alluding in this place: not but that they very frequently exceeded that number of virgins in weddings of greater note, but rarely came short of it.

[*To meet the bridegroom.*] To go to a wedding was reckoned among the works of mercy.

"*The shewing of mercy* implies two things: 1. That one should assist an Israelite with one's wealth, namely, by alms and redeeming of captives. 2. That one should assist him in one's own person; to wit, by comforting the mourners, by attending the dead to burial, *and by being present at the chambers of bridegrooms.*" The presence of virgins also adorned the pomp and festivity of the thing. Marriages are called by the Rabbins *receivings*, &c. *The introducing of the bride*, namely, into the house of her husband. There were no marriages but of such as had been before betrothed; and, after the betrothing, the bridegroom might not lie with the bride in his father-in-law's house before he had brought her to his own. That 'bringing' of her was the consummation of the marriage. This parable supposeth that the bride was thus fetched to the house of her husband, and that the virgins were ready against her coming; who yet, being either fetched a great way, or some accident happening to delay her, did not come till midnight.

[*Took lamps.*] The form of *lamps* is described by Rambam and R. Solomon, whom see. These things are also mentioned by R. Solomon: "It is the fashion in the country of the Ismaelites to carry the bride from the house of her father to the house of the bridegroom before she is put to bed; and to carry before her about ten wooden staves, having each of them on the top a vessel like a dish, in which there is a piece of cloth with oil and pitch: these, being lighted, they carry before her for torches."

2. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

[*Five wise; Five foolish.*] A parable, not unlike this, is produced by Kimchi: "Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai saith (as he hath it), This thing is like a king, who invited his servants, but did not appoint them any set time. *Those of them that were wise* adorned themselves, and sat at the gate of the palace; *those that were foolish* were about their own business. The

king on a sudden called for his servants: those went in adorned; these, undressed. The king was pleased with the wise, and angry at the foolish."

5. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

[*They all slumbered and slept.*] "If some sleep" [while they celebrate the paschal supper], "let them eat; if all, let them not eat. R. Josi saith, *Do they slumber? let them eat. Do they sleep? let them not eat.*" The Gemarists inquire, "*Whence a man is to be reputed as a slumberer?*" R. Ishi saith, He sleeps and doth not sleep, he wakes and is not awake. If you call him, he answers; *but he cannot answer to the purpose.*" The Gloss, "If you speak to him, he will answer *yes, or no*; but if you ask any thing that hath need of thinking; as, for instance, where such a vessel is laid up? he cannot answer you."

15. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

[*And unto one he gave five talents, &c.*] You have a like and almost the same parable, [Luke 19](#); yet, indeed, not the very same; for, besides that there is mention there of *pounds* being given, here of *talents*,--*that* parable was spoken by Christ, going up from Jericho to Jerusalem, before the raising up of Lazarus; *this*, as he was sitting on Mount Olivet, three days before the Passover. *That*, upon this account, "because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear," [Luke 19:11](#), and that he might shew that it would not be long before Jerusalem should be called to an account for all the privileges and benefits conferred upon it by God (see verses the fourteenth and seventeenth); but *this*, that he might warn all to be watchful, and provide with their utmost care concerning giving up their accounts at the last judgment.

27. Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

[*Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, &c.*] The lord did not deliver the talents to his servants with that intent, that they should receive the increase and profit of them by usury; but that, by merchandise and some honest way of trade, they should increase them. He only returns this answer to the slothful servant, as fitted to what he had alleged; "You take me for a covetous, griping, and sordid man: why then did you not make use of a manner of gain agreeable to these qualities, namely, interest or usury (since you would not apply yourself to any honest traffic), that you might have returned me some increase of my money, rather than nothing at all?" So that our Lord, in these words, doth not so much approve of usury, as upbraid the folly and sloth of his servant.

Exchangers, answering to the word *trapezita* very usual among the Talmudists: "*An exchanger (trapezita) sells money*; and because a *table* is always before him, upon which he buys and sells, therefore he is called *mensarius*," *one that stands at a table.*

Of the same employment was *the shopkeeper* of whom is as frequent mention among them. He exercised the employment of a usurer in buying and changing of fruits, as the other in money: for in these two especially consisted usury: of which you may see, if you please, the tract *Bava Mezia*.

Of the present Authority of the Council, and of its Place.

3. Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas.

[*Assembled together unto the palace of the high priest.*] Those ominous prodigies are very memorable, which are related by the Talmudists to have happened forty years before the destruction of the Temple.

"A tradition. Forty years before the Temple was destroyed, the western candle" (that is, the middlemost in the holy candlestick) "was put out. And the crimson tongue" (that was fastened to the horns of the scapegoat, or the doors of the Temple) "kept its redness. And the lot of the Lord" (for the goat that was to be offered up on the day of Expiation) "came out on the left hand. And the gates of the Temple, which were shut over night, were found open in the morning. Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai said, 'Therefore, O Temple, wherefore dost thou trouble us? we know thy fate; namely, that thou art to be destroyed: for it is said, Open, O Lebanon, thy gates, that the flame may consume thy cedars.'" "A tradition. Forty years before the Temple was destroyed, judgment in capital causes was taken away from Israel." "Forty years before the Temple was destroyed, the council removed and sat in the sheds."

With these two last traditions lies our present business. What the Jews said, [John 18:31](#), *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death*, signifies the same thing with the tradition before us, "Judgments in capital causes are taken away from Israel." When were they first taken away? "Forty years before the destruction of the Temple," say the Talmudists: no doubt before the death of Christ; the words of the Jews imply so much. But how were they taken away? It is generally received by all that the Romans did so far divest the council of its authority, that it was not allowed by them to punish any with death; and this is gathered from those words of the Jews, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death."

But if this, indeed, be true, 1. What do then those words of our Saviour mean, *they will deliver you up to the councils*? 2. How did they put Stephen to death? 3. Why was Paul so much afraid to commit himself to the council, that he chose rather to appeal to Caesar?

The Talmudists excellently well clear the matter: "What signifieth that tradition (say they) of the removal of the council forty years before the ruin of the Temple? Rabh Isaac Bar Abdimi saith, 'It signifieth thus much, that they did not judge of fines.'" And a little after; "But R. Nachman Bar Isaac saith, 'Do not say that it did not judge of fines, but that it did not judge in capital causes.' And the reason was this, *because they saw murderers so much increase that they could not judge them*. They said therefore, 'It is fit that we should remove from place to place, that so we may avoid the guilt.'" That is, the number and boldness of thieves and murderers growing so great that, by reason thereof, the authority of the council grew weak, and neither could nor dared put them to death. "It is better (say they) for us to remove from hence, out of this chamber Gazith, where, by the quality of the place, we are

obliged to judge them, than that, by sitting still here, and not judging them, we should render ourselves guilty." Hence it is that neither in the highest nor in the inferior councils any one was punished with death. ("For they did not judge of capital matters in the inferior councils in any city, but only when the great council sat in the chamber Gazith," saith the Gloss.) The authority of them was not taken away by the Romans, but rather relinquished by themselves. The slothfulness of the council destroyed its own authority. Hear it justly upbraided in this matter: "The council which puts but one to death in seven years is called Destruction. R. Lazar Ben Azariah said, 'Which puts one to death in seventy years.' R. Tarphon and R. Akiba said, 'If we had been in the council' (when it judged of capital matters), 'there had none ever been put to death by it.' R. Simeon Ben Gamaliel said, 'These men have increased the number of murderers in Israel.'" Most certainly true, O Simeon! for by this means the power of the council came to be weakened in capital matters, because they, either by mere slothfulness, or by a foolish tenderness, or, as indeed the truth was, by a most fond estimation of an Israelite as an Israelite, they so far neglected to punish bloodshed and murder, and other crimes, till wickedness grew so untractable that the authority of the council trembled for fear of it, and dared not kill the killers. In this sense their saying must be understood, *It is not lawful for us to put any man to death*: their authority of judging not being taken from them by the Romans, but lost by themselves, and despised by their people.

Notwithstanding it was not so lost, but that sometimes they exercised it; namely, when they observed they might do it safely and without danger. "Dat veniam corvis," &c *sparcs crows, but vexeth pigeons*. Thieves, murderers, and wicked men armed with force, they dared not call into their judgment; they were afraid of so desperate a crew: but to judge, condemn, torture, and put to death poor men and Christians, from whom they feared no such danger, they dreaded it not, they did not avoid it. They had been ready enough at condemning our Saviour himself to death if they had not feared the people, and if Providence had not otherwise determined of his death.

We may also, by the way, add that also which follows after the place above cited, *In the day of Simeon Ben Jochai, judgments of pecuniary matters were taken away from Israel*. In the same tract this is said to have been in "the days of Simeon Ben Shetah," long before Christ was born: but this is an error of the transcribers.

But now, if the Jewish council lost their power of judging in pecuniary causes by the same means as they lost it in capital, it must needs be that deceits, oppressions, and mutual injuries were grown so common and daring that they were let alone, as being above all punishment. The Babylonian Gemarists allege another reason; but whether it be only in favour of their nation, this is no fit place to examine.

That we may yet further confirm our opinion, that the authority of that council in capital matters was not taken away by the Romans, we will produce two stories, as clear examples of the thing we assert: one is this; "R. Lazar son of R. Zadok said, 'When I was a little boy,

sitting on my father's shoulders, I saw a priest's daughter that had played the harlot compassed round with fagots and burnt." The council no doubt judging and condemning her, and this after Judea had then groaned many years under the Roman yoke; for that same R. Lazar saw the destruction of the city.

The other you have in the same tract, where they are speaking of the manner of pumping out evidence against a heretic and seducer of the people: "They place (say they) two witnesses in ambush, in the inner part of the house, and him in the outward, with a candle burning by him that they may see and hear him. Thus they dealt with Ben Satda in Lydda. They placed two disciples of the wise in ambush for him, and they brought him before the council, and stoned him." The Jews openly profess that this was done to him in the days of R. Akiba, long after the destruction of the city; and yet then, as you see, the council still retained its authority in judging of capital causes. They might do it for all the Romans, if they dared do it to the criminals.

But so much thus far concerning its authority: let us now speak of its present seat. "The council removed from the chamber Gazith to the sheds, from the sheds into Jerusalem, from Jerusalem to Jafne, from Jafne to Osha, from Osha to Shepharaama, from Shepharaama to Bethshaarim, from Bethshaarim to Tsippor, from Tsippor to Tiberias," &c. We conjecture that the great bench was driven from its seat, the chamber Gazith, half a year, or thereabout, before the death of Christ; but whether they sat then in the sheds [a place in the Court of the Gentiles] or in the city, when they debated about the death of Christ, does not clearly appear, since no authors make mention how long it sat either here or there. Those things that are mentioned in chapter 27:4-6, seem to argue that they sat in the Temple; these before us, that they sat in the city. Perhaps in both places; for it was not unusual with them to return thither, as occasion served, from whence they came; only to the chamber Gazith they never went back. Whence the Gloss upon the place lately cited, "They sat in Jafne in the days of Rabban Jochanan; in Osha, in the days of Rabban Gamaliel; for they returned from Osha to Jafne," &c. Thus the council, which was removed from Jerusalem to Jafne before the destruction of the city, returned thither at the feast, and sat as before. Hence Paul is brought before the council at Jerusalem when Jafne at that time was its proper seat. And hence Rabban Simeon, president of the council, was taken and killed in the siege of the city; and Rabban Jochanan his vice-president was very near it, both of them being drawn from Jafne to the city, with the rest of the bench, for observation of the Passover.

Whether the hall of the high priest were the ordinary receptacle for the council, or only in the present occasion, we do not here inquire. It is more material to inquire concerning the bench itself, and who sat president in judging. The president of the council at this time was Rabban Gamaliel, (Paul's master,) and the vice-president, Rabban Simeon his son, or Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai (which we do not dispute now). Whence therefore had the chief priest, here and in other places, the precedence and the chief voice in judging? For

thus in Stephen's case the high priest is the chief of the inquisition, [Acts 7:1](#); also in Paul's case, [Acts 23:2](#), see also [Acts 9:1](#). Had the priests a council and judgment seat of their own? or might they in the chief council, when the president was absent, hear causes of life and death? To this long question, and that enough perplexed, we reply these few things:

I. We confess, indeed, that the priests had a bench and council of their own, yet denying that there was a double council, one for ecclesiastical, the other for civil affairs, as some would have it.

We meet often with mention of the *chamber of the counsellors*, next the court...Concerning which thus the Babyl. *Joma*: "The tradition of R. Juda. What, was it the chamber of? Was it not the chamber of *the counsellors*? At first it was called the chamber of the *counsellors*: but when the high priesthood came to be bought with money, and changed yearly *as the king's presidents* are changed every year, from that time forward it was called the chamber of the *presidents*."

Hear the Glosser on this place: "The high priests were wicked, and did not fulfil their whole year; and he that succeeded the other changed this building and adorned it, that it might be called by his own name." Hear also the Gemara: "The first Temple stood four hundred and ten years, and there were not above eighteen priests under it. The second stood four hundred and twenty years, and there were more than three hundred under it. Take out forty years of Simeon the Just, eighty of Jochanan, ten of Ismael Ben Phabi, and eleven of Eleazar Ben Harsum, and there doth not remain one whole year to each of the rest."

Behold the chamber of the *counsellors*, properly so called, because the priests did meet and sit there not to judge, but to consult; and that only of things belonging to the Temple! Here they consulted, and took care that all persons and things belonging and necessary to the worship of God should be in readiness; that the buildings of the Temple and the courts should be kept in repair; and that the public Liturgy should be duly performed: but in the meantime they wanted all power of judging and punishing; they had not authority to fine, scourge, or put to death, yea, and in a word, to exercise any judgment; for by their own examination and authority they could not admit a candidate into the priesthood, but he was admitted by the authority of the council: "In the chamber Gazith sat the council of Israel, and held the examinations of priests: whosoever was not found fit was sent away in black clothes, and a black veil; whosoever was found fit was clothed in white, and had a white veil, and entered and ministered with his brethren the priests."

2. We meet also with mention of *the council house of the priests*. "*The high priests made a decree*, and did not permit an Israelite to carry the scapegoat into the wilderness." But in the Gloss, *The council of the priests did not permit this*. "*The council of the priests exacted for the portion of a virgin four hundred zuzes, and the wise men did not hinder it*."

First, This was that council of which we spoke before in *the chamber of the counsellors*. Secondly, That which was decreed by them concerning the carrying away of the scapegoat

belonged merely to the service of the Temple, as being a caution about the right performance of the office in the day of atonement. Thirdly, and that about the portion of a virgin was nothing else but what any Israelite might do: and so the Gemarists confess; "If any noble family in Israel (say they) would do what the priests do, they may." The priests set a price upon their virgins, and decreed by common consent, that not less than such a portion should be required for them; which was lawful for all the Israelites to do for their virgins if they pleased.

3. There is an example brought of "Tobias a physician, who saw the new moon at Jerusalem, he and his son, and his servant whom he had freed. The priests admitted him and his son for witnesses, his servant they rejected: but when they came before *the bench*, they admitted him and his servant, and rejected his son." Observe, 1. That *the council* is here opposed to the priests. 2. That it belonged to the council to determine of the new moon, because on that depended the set times of the feasts: this is plain enough in the chapter cited. 3. That what the priests did was matter of examination only, not decree.

4. "*The elders of the city* (Deut 22:18) are the triumvirate bench": 'at the gate' (v 24) means *the bench of the chief priest*. The matter there in debate is about a married woman, who is found by her husband to have lost her virginity, and is therefore to be put to death: Deuteronomy 22:13, &c. In that passage, among other things, you may find these words, verse 18: "And the elders of that city shall lay hold of that man and scourge him." The Gemarists take occasion from thence to define what the phrase there and in other places means, "The elders of the city": and what is the meaning of the word *gate*, when it relates to the bench: "*That* (say they) signifies the triumvirate bench: *this* the bench or council of the high priest": that is, unless I be very much mistaken, every council of twenty-three; which is clear enough both from the place mentioned and from reason itself:

1. The words of the place quoted are these: "R. Bon Bar Chaija inquired before R. Zeira, What if the father [of the virgin] should produce witnesses which invalidate the testimony of the husband's witnesses? if the father's witnesses are proved false, he must be whipped, and pay a hundred selaim in the triumvirate court; but the witnesses are to be stoned by the bench of the twenty-three, &c. R. Zeira thought that this was a double judgment: but R. Jeremias, in the name of R. Abhu, that it was but a single one: but the tradition contradicts R. Abhu; for *To the elders of the city*, verse 5, is, *To the triumvirate-bench*, but *at the gate*, means *the bench of the high priest*." It is plain, that *the bench of the high priest* is put in opposition to *the triumvirate bench*; and, by consequence, that it is either the chief council, or the council of the twenty-three, or some other council of the priests, distinct from all these. But it cannot be this third, because the place cited in the Talmudists, and the place in the law cited by the Talmudists, plainly speak of such a council, which had power of judging in capital causes. But they that suppose the ecclesiastical council among the Jews to have been distinct from the civil, scarce suppose that that council sat on capital causes, or passed sen-

tence of death; much less is it to be thought that that council sat only on life and death; which certainly ought to be supposed from the place quoted, if *the council of the high priest* did strictly signify such a council of priests. Let us illustrate the Talmudical words with a paraphrase: R. Zeira thought, that that cause of a husband accusing his wife for the loss of her virginity belonged to the judgment of two benches; namely, of the triumvirate, which inflicted whipping and pecuniary mulcts; and of the 'twenty-three,' which adjudged to death; but Rabbi Abhu thinks it is to be referred to the judgment of one bench only. But you are mistaken, good Rabbi Abhu; and the very phrase made use of in this case refutes you; for the expression which is brought in, "To the elders of the city," signifies the triumviral bench; and the phrase, "at the gate," signifies the bench of twenty-three; for the chief council never at in the gate.

2. Now the council of *twenty-three* is called by the Talmudists *the bench*, or *the council of the chief priest*, alluding to the words of the lawgiver, [Deuteronomy 17:9](#), where the word *priests* denotes the inferior councils, and *judge* the chief council.

II. In the chief council, the president sat in the highest seat, (being at this time, when Christ was under examination, Rabban Gamaliel, as we said); but the high priest excelled him in dignity everywhere: for the president of the council was chosen not so much for his quality, as for his learning and skill in traditions. He was (a phrase very much used by the author of *Juchasin*, applied to presidents), that is, *keeper, father, and deliver of traditions*; and he was chosen to this office, who was fittest for these things. Memorable is the story of Hillel's coming to the presidentship, being preferred to the chair for this only thing, because he solved some doubts about the Passover, having learned it, as he saith himself, from Shemaiah and Abtalion. We will not think it much to transcribe the story: "The sons of Betira once forgot a tradition: for when the fourteenth day [on which the Passover was to be celebrated] fell out on the sabbath, they could not tell whether the Passover should take place of the sabbath or no. But they said, There is here a certain Babylonian, Hillel by name, who was brought up under Shemaiah and Abtalion; he can resolve us whether the Passover should take place of the sabbath or no. They sent therefore for him, and said to him, 'Have you ever heard in your life, [that is, have you received any tradition,] whether, when the fourteenth day falls on the sabbath, the Passover should take place of the sabbath or no?' He answered, 'Have we but one Passover that takes place of the sabbath yearly? or are there not many Passovers that put by the sabbath yearly? namely, the continual sacrifice.' He proved this by arguments *a pari*, from the equality of it, from the less to the greater, &c. But they did not admit of this from him, till he said, 'May it thus and thus happen to me, if I did not hear this of Shemaiah and Abtalion.' When they hear this they immediately submitted, and promoted him to the presidentship," &c.

It belonged to the president chiefly to sum up the votes of the elders, to determine of a tradition, to preserve it, and transmit it to posterity; and, these things excepted, you will

scarce observe any thing peculiar to him in judging which was not common to all the rest. Nothing therefore hindered but that the high priest and the other priests (while he excelled in quality, and they in number) might promote acts in the council above the rest, and pursue them with the greatest vigour; but especially when the business before them was about the sum of religion, as it was here, and in the examples alleged of Paul and Stephen. It was lawful for them, to whose office it peculiarly belonged to take care of sacred things, to show more officious diligence in matters where these were concerned than other men, that they might provide for their fame among men, and the good of their places. The council, indeed, might consist of Israelites only, without either Levites or priests, in case such could not be found fit: "Thus it is commanded that in the great council there should be Levites and priests; but if such are not to be found, and the council consists of other Israelites only, it is lawful." But such a scarcity of priests and Levites is only supposed, was never found; they were always a great part, if not the greatest, of the council. Rabban Jochanan Ben Zacchai, the priest, was either now vice-president of the council, or next to him. Priests were everywhere in such esteem with the people and with the council, and the dignity and veneration of the high priest was so great, that it is no wonder if you find him and them always the chief actors, and the principal part in that great assembly.

6. Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper.

[*Now when Jesus was in Bethany, &c.*] That this supper in Bethany was the same with that mentioned [John 13](#), I dare venture to affirm; however that be taken by very many for the paschal supper. Let us examine the matter a little home:

I. This supper was before the Passover; so was that: that this was, none need doubt; no more may they of the other, if we consider these things:

1. It is said by John in express words, *before the feast of the Passover*, verse 1, *Passover*, indeed, not seldom signifies the lamb itself; sometimes the very time of eating the lamb; sometimes the sacrifice of the day following, as [John 18:28](#). But *the feast of the Passover*, always signifies the whole seven days' paschal feast, both in the language of the Scripture and of the Talmudists: a Jew would laugh at one that should interpret it otherways.

2. When Christ said to Judas going out, "What thou doest, do quickly," some thought he meant this, "Buy those things that we have need of against the feast," at the twenty-ninth verse. For what *feast*, I pray? for the paschal supper? That, according to the interpreters which we here oppose, was just past. For the remaining part of the *feast* of that solemnity? Alas, how unseasonable! Where were those things, I pray, then to be bought, if this were the very night on which they had just eaten the lamb? The night of a feast day was festival: where were there any such markets to be found then? It was an unusual thing indeed, and unheard of, to rise from the paschal supper to go to market: a market on a festival-night was unusual and unheard of. It would argue some negligence, and a little good husbandry, if those things that were necessary for the feast were not yet provided; but that they must

be to run, now late at night, to buy those things they knew not where, they knew not how. It is certainly very harsh, and contrary to reason, to understand these things thus, when, from the first verse, the sense is very plain, *before the feast of the Passover*. The Passover was not yet come, but was near at hand: the disciples, therefore, thought that our Saviour had given order to Judas to provide all those things that were necessary to the paschal solemnity against it came.

3. Observe that also of [Luke 22:3](#), &c.: "Satan entered into Judas, and he went his way, and communed with the chief priests," &c. And after, in the seventh verse, "Then came the day of unleavened bread." Hence I inquire, Is the method of Luke direct or no? If not, let there be some reason given of the transposition; if it be direct, then it is plain that the devil entered into Judas before the Passover: but he entered into him at that supper in [John 13:27](#); therefore that supper was before the Passover. For,

4. Let them who take that supper in [John 13](#) for the paschal supper, tell me how this is possible, that Judas after the paschal supper (at which they do not deny that he was present with the rest of the disciples) could make his agreement with the priests, and get his blades together ready to apprehend our Saviour, and assemble all the council, verse 57. The evangelists say that he made an agreement with the chief priests, [Matthew 26:14](#), and with the captains, [Luke 22:4](#), and "with all the council," [Mark 14:10,11](#). But now, which way was it possible that he could bargain with all these in so small a space as there was between the going out of Judas from supper and the betraying of our Lord in the garden? What! were these all together at supper that night? This is a matter to be laughed at rather than credited. Did he visit all these from door to door? And this is as little to be thought, since he had scarce time to discourse with any one of them. Every one supped this night at home, the master of a family with his family. It would be ridiculous to suppose that these chief priests supped together, while, in the mean time, their families sat down at home without their head. It is required by the law that every master of a family should be with his family that night, instructing them, and performing sacred rites with and for them. These were, therefore, to be sought from house to house by Judas, if that were the first time of his treating with them about this matter: and let reason answer whether that little time he had were sufficient for this? We affirm, therefore, with the authority of the evangelists, that that supper, [John 13](#), was before the Passover; at which, Satan entering into Judas, he bargained with the priests before the Passover, he appointed the time and place of his betraying our Saviour, and all things were by them made ready for this wicked deed before the Passover came. Observe the method and order of the story in the evangelists, [Matthew 26:14-17](#); [Mark 14:10-12](#): "Then went Judas to the priests, and said, 'What will ye give me,' &c. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him. Now, the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, the disciples came," &c. When was it that Judas came to the priests to treat about betraying Christ? surely before the first day of unleavened bread. Luke also, whom we quoted before,

proceeds in the very same method: "From that time (say they), he sought for an opportunity to betray him." If then first he went to and agreed with the priests when he rose up from the paschal supper, as many suppose, he did not then seek for an opportunity, but had found one. The manner of speaking used by the evangelists most plainly intimates some space of deliberation, not sudden execution.

5. Let those words of John be considered, chapter 14:31, *Arise, let us go hence*, and compared with the words, chapter 18:1, "When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron." Do not these speak of two plainly different departures? Did not Christ rise up and depart when he said, "Arise, let us go hence?" Those words are brought in by the evangelist without any end or design, if we are not to understand by them that Christ immediately changed his place: and certainly this change of place is different from that which followed the paschal supper, [John 18:1](#).

6. In that thirteenth chapter of John there is not the least mention nor syllable of the paschal supper. There is, indeed, plain mention of a supper *before the feast of the Passover*, that is, before the festival day; but of a paschal supper there is not one syllable. I profess seriously, I cannot wonder enough how interpreters could apply that chapter to the paschal supper, when there is not only no mention at all in it of the paschal supper, but the evangelist hath also pronounced, in most express words, and than which nothing can be more plain, that that supper of which he speaks was not *on* the feast of the Passover, but *before* the feast.

7. If those things which we meet with, [John 13](#), of the sop given to Judas, &c. were acted in the paschal supper, then how, I pray, was it possible for the disciples to mistake the meaning of those words, "What thou doest, do quickly?" In the paschal supper he said, "He that dips with me in the dish is he"; and the hand of Judas, as some think, was at that very moment in the dish. To Judas asking, "Is it I?" he plainly answered, "Thou hast said": and besides, he gave him a sop for a token, as they say who maintain that opinion: then with what reason, or with what ignorance, after so clear a discovery of the thing and person, could the disciples imagine that Christ said, "Buy quickly those things that are necessary, or give something to the poor?"

8. And to what *poor*, I pray? It was unseasonable, truly, late at night, to go to seek for poor people here and there, who were now dispersed all about in several *families* eating the passover: for the poorest Israelite was obliged to that duty as well as the richest. They who supposed that Christ commanded him to give something to the poor, could not but understand it of a thing that was presently to be done. For it had been ridiculous to conceive, that Christ sent him so hastily away from supper to give something to the poor tomorrow. But, if it be granted that the matter was transacted at Bethany, and that two days before the Passover, which we assert, then it is neither necessary you should suppose that supper to have been so late at night; nor were poor people, then and there, to be far sought for, since so great a multitude of men followed Christ everywhere.

II. This supper was at Bethany, two days before the Passover: the same we conclude of that supper, [John 13](#), both as to the place and time; and that, partly, by the carrying on of the story to that time, partly, by observing the sequel of that supper. Six days before the Passover Christ sups at Bethany, [John 12:1](#).

The next day (five days before the Passover) he came to Jerusalem riding on an ass, [John 12:12](#): and in the evening he returned to Bethany, [Matthew 21:17](#); [Mark 11:11](#).

The day following (four days before the Passover) he went to Jerusalem, [Mark 11:11,15](#), &c.; and at evening he returned the same way to Bethany, [Mark 11:19](#).

The day after (three days before the Passover), he goes again to Jerusalem, [Mark 11:27](#). In the evening, he went out to the mount of Olives, [Matthew 24:1,3](#); [Mark 13:1,3](#); [Luke 21:37](#). Now where did he sup this night? at Bethany. For so Matthew and Mark, "After two days was the Passover," &c. "Now when Jesus was in Bethany." And from this time forward there is no account either of his supping or going to Jerusalem till the evening of the Passover.

From that supper both the evangelists begin their story of Judas' contriving to betray our Lord; [Matthew 26:14](#); [Mark 14:10](#): and very fitly; for at that supper the devil had entered into him, and hurried him forward to accomplish his villainy.

We therefore thus draw up the series of the history out of the holy writers: *Before the feast of the Passover* ([John 13:1](#)), namely, *two days* ([Matt 26:2,6](#)), as Jesus was supping in Bethany, a woman anoints his head: and some of the disciples murmur at it. Our Saviour himself becomes both her advocate and encomiast. Before supper was done Christ riseth from the table, and washeth his disciples' feet; and, sitting down again, acquaints them with the betrayer. John asking privately about him, he privately also gives him a token by a sop, and gives a sop to Judas. With this the devil entered into him, and now he grows ripe for his wickedness: "The devil had before put it into his heart to betray him," verse 2; now he is impatient till he hath done it. He riseth up immediately after he had the sop, and goes out. As he was going out, Jesus said to him, "What thou doest, do quickly": which some understood of buying necessaries for the feast, that was now two days off. It was natural and easy for them to suppose, that he, out of his diligence (having the purse, and the care of providing things that were necessary), was now gone to Jerusalem, though it were night, there being a great deal to be done, to get all things ready against the feast. He goes away; comes to Jerusalem; and the next day treats with the priests about betraying our Lord, and concludes a bargain with them. They were afraid for themselves, lest they should be either hindered by the people, or suffer some violence from them on the feast day. He frees them from this fear, provided they would let him have soldiers and company ready at the time appointed. Our Saviour lodges at Bethany that night, and spends the next day and the night after there too: and, being now ready to take his leave of his disciples, he teaches, instructs, and comforts them at large. Judas, having craftily laid the design of his treachery, and set his nets in readiness, returns, as is probable, to Bethany; and is supposed by the disciples, who were

ignorant of the matter, to have performed his office exceeding diligently, in providing necessaries for the approaching feast. On the day itself of the Passover, Jesus removes from Bethany with his disciples: "Arise (saith he), let us go hence," [John 14:31](#), and comes to Jerusalem.

7. There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.

[*Poured it upon his head, as he sat at meat.*] Therefore, it was not the same supper with that in [John 12:1](#); for then our Saviour's *feet* were anointed, now his *head*. I admire that any one should be able to confound these two stories. Oil, perfumed with spices, was very usual in feasts, especially sacred; and it was wont to be poured upon the head of some one present.

"The school of Shammai saith, He holds sweet oil in his right hand, and a cup of wine in his left. He says grace first over the oil, and then over the wine. The school of Hillel saith, Oil in his right hand, and wine in his left. He blesseth the sweet oil, and anoints the head of him that serves: but if the waiter be a disciple of the wise, he anoints the wall; for it is a shame for a disciple of the wise to smell of perfumes." Here the waiter anoints the head of him that sits down.

8. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?

[*To what purpose is this waste?*] It was not without cause that it was called "precious ointment," verse 7, and "very costly," [John 12:3](#): to shew that it was not of those common sorts of ointments used in feasts, which they thought it no waste to pour upon the waiter's head, or to daub upon the wall. But this ointment was of much more value, and thence arose the cavil.

9. For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

[*And be given to the poor.*] That it was Judas especially who cavilled at this, we have reason to believe from what is said of him in another supper, [John 12:4](#). Compare this with those words, [John 13:29](#). When Jesus said to Judas, "What thou doest, do quickly," some thought he had meant, "Give something to the poor." That supper, I presume, was the same with this: and see, how these things agree! When a complaint arose of that prodigal waste of the ointment here, and before in [John 12](#), and that it seemed unfit to some that that should be spent so unadvisedly upon our Lord which might have been bestowed much better, and more fitly, upon the poor, how easily might the others think that Christ had spoken to him about giving somewhat to the poor, that he might show his care of the poor, notwithstanding what he had before said concerning them, and the waste of the ointment.

12. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial.

[*She did it for my burial.*] She had anointed his feet, [John 12:3](#), out of love, duty, and honour to him; but this (which is added over and above to them) is upon account of his burial; and that not only in the interpretation of Christ, but in the design of the woman. She, and she first, believes that Christ should die; and, under that notion, she pours the ointment upon his head, as if she were now taking care of his body, and anointing it for burial: and it is as if Christ had said to those that took exceptions and complained, "You account her too officious and diligent for her doing this; and wasteful rather than prudent, in the immoderate profession of her friendship and respect; but a great and weighty reason moves her to it. She knows I shall die, and now takes care of my burial: what you approve of towards the dead, she hath done to one ready to die. Hence her fame shall be celebrated, in all ages, for this her faith, and this expression of it."

15. And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

[*Thirty pieces of silver.*] The price of a slave, [Exodus 21:32](#). Maimon. "The price of a slave, whether great or little, he or she, is *thirty selaim* of pure silver: if the slave be worth a hundred pounds, or worth only one penny." Now a *selaa*, in his weight, weighed three hundred and eighty-four barleycorns.

17. Now the first *day* of the *feast of unleavened bread* the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

[*Where wilt thou that we prepare, &c.*] For they might anywhere; since the houses at Jerusalem were not to be hired, as we have noted elsewhere, but during the time of the feast they were of common right.

19. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.

[Please see "The Temple: Its Ministry and Services" by Alfred Edersheim, "The Passover" for information on the workings of the Temple during this feast.]

[*They made ready the Passover.*] Peter and John were sent for this purpose, [Luke 22:8](#): and perhaps they moved the question, *where wilt thou, &c.* They only knew that Judas was about another business, while the rest supposed he was preparing necessaries for the Passover.

This Peter and John were to do, after having spoken with the landlord, whom our Saviour pointed out to them by a sign, to prepare and fit the room.

I. A lamb was to be bought, approved, and fit for the Passover.

II. This lamb was to be brought by them into the court where the altar was.

"The Passover was to be killed only in the court where the other sacrifices were slain: and it was to be killed on the fourteenth day after noon, after the daily sacrifice, after the offering of the incense," &c. The manner of bringing the Passover into the court, and of killing it, you have in *Pesachin*, in these words: "The Passover is killed in three companies; according as it is said, [[Exodus 12:6](#),] *and all the assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it (the Passover); assembly, congregation, and Israel*. The first company enters and fills the whole court: they lock the doors of the court: the trumpets sound: the priests stand in order, having golden and silver vials in their hands: one row silver, and the other gold; and they are not intermingled: the vials had no brims, lest the blood should stay upon them, and be congealed or thickened: an Israelite kills it, and a priest receives the blood, and gives it to him that stands next, and he to the next, who, taking the vial that was full, gives him an empty one. The priest who stands next to the altar sprinkles the blood at one sprinkling against the bottom of the altar: that company goes out, and the second comes in," &c. Let them tell me now, who suppose that Christ ate his Passover one day sooner than the Jews did theirs, how these things could be performed by him or his disciples in the Temple, since it was looked upon as a heinous offence among the people not to kill or eat the Passover in the due time. They commonly carried the lambs into the court upon their shoulders: this is called *its carrying*, in *Pesachin*: where the Gloss, "The carrying of it upon a man's shoulders, to bring it into the court, as into a public place."

III. It was to be presented in the court *under the name of the Paschal lamb*, and to be killed *for the company mentioned*. See what the Gemarists say of this thing in *Pesachin*: "If they kill it for such as are not to eat, or as are not numbered, for such as are not circumcised or unclean, it is profane: if for those that are to eat, and not to eat, numbered and not numbered, for circumcised and not circumcised, clean and unclean, it is right": that is, for those that are numbered, that atonement may be made for the not numbered; for the circumcised, that atonement may be made for the uncircumcised, &c. So the Gemarists and the Glosses.

IV. The blood being sprinkled at the foot of the altar, the lamb flayed, his belly cut up, the fat taken out and thrown into the fire upon the altar, the body is carried back to the place where they sup: the flesh is roasted, and the skin given to the landlord.

V. Other things were also provided. Bread according to God's appointment, wine, some usual meats, and the same called *Charoseth*: of which commentators speak everywhere.

20. Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

[*He sat down with the twelve.*]

I. The schools of the Rabbins distinguish between *sitting* at the table, and *lying* at the table: "If *they sit to eat*, every one says grace for himself; if they *lie*, one says grace for all." But now "that lying," as the Gloss on the place saith, "was when they leaned on their left side

upon couches, and ate and drank as they thus leaned." And the same Gloss in another place; "They used to eat lying along upon their left side, their feet being on the ground, every one on a single couch": Babyl. Berac. As also the Gemara; *to lie on one's back is not called lying down; and to lie on one's right side is not called lying down.*

II. The Israelites accounted such lying down in eating a very fit posture requisite in sacred feasts, and highly requisite and most necessary in the Paschal supper: "We do not use lying down but only to a morsel," &c. "And indeed to those that did eat leaning, leaning was necessary. But now our sitting is a kind of leaning along. They were used to lean along every one on his own couch, and to eat his meat on his own table: but we eat all together at one table."

Even the poorest Israelite must not eat till he lies down. The canon is speaking about the Paschal supper; on which thus the Babylonians: "It is said that the feast of unleavened bread requires leaning or lying down, but the bitter herbs not: concerning wine, it is said in the name of Rabh Nachman that it hath need of lying down: and it is said in the name of Rabh Nachman, that it hath not need of lying down: and yet these do not contradict one another; for *that* is said of the two first cups, *this* of the two last." They lie down on the left side, not on the right, "because they must necessarily use their right hand in eating." So the Gloss there.

III. They used and were fond of that custom of lying down, even to superstition, because it carried with it a token and signification of liberty: "R. Levi saith, It is the manner of slaves to eat standing: but now let them eat lying along, that it may be known that they are gone out of bondage to liberty. R. Simon in the name of R. Joshua Ben Levi, Let that which a man eats at the Passover, and does his duty, though it be but as big as an olive, let it be eaten lying along." "They eat the unleavened bread the first night lying down, because it is a commemoration of deliverance. The bitter herbs have no need of lying down, because they are in memory of bondage. Although it be the bread of affliction, yet it is to be eaten after the manner of liberty." See more there. "We are obliged to lie down when we eat, that we may eat after the manner of kings and nobles."

IV. "When there were two beds, *the worthiest person lay uppermost*; the second to him, next above him. But when there were three beds, the worthiest person lay in the middle, the second above him, the third below him." On which thus the Gloss: "When there were two, the principal person lay on the first couch, and the next to him lay above him, that is, on a couch placed at the pillow of the more worthy person. If there were three, the worthiest lay in the middle, the next above him, and the third below him; that is, at the coverlids of his feet. If the principal person desires to speak with the second, he must necessarily raise himself so as to sit upright; for as long as he sits bending he cannot speak to him; for the second sat behind the head of the first, and the face of the first was turned another way: and it would be better with the second [*in respect of discourse*] if he sat below him; for then

he might hear his words, even as he lay along." This affords some light to that story, [John 13:23,24](#); where Peter, as seems likely, lying behind our Saviour's head in the first place next after him, could not discourse with him, nor ask about the betrayer: therefore looking over Christ's head upon John, he gave him a sign to inquire. He sitting in the second place from Christ with his face towards him, asketh him,

22. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?

[*Lord, is it I?*] The very occasion, namely, eating together and fellowship, partly renews the mention of the betrayer at the Paschal supper; as if he had said, "We are eating here friendly together, and yet there is one in this number who will betray me": partly, that the disciples might be more fully acquainted with the matter itself: for at the supper in [John 13](#), he had privately discovered the person to John only; unless perhaps Peter understood it also, who knew of John's question to Christ, having at first put him upon it by his beckoning. The disciples ask, *Is it I?* partly through ignorance of the thing, partly out of a sincere and assured profession of the contrary.

24. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

[*It had been good for him if he had not been born*] *It were better for him that he were not created.* A very usual way of speaking in the Talmudists.

26. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

[*Jesus took bread, &c.*] *Bread* at supper, the cup after supper: "After supper he took the cup," saith [Luke 22:20](#); and Paul, [1 Corinthians 11:25](#); but not so of the bread.

That we may more clearly perceive the history of this supper in the evangelists, it may not be amiss to transcribe the rubric of the paschal supper, with what brevity we can, out of the Talmudists; that we may compare the things here related with the custom of the nation.

I. The paschal supper began with a cup of wine: "They mingle the first cup for him. The school of Shammai saith, He gives thanks, first for the day, and then for the wine: but the school of Hillel saith, He first gives thanks for the wine, and then for the day." The Sham-means confirm their opinion, *Because the day is the cause of their having wine*: that is, as the Gloss explains it, *that they have it before meat*. "They first mingle a cup for every one, and [*the master of the family*] blesseth it; 'Blessed be he that created the fruit of the vine': and then he repeats the consecration of the day, [that is, he gives thanks in the plural number for all the company, saying, 'Let us give thanks,'] and drinks up the cup. And afterward he

blesseth concerning the washing of hands, and washeth." Compare this cup with that, [Luke 22:17](#).

II. Then the bitter herbs are set on: "They bring in a table ready covered, upon which there is *sour sauce and other herbs*." Let the Glossers give the interpretation: "They do not set the table till after the consecration of the day: and upon the table they set lettuce. After he hath blessed over the wine, they set herbs, and he eats lettuce dipped, but not in *the sour sauce*, for that is not yet brought: and this is not meant simply of lettuce, unless when there be other herbs." His meaning is this, before he comes to those bitter herbs which he eats after the unleavened bread, when he also gives thanks for the eating of the bitter herbs, "as it is written," Ye shall eat (*it*) with unleavened bread and bitter herbs: "First unleavened bread, and then bitter herbs. And this first dipping is used only for that reason, that children may observe and inquire; for it is unusual for men to eat herbs before meat."

III. "Afterward there is set on unleavened bread, and the sauce...and the lamb, and the flesh also of the *Chagigah* of the fourteenth day." Maimonides doth not take notice of any interposition between the setting on the bitter herbs, and the setting on the unleavened bread: but the Talmudic Misna notes it in these words; *They set unleavened bread before him*. Where the Gloss, "This is said, because they have moved the table from before him who performed the duty of the Passover: now that removal of the table was for this end, that the son might ask the father, and the father answered him, 'Let them bring the table again, that we may make the second dipping'; then the son would ask, 'Why do we dip twice?' Therefore they bring back the table with unleavened bread upon it, and bitter herbs," &c.

IV. He begins, and blesseth, "'Blessed be He that created the fruits of the earth': and he takes the herbs and dips them in the sauce *Charoseth*, and eats as much as an olive, he, and all that lie down with him; but less than the quantity of an olive he must not eat: then they remove the table from before the master of the family." Whether this removal of the table be the same with the former is not much worth our inquiry.

V. "*Now they mingle the second cup for him*: and the son asks the father; or if the son doth not ask him, he tells him himself, how much this night differs from all other nights. 'On other nights (saith he) we dip but once, but this night twice. On other nights we eat either leavened or unleavened bread; on this, only unleavened, &c. On other nights we eat either sitting or lying; on this, all lying.'"

VI. "The table is set before them again; and then he saith, 'This is the passover, which we therefore eat, because God passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt.' Then he lifts up the bitter herbs in his hand and saith, 'We therefore eat these bitter herbs, because the Egyptians made the lives of our fathers bitter in Egypt.' He takes up the unleavened bread in his hand, and saith, 'We eat this unleavened bread, because our fathers had not time to sprinkle their meal to be leavened before God revealed himself and redeemed them. We ought therefore to praise, celebrate, honour, magnify, &c. him, who wrought all these

wonderful things for our fathers and for us, and brought us out of bondage into liberty, out of sorrow into joy, out of darkness into great light; let us therefore say, Hallelujah: Praise the Lord, praise him, O ye servants of the Lord, &c. *to*, And the flint-stone into foundations of waters' [that is, from the beginning of [Psalm 113](#) to the end of [Psalm 114](#)]. And he concludes, 'Blessed be thou, O Lord God, our King eternal, redeeming us, and redeeming our fathers out of Egypt, and bringing us to this night; that we may eat unleavened bread and bitter herbs': and then he drinks off the second cup."

VII. "Then washing his hands, and taking two loaves, he breaks one, and lays the broken upon the whole one, and blesseth it; 'Blessed be he who causeth bread to grow out of the earth': and putting some bread and bitter herbs together, he dips them in the sauce *Charoseth*,--and blessing, 'Blessed be thou, O Lord God, our eternal King, he who hath sanctified us by his precepts, and hath commanded us to eat,' he eats the unleavened bread and bitter herbs together; but if he eats the unleavened bread and bitter herbs by themselves, he gives thanks severally for each. And afterward, giving thanks after the same manner over the flesh of the *Chagigah* of the fourteenth day, he eats also of it, and in like manner giving thanks over the lamb, he eats of it."

VIII. "From thenceforward he lengthens out the supper, eating this or that as he hath a mind, and last of all he eats of the flesh of the passover, at least as much as an olive; but after this he tastes not at all of any food." Thus far Maimonides in the place quoted, as also the Talmudists in several places in the last chapter in the tract *Pesachin*.

And now was the time when Christ, taking bread, instituted the eucharist: but whether was it after the eating of those *farewell morsels*, as I may call them, of the lamb, or instead of them? It seems to be in their stead, because it is said by our evangelist and Mark, *As they were eating, Jesus took bread*. Now, without doubt, they speak according to the known and common custom of that supper, that they might be understood by their own people. But all Jews know well enough, that after the eating of those morsels of the lamb it cannot be said, *As they were eating*; for the eating was ended with those morsels. It seems therefore more likely that Christ, when they were now ready to take those morsels, changed the custom, and gave about morsels of bread in their stead, and instituted the sacrament. Some are of opinion, that it was the custom to taste the unleavened bread last of all, and to close up the supper with it; of which opinion, I confess, I also sometimes was. And it is so much the more easy to fall into this opinion, because there is such a thing mentioned in some of the rubrics about the passover; and with good reason, because they took up this custom after the destruction of the Temple.

[*Blessed and brake it.*] First he blessed, then he brake it. Thus it always used to be done, except in the paschal bread. One of the two loaves was first divided into two parts, or, perhaps, into more, before it was blessed. *One of them is divided*: they are the words of Maimonides, who also adds, "But why doth he not bless both the loaves after the same manner as in other

feasts? Because this is called *the bread of poverty*. Now poor people deal in morsels, and here likewise are morsels."

Let not him that is to break the bread, break it before Amen be pronounced from the mouths of the answerers.

[*This is my body.*] These words, being applied to the Passover now newly eaten, will be more clear: "*This* now is my body, in that sense, in which the paschal lamb hath been my body hitherto." And in the twenty-eighth verse, "*This* is my blood of the new testament, in the same sense, as the blood of bulls and goats hath been my blood under the Old." [Exodus 24](#), [Hebrews 9](#).

27. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

[*The cup.*] Bread was to be here at this supper by divine institution: but how came the wine to be here? and how much? and of what sort?

I. "A tradition. It is necessary that a man should cheer up his wife and his children for the feast. But how doth he cheer them up? With wine." The same things are cited in the Babylonian Talmud: "The Rabbins deliver," say they, "that a man is obliged to cheer up his wife and his domestics in the feast; as it is said, 'And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast.' ([Deut 16:14](#)). But how are they cheered up? With wine. R. Judah saith, 'Men are cheered up with something agreeable to them; women, with that which is agreeable to them.' That which is agreeable to men to rejoice them is wine. But what is that which is agreeable to women to cheer them? Rabh Joseph saith, 'Dyed garments in Babylon, and linen garments in the land of Israel.'"

II. Four cups of wine were to be drunk up by every one: "*All are obliged to four cups*, men, women, and children: R. Judah saith, 'But what have children to do with wine?' But they give them wheat and nuts," &c.

The Jerusalem Talmudists give the reason of the number, in the place before quoted, at full. Some, according to the number of the four words made use of in the history of the redemption of Israel out of Egypt, *And I will bring forth, and I will deliver, and I will redeem, and I will take*: some, according to the number of the repetition of the word *cup*, in [Genesis 40:11,13](#), which is four times; some, according to the number of the four monarchies; some, according to the number of the four cups of vengeance which God shall give to the nations to drink, [Jeremiah 25:15, 51:7](#); [Psalm 11:6, 75:8](#). And according to the number of the four cups which God shall give Israel to drink, [Psalm 23:5, 16:5, 116:13](#). *The cup of two salvations.*

III. The measure of these cups is thus determined: "Rabbi Chaia saith, '*Four cups contain an Italian quart of wine.*'" And more exactly in the same place: "How much is the measure of a cup? *Two fingers square, and one finger and a half, and a third part of a finger deep.*" The same words you have in the Babylonian Talmud at the place before quoted, only with this difference, that instead of *the third part of a finger*, there is *the fifth part of a finger*.

IV. *It is commanded, that he should perform this office with red wine.* So the Babylonian, "*It is necessary that it should taste, and look like wine.*" The Gloss, *that it should be red.*

V. *If he drinks wine pure, and not mingled with water, he hath performed his duty;* but commonly they mingled water with it: hence, when there is mention of wine in the rubric of the feasts, they always use the word *they mingle* him a cup. Concerning that mingling, both Talmudists dispute in the forecited chapter of the Passover: which see. "The Rabbins have a tradition. Over wine which hath not water mingled with it they do not say that blessing, 'Blessed be He that created the fruit of the vine'; but, 'Blessed be he that created the fruit of the tree.'" The Gloss, "*Their wine was very strong, and not fit to be drunk without water,*" &c. The Gemarists a little after: "The wise agree with R. Eleazar, "That one ought not to bless over the cup of blessing till water be mingled with it." The mingling of water with every cup was requisite for health, and the avoiding of drunkenness. We have before taken notice of a story of Rabban Gamaliel, who found and confessed some disorder of mind, and unfitness for serious business, by having drunk off an Italian quart of wine. These things being thus premised, concerning the paschal wine, we now return to observe this cup of our Saviour.

After those things which used to be performed in the paschal supper, as is before related, these are moreover added by Maimonides: "Then he washeth his hands, *and blesseth the blessing of the meat*" [that is, gives thanks after meat], "over the third cup of wine, and drinks it up." That cup was commonly called *the cup of blessing*; in the Talmudic dialect. *The cup of blessing is when they give thanks after supper,* saith the Gloss on Babyl. Berac. Where also in the text many thinkings are mentioned of this cup: "Ten things are spoken of the cup of blessing. *Washing and cleansing*": [that is, to wash the inside and outside, namely, that nothing should remain of the wine of the former cups]. "Let *pure wine*" be poured into the cup, and water mingled with it there. "Let it be *full: the crowning*"; that is, as the Gemara, "by the disciples." While he is doing this, let the disciples stand about him in a crown or ring. *The veiling*; that is, "as Rabh Papa, he veils himself and sits down; as R. Issai, he spreads a handkerchief on his head. *He takes up the cup in both hands,* but puts it into his right hand; he lifts it from the table, fixeth his eyes upon it, &c. Some say he imparts it (as a gift) to his family."

Which of these rites our Saviour made use of, we do not inquire; the cup certainly was the same with the "cup of blessing": namely, when, according to the custom, after having eaten the farewell morsel of the lamb, there was now an end of supper, and thanks were to be given over the third cup after meat, he takes that cup, and after having returned thanks, as is probable, for the meat, both according to the custom, and his office, he instituted this for a cup of eucharist or thanksgiving; *The cup of blessing which we bless, 1 Corinthians 10:16.* Hence it is that Luke and Paul say that he took the cup "after supper"; that is, that cup which closed up the supper.

It must not be passed by, that when he instituted the eucharistical cup, he said, "This is my blood of the new testament," as Matthew and Mark: nay, as Luke and Paul, "This cup is the new testament in my blood." Not only the seal of the covenant, but the sanction of the new covenant: the end of the Mosaical economy, and the confirming of a new one. The confirmation of the old covenant was by the blood of bulls and goats, [Exodus 24](#), [Hebrews 9](#), because blood was still to be shed: the confirmation of the new was by a cup of wine; because, under the new testament, there was no further shedding of blood. As it is here said of the cup, "This cup is the new testament in my blood," so it might be said of the cup of blood ([Exo 24:8](#)), "That cup was the old testament in the blood of Christ." There, all the articles of that covenant being read over, Moses sprinkled all the people with blood, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which God hath made with you": and thus that old covenant or testimony was confirmed. In like manner, Christ having published all the articles of the new covenant, he takes the cup of wine, and gives them to drink, and saith, "This is the new testament in my blood": and thus the new covenant is established.

There was, besides, a fourth cup, of which our author speaks also; "Then he mingled a fourth cup, and over it he finished the *Hallel*; and adds, moreover, *the blessing of the hymn*, which is, 'Let all thy works praise thee, O Lord,' &c.; and saith, 'Blessed is He that created the fruit of the vine'; and afterward he tastes of nothing more that night," &c. 'Finisheth the *Hallel*'; that is, he begins there where he left off before, to wit, at the beginning of [Psalm 115](#), and goes on to the end of [Psalm 118](#).

Whether Christ made use of this cup also, we do not dispute; it is certain he used the hymn, as the evangelist tells us, *when they had sung a hymn*, at the thirtieth verse. We meet with the very same word in *Midras Tillim*.

And now looking back on this paschal supper, let me ask those who suppose the supper in [John 13](#) to be the same with this, What part of this time they do allot to the washing of the disciples' feet? what part to Judas' going out? and what part to his discoursing with the priests, and getting ready his accomplices for their wicked exploit?

I. It seems strange, indeed, that Christ should put off the washing of the disciples' feet to the paschal supper, when, 1. That kind of action was not only unusual and unheard of at that supper, but in nowise necessary or fitting: for 2. How much more conveniently might that have been performed at a common supper before the Passover, as we suppose, when he was not straitened by the time, than at the paschal supper, when there were many things to be done which required despatch!

II. The office of the paschal supper did not admit of such interruption, nor was it lawful for others so to decline from the fixed rule as to introduce such a foreign matter: and why should Christ so swerve from it, when in other things he conformed himself to the custom of the nation, and when he had before a much more fit occasion for this action than when he was thus pressed and straitened by the time?

III. Judas sat at supper with the rest, and was there when he did eat, [Matthew 26:20,21](#); [Mark 14:18](#): and, alas! how unusual was it for any to depart, in that manner, from that supper before it was done! It is enough doubted by the Jewish canons whether it were lawful; and how far any one, who had joined himself to this or that *family*, might leave it to go to another, and take one part of the supper here, and another part there: but for a person to leave the supper and go about another business, is a thing they never in the least dreamed of; they would not, they could not, suppose it. You see how light a matter Judas' going away to buy necessaries, as the disciples interpreted it, seemed to them, because he went away from a common supper: but if they had seen him thus dismissed, and sent away from the paschal supper, it would have seemed a monstrous and wonderful thing. What! to leave the paschal supper, now begun, to go to market! To go from a common supper at Bethany, to buy necessaries for the Passover, against the time of the Passover, this was nothing strange or unusual: but to go from the paschal supper, before it was done, to a market or fair, was more unusual and strange than that it should be so lightly passed over by the disciples.

We, therefore, do not at all doubt that Judas was present both at the Passover and the eucharist; which Luke affirms in direct words, [22:20,21](#): nor do we doubt much of his being present at the hymn, and that he went not away before all was done: but when they all rose up from the table, and prepared for their journey to mount Olivet (in order to lie at Bethany, as the disciples supposed), the villainous traitor stole away, and went to the company [*cohortes*], that he had appointed the priests two days before to make ready for him at such a time and place. Methinks I hear the words and consultations of this bloody wretch: "Tomorrow (saith he) will be the Passover, and I know my Master will come to it: I know he will not lie at Jerusalem, but will go back to Bethany, however late at night, where he is used to lie. Make ready, therefore, for me armed men, and let them come to a place appointed immediately after the paschal supper; and I will steal out privately to them while my Master makes himself ready for his journey; and I will conduct them to seize upon him in the gardens without the city, where, by reason of the solitariness of the place and the silence of the night, we shall be secure enough from the multitude. Do ye make haste to despatch your passovers, that you may meet together at the council after supper, to examine and judge him, when we shall bring him to you; while the silence of the night favours you also, and protects you from the multitude." Thus, all things are provided against the place and time appointed; and the thief, stealing away from the company of the disciples as they were going out towards the mount of Olives and hastening to his armed confederates without delay, brings them prepared along with him, and sets upon his Master now in the garden.

34. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

[*Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.*] The same also he had said, [John 13:38](#), "The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice." Therefore some say, that that was

the same supper with this of the Passover. Very right indeed, if [it] ought to be rendered, *the cock shall not crow once, or the cock shall not crow at all*. But it is not so; but it amounts to this sense, "Within the time of cockcrowing" thou shalt deny me thrice; for Peter had denied him but once before the first crowing of the cock, and thrice before the second, [Mark 14:68,72](#). From hence, therefore, we may easily observe in what sense those words are to be understood, which were spoken to Peter two days before the Passover, [John 13:38](#), "The cock shall not crow," &c.: not that the cock should not crow at all between that time and Peter's denying; but as if our Saviour had said, "Are you so secure of yourself, O Peter? Verily, I say unto you, the time shall be, and that shortly, when you shall deny me thrice within the time of cockcrowing." *At cockcrowing*, [Mark 13:35](#). At the Paschal supper it is said, "*This night, before the cock crow,*" &c. [Matt 26:34](#); [Mark 14:30](#); [Luke 22:34](#). But there is nothing of this said in that supper, [John 13](#).

Concerning the cockcrowing, thus the masters: "R. Shilla saith, Whosoever begins his journey before cockcrowing, his blood be upon his head. R. Josia saith, If before the second crowing: but some say, Before the third. But of what kind of cock is this spoken?" *Of a middling cock*; that is, as the Gloss explains it, "a cock that doth not crow too soon nor too late." The Misna on which this Gloss is hath these words; "Every day they remove the ashes from the altar about cockcrowing; but on the day of atonement at midnight," &c.

You may wonder that a dunghill cock should be found at Jerusalem, when it is forbid by the canons that any cocks should be kept there: "*They do not keep cocks at Jerusalem, upon account of the holy things*; nor do the priests keep them throughout all the land of Israel." The Gloss gives the reason; "Even Israelites are forbid to keep cocks at Jerusalem, because of the holy things: for Israelites have eaten there peace offerings and thank offerings: but now it is the custom of dunghill cocks to turn over dunghills, where perhaps they might find creeping things that might pollute those holy things that are to be eaten." By what means, and under what pretence, the canon was dispensed with, we do not dispute. It is certain there were cocks at Jerusalem, as well as at other places. And memorable is the story of a cock which was stoned by the sentence of the council for having killed a little child.

36. Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

[*Gethsemane.*] *The place of the olive presses*, at the foot of mount *Olivet*. In John, it is "a garden beyond Cedron." "They do not make gardens or paradises in Jerusalem, *because of the stink*. The Gloss, "Because of the stink that riseth from the weeds which are thrown out: besides, it is the custom to dung gardens; and thence comes a stink." Upon this account there were no gardens in the city, (some few gardens of roses excepted, which had been so from the days of the prophets,) but all were without the walls, especially at the foot of *Olivet*.

49. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him.

[*Kissed him.*] It was not unusual for a master to *kiss* his disciple; but for a disciple to *kiss* his master was more rare. Whether therefore Judas did this under pretence of respect, or out of open contempt and derision, let it be inquired.

60. But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none.

At the last came two false witnesses.

[*Many false witnesses came.*] ...

65. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard this blasphemy.

[*Then the high priest rent his clothes.*] "When witnesses speak out the blasphemy which they heard, then all, hearing the blasphemy, are bound to rend their clothes." "They that judge a blasphemer, first ask the witnesses, and bid him speak out plainly what he hath heard; and when he speaks it, the judges standing on their feet rend their garments, and do not sew them up again," &c. See there the Babylonian Gemara discoursing at large why they stand upon their feet, why they rend their garments, and why they may not be sewed up again [Sanhedr. cap. 7. hal. 10].

1. When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death:

[*When the morning was come, &c.*] Let us trace a little the proceedings of this council:--

I. They spend the night in judging on a capital cause, which is expressly forbid by their own canon: *They handle capital causes in the day time, and finish them by day.* Money matters indeed that were begun by day might be ended in the night, which is asserted in that place; but capital causes were only to be handled by day: but here, in sitting upon the life and death of our Saviour, there is need of night and darkness. This judgment is begun in the night, and carried on all the night through in a manner.

II. This night was the evening of a feast day, namely, of the first day of the paschal week, at what time they were also forbid to sit in judgment: "They do not judge on a feast day." How the lawyers are divided on this point, I will not trouble you now with recounting. This very canon is sufficient ground for scruple, which we leave to them to clear, who, through rancour and hatred towards Christ, seem to slight and trample under feet their own canons.

III. *When it was morning.* This was the time of saying their phylacteries, namely, from the first daylight to the third hour...Another business that you had in hand (effectually to destroy Jesus), either robbed you of your prayers, or robbed your prayers of charity.

IV. Now appears, *the first feast day of the Passover*, when they used to present themselves in the Temple and offer their gifts, [Exodus 23:15](#). But when and how was this performed by them today? They take heed of going into the judgment (or Praetor's) hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the *Chagigah*, or *Passover*: but you will scarce find what time they allowed today for that purpose; nor indeed was it lawful for them to eat any thing on that day; it being provided by a canon, "That when the council shall have adjudged any one to die, let them not taste any thing that day."

[*Took counsel to put him to death.*] Let that be considered; "*Cases of money are heard in the daytime, and may be determined in the night.* Capital causes are tried in the day, and finished in the day. Judgment in cases of money is passed the same day, whether it be for fining or acquitting. Judgment in capital causes is passed the same day, if it be for acquitting; but if it be for condemning, it is passed the day after." The reason of this difference is given by the Gemarists; whom see. The reason of the latter is thus expressed: *Blessed is the judge who leaveneth his judgment*: that is, as the Gloss, "who delays his judgment, and lets it rest all night, that he may sift out the truth."

The difference between *hear* and *determine* is greater than the reader may perhaps think at first sight. By the word *hear* they signify the whole process of the trial, the examining of the plaintiff and defendant, and of the witnesses, the taking the votes of the council, and the entering of them by the scribes: *determine* signifies only the passing of judgment, or giving a definitive sentence. You may better perceive the difference from the Glossary on *Babyl. Sanhedrin*: in the text this is decried, *Let them not judge on the eve of the sabbath, nor on the*

eve of a feast day; which is also repeated in other places. The reason of the prohibition is this, namely, that the trials which were begun on the eve of the sabbath, or a feast day, should not be finished on the sabbath or feast day. "Which indeed (saith the Gloss), is observed in pecuniary trials, and care is taken that there be no writing" (for it is forbid to write so much as a letter on the sabbath): "but in capital causes it takes not place upon that account; for the votes of those that acquitted or condemned were written the day before."

You see in the history of the gospel, 1. The trial concerning our Saviour's life, was not despatched at one and the same sitting. 2. And that too on a feast-day.

5. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

[*Hanged himself.*] *Strangulatus est, was strangled*: namely, by the devil, who had now been in him three days together. The words of Peter, [Acts 1:18](#), do not suffer me to understand this of hanging himself. *Falling headlong he burst asunder in the midst*. Interpreters take a great deal of pains to make these words agree with his hanging himself; but indeed all will not do. I know the word is commonly applied to a man's *hanging himself*, but not to exclude some other way of *strangling*. And I cannot but take the story (with good leave of antiquity) in this sense: After Judas had thrown down the money, the price of his treason, in the Temple, and was now returning again to his mates, the devil, who dwelt in him, caught him up on high, strangled him, and threw him down headlong; so that dashing upon the ground, he burst in the midst, and his guts issued out, and the devil went out in so horrid an exit. This certainly agrees very well with the words of Peter now mentioned, and also with those that follow, "This was known to all that dwelt at Jerusalem." It agrees also very well with the deserts of the wicked wretch, and with the title of Iscariot. The wickedness he had committed was above all example, and the punishment he suffered was beyond all precedent. There had been many instances of persons who had hanged themselves; this would not so much have stirred up the people of Jerusalem to take notice of it, as such a strangling and throwing down headlong, which we suppose horrible above measure, and singular beyond example. See what we have said at the tenth chapter concerning the word *Iscariot*.

9. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value;

[*That which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet.*] How much this place hath troubled interpreters, let the famous Beza, instead of many others, declare: "This knot hath hampered all the most ancient interpreters, in that the testimony here is taken out of Zechariah, and not from Jeremiah; so that it seem plainly to have been *a failing of memory*, as Augustine supposes in his third book, 'De consensu evangelistarum,' chapter the seventh; as also Eusebius in the twentieth book of *demonstration*. But if any one had rather impute this error to

the transcribers, or (as I rather suppose) to the unskillfulness of some person, who put in the name of *Jeremiah*, when the evangelist had writ only, as he often doth in other places, *by the prophet*, yet we must confess that this error hath long since crept into the Holy Scriptures, as Jerome expressly affirms," &c.

But (with the leave of so great men) I do not only deny that so much as one letter is spurious, or crept in without the knowledge of the evangelist, but I do confidently assert that Matthew wrote *Jeremy*, as we read it, and that it was very readily understood and received by his countrymen. We will transcribe the following monument of antiquity out of the Talmudists, and then let the reader judge: "A tradition of the Rabbins. This is the order of the prophets. The Book of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the twelve." And a little after: "But since Isaiah was before both Jeremiah and Ezekiel, he ought to have been set before them: but *since the Book of Kings ends with destruction, and all Jeremiah is about destruction*, and since Ezekiel begins with destruction and ends with comfort; and all Isaiah is about comfort, *they joined destruction with destruction, and comfort with comfort*": that is, they placed these books together which treat of destruction, and those together which treat of comfort.

You have this tradition quoted by David Kimchi in his preface to Jeremiah. Whence it is very plain that Jeremiah of old had the first place among the prophets: and hereby he comes to be mentioned above all the rest, [Matthew 16:14](#), because he stood first in the volume of the prophets, therefore he is first named. When, therefore, Matthew produceth a text of Zechariah under the name of *Jeremy*, he only cites the words of the volume of the prophets under his name who stood first in the volume of the prophets. Of which sort is that also of our Saviour, [Luke 24:44](#); "All things must be fulfilled, which are written of me in the Law, and the Prophets, and the Psalms." "In the Psalms"; that is, in the Book of Hagiographa, in which the Psalms were placed first.

16. And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.

[*Barabbas.*] *Bar Abba*, a very usual name in the Talmudists: "R. Samuel Barabba, and R. Nathan Barabba." *Abba Bar Abba*, In the Jerusalem dialect it is very often uttered *Bar Ba*: "Simeon Bar Ba." "R. Chaijah Bar Ba." This brings to my mind what Josephus relates to have been done in the besieging of the city, *When huge stones were thrown against the city by the Roman slings, some persons sitting in the towers gave the citizens warning by a sign to take heed, crying out in the vulgar dialect, 'The Son cometh,'* that is, *Bar Ba*. The Son of man indeed then came in the glory of his justice and his vengeance, as he had often foretold, to destroy that most wicked and profligate nation.

19. When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

[*Have thou nothing to do with that just man.*] "When king Sapores went about to afflict Rabbah, his mother sent to him, saying, *Have thou nothing to do with that Jew,*" &c.

26. Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

[*When he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.*] Such was the custom of the Romans towards those that were to be crucified: *Whom after he had beaten with whips, he crucified.* And a little after, *To be whipped before the judgment seat, and to be nailed to the cross.*

29. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

[*A reed in his right hand.*] See those fictions in Tanchum [fol. 59. 4.], concerning an angel that appeared in the shape of Solomon: *In whose hand there was a reed: and whom they struck with a reed.*

31. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.

[*Led him away to crucify him.*] These things are delivered in Sanhedrim, of one that is guilty of stoning: "If there be no defence found for him, they lead him out to be stoned, and a crier went before, saying aloud thus, 'N. the son of N. comes out to be stoned, because he hath done so and so. The witnesses against him are N. and N.: whosoever can bring any thing in his defence, let him come forth and produce it.'" On which thus the Gemara of Babylon: "The tradition is, that on the evening of the Passover Jesus was hanged, and that a crier went before him for forty days making this proclamation, 'This man comes forth to be stoned, because he dealt in sorceries, and persuaded and seduced Israel; whosoever knows of any defence for him, let him come forth and produce it': but no defence could be found, therefore they hanged him on the evening of the Passover. Ulla saith, His case seemed not to admit of any defence, since he was a seducer, and of such God hath said, 'Thou shalt not spare him, neither shalt thou conceal him,'" [Deuteronomy 13:8](#).

They led him that was to be stoned out of the city, [Acts 7:58](#): so also him that was to be crucified: "The place of stoning was without the three camps; for at Jerusalem there were three camps," (namely, God's, the Levites', and the people's, as it was in the encamping in the wilderness:) "and in every city also where there was a council," (namely, of twenty-three,)

"the place of stoning was without the city. For all cities that have walls bear a resemblance to the camp of Israel."

Because Jesus was judged at a heathen tribunal, therefore a death is inflicted on him not usual with the Jewish council, namely, crucifixion. In several things the circumstances and actions belonging to his death differed from the custom of the Jews in putting persons to death.

1. *They never judge two on the same day.* But here, besides Christ, are two thieves judged.

2. They never carried one that was to be hanged to hanging till near sunset: *They stay till near sunset, and then they pass sentence, and execute him.* And the reason is given by the Glosser; "They do not perfect his judgment, nor hang him in the morning, lest they should neglect his burial, and happen to forget themselves," and the malefactor should hang till after sunset; "but near sunseting, so that they may bury him out of hand." But Christ was sentenced to death before noon; and at noon was nailed to the cross. For,

3. *They first put the condemned person to death, and then hanged him upon a tree:* but the custom of the (Roman) empire is first to hang them, and then to put them to death.

4. They did not openly lament for those that were led forth to be put to death; but for Jesus they did, [Luke 23:27,28](#). The reason of this difference is not to be sought from the kind of the death, but from the persons: *They did not bewail for a person led out to execution, but they lamented inwardly in their hearts.* You will wonder at the reason which the Gloss thus gives you: "They did not openly bewail him, upon this account, that his being vilified" [when nobody openly lamented him] "might help to atone for him; but they sorrowed for him in their hearts; for this did not tend to his honour, nor lessen the atonement." Those were better instructed, who lamented for Christ both as to the thing and person.

33. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,

[*Golgotha.*] Beza pretends that this is written amiss for *Golgotha*, when yet it is found thus written in all copies. But the good man censures amiss; since such a leaving out of letters in many Syriac words is very usual: you have this word thus written without the second [l], by the Samaritan interpreter, in the first chapter of Numbers.

34. They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.

[*They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall.*] "To those that were to be executed they gave a grain of *myrrh* infused in wine to drink, that their understanding might be disturbed," (that is, that they might lose their senses); "as it is said, 'Give strong drink to them that are ready to die, and wine to those that are of a sorrowful heart,' &c. And the tradition is, That some women of quality in Jerusalem allowed this freely of their own cost," &c.

But it makes a scruple that in Matthew it is *vinegar with gall*; in Mark *wine mingled with myrrh*. If *wine*, why is it called *vinegar*? If wine mingled with *myrrh*, why *gall*? Ans. The words of Mark seem to relate to the custom of the nation; those of Matthew, to the thing as it was really acted. I understand Mark thus, They gave him, according to the custom of the nation, that cup which used to be given to those that were led to execution; but (as Matthew has it) not the usual mixture; namely, wine and frankincense, or myrrh; but for the greater mockery, and out of more bitter rancour, *vinegar* and *gall*. So that we may suppose this cup not to have been prepared by those honourable women, compassionating those that were to die, but on purpose by the scribes, and the other persecutors of Christ, studying to heap upon him all kind of ignominy and vexation. In this cup they afterward dipped a sponge, as may be supposed: see the 48th verse.

35. And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

[*Parted my garments.*] Of stoning, we have this account; "When he is now four cubits from the place of stoning, they strip him of his clothes; and if it be a man, they hang a cloth before him; if a woman, both before and behind. These are the words of R. Juda: but the wise say, A man is stoned naked, a woman not naked." So that it is plain enough he was crucified naked.

38. Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.

[*Two thieves.*] See, in Josephus, who they were that, at that time, were called thieves, and how much trouble and pains the governors of Judea were at to restrain and root out this cursed sort of men: "*One Simon, straggling about with the robbers with whom he associated, burnt the palaces in Jericho.*" "[*Felix*] having caught the chief robber Eleazar, who for twenty years had wasted the country with fire and sword, sent him to Rome, and many others with him." "*Another kind of robbers sprang up in Jerusalem, called sicarii, who slew men in the day time, and in the midst of the city,*" &c.

There is a rule set down, and the art shewed, of discovering and apprehending robbers: "Go to the victualling-houses at the fourth hour" (the Gloss, "That was the hour of eating, and they went all to the victualling-houses to eat"); "and if you see there a man drinking wine, and holding the cup in his hand, and sleeping, &c., he is a thief; lay hold on him," &c.

Among the monsters of the Jewish routs, preceding the destruction of the city, the multitude of robbers, and the horrible slaughters committed by them, deservedly claim the first consideration; which, next to the just vengeance of God against that most wicked nation, you may justly ascribe to divers originals.

1. It is no wonder, if that nation abounded beyond measure with a vagabond, dissolute, and lewd sort of young men; since, by means of polygamy, and the divorces of their wives at pleasure, and the nation's unspeakable addictedness to lasciviousness and whoredoms, there could not but continually spring up bastards, and an offspring born only to beggary or rapine, as wanting both sustenance and ingenuous education.

2. The foolish and sinful indulgence of the council could not but nurse up all kind of broods of wicked men, while they scarce ever put any one to death, though never so wicked, as being an Israelite; who must not by any means be touched.

3. The opposition of the Zealots to the Roman yoke made them study only to mischief the Romans, and do all the mischief they could to those Jews that submitted to them.

4. The governors of Judea did often, out of policy, indulge a licentiousness to such kind of rapines, that they might humble that people they so much hated, and which was continually subject to insurrections, by beating them, as it were, with their own clubs; and sometimes getting a share in the booty. Thus Josephus concerning Florus: "He spoiled all the people, and he did in effect proclaim, that all might go out in the country to rob, that he might receive a share in the spoils." And thus a sword, that first came out of their own bowels, was sheathed in them.

39. And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,

[*Wagging their heads.*] *To shake the head*, with the Rabbins, signifies irreverence and lightness.

46. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

[*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani.*] I. All the rout indeed and force of hell was let loose at that time against Christ, without either bridle or chain: he calls it himself, *the power of darkness*, [Luke 22:53](#). God who had foretold of old, that the serpent should bruise the heel of the promised seed, and now that time is come, had slackened the devil's chain, which, in regard of men, the Divine Providence used to hold in his hand; so that all the power and all the rancour of hell might, freely and without restraint, assault Christ; and that all that malice that was in the devil against the whole elect of God, summed up and gathered together into one head, might at one stroke and onset be brandished against Christ without measure.

II. Our most blessed Saviour, therefore, feeling such torments as either hell itself, or the instruments of hell, men conspiring together in villainy and cruelty, could pour out upon him, cries out, under the sharpness of the present providence, "My God! my God! why hast thou delivered me up and left me to such assaults, such bitternesses, and such merciless hands?" The Talmudists bring in Esther using such an ejaculation, which is also cited in the Gloss on Joma: "Esther stood in the inner court of the palace. R. Levi saith, When she was

now just come up to the idol-temple, the divine glory departed from her: therefore she said, *Eli, Eli, lamma azabhtani.*"

47,49. Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

[*This man calleth for Elias.* Let us see whether Elias will come to save him.] That Christ here used the Syriac dialect, is plain from the word *sabachthani*: but the word *Eli, Eli*, is not so properly Syriac: and hence arose the error and misconstruction of the standers by. In Syriac he should have said, *Mari, Mari*: but *Eli* was strange to a Syrian ear: this deceived the standers-by, who, having heard more than enough of the apparitions of Elias from the Jewish fables, and being deceived by the double meaning of the word, supposed that Christ was tainted with the same folly and mistake, and called out to Elias for help; which it was no strange thing for that deluded people to expect.

51. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

[*The veil of the Temple was rent in twain, &c.*] Let us hear what the Fathers of the Traditions say concerning this *catapetasm* or *veil*: "The wall of the pronaon was five cubits, the pronaon itself eleven. The wall of the Temple was six, the Temple forty. *The taraxis one cubit*, and the entrance, twenty." What *taraxis* means, Maimonides will tell you; "In the first Temple there was a wall one cubit thick, separating the Holy from the Holy of Holies; but when they built the second Temple, it was doubted whether the thickness of that wall should be accounted to belong to the measure of the Holy, or to the measure of the Holy of Holies. Wherefore they made the Holy of Holies twenty cubits complete, and the Holy forty cubits complete; and they left a void cubit between the Holy and the Holy of Holies, but they did not build any wall there in the second Temple: only they made two hangings, one contiguous to the Holy of Holies, and the other to the Holy; between which there was a void cubit, according to the thickness of the wall that was in the first Temple; in which there was but one *catapetasm* [or *veil*] only."

"The high priest [on the day of atonement] goes forward in the Temple, till he comes to the two hangings that divide the Holy from the Holy of Holies, between which there was a cubit. R. Josi saith, There was but one hanging there; as it is said, 'And the hanging shall separate [to, or] between the Holy and the Holy of Holies.'" On which words thus the Gemara of Babylon: "R. Josi saith rightly to the Rabbins, and the Rabbins to thee: for he speaks of the tabernacle, and they, of the second Temple; in which since there was not a partition-wall, as there was in the first Temple, there was some doubt made of its holiness, namely, whether it should belong to the outward part of the Temple or to the inward; whereupon they made two hangings."

While, therefore, their minds were *troubled* about this affair, not knowing whether they should hang the veil at the Temple, or at the inmost recess of it, and whether the void space

between of a cubit thick should belong to this or that; they called the place itself by the Greek word *taraxis*, that is, *trouble*, as Aruch plainly affirms, and they hung up two veils, that they might be sure to offend neither against this part nor that.

You will wonder, therefore, that Matthew doth not say *veils*, in the plural; or perhaps you will think that only one of these two veils was rent, not both. But it was enough for the evangelists Matthew and Mark, who speak of this miracle, to have shewed that that fence between, which hindered seeing into the Holy of Holies, and going into it, was cleft and broken. This is it they mean, not being solicitous in explaining particulars, but contented to have declared the thing itself. Perhaps the priest, who offered the incense that evening, was in the Temple at the very moment when this miracle happened: and when he went out amazed to the people, and should tell them, *The veil of the Temple is rent* it would easily be understood of a passage broken into the Holy of Holies by some astonishing and miraculous rending of the hangings. Compare [Hebrews 10:19,20](#).

When the high priest went into the inmost recess of the Temple on the day of atonement, he went in by the south side of the outward hanging, and the north side of the inner. But now both are rent in the very middle, and that from the top to the bottom.

52. And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

[*And many bodies of saints which slept arose.*] You can hardly impute the rending of the hangings to the earthquake, but it must be ascribed rather to another peculiar miracle; since it is more proper for an earthquake to break hard things than soft, and to rend rocks rather than curtains. Rocks were rent by it in those places where sepulchres had been built, so that now the gates of the resurrection were thrown open, the bonds of the grave were unloosed, and the bodies of dead men were made ready, as it were, for their rising again when Christ, the firstfruits, was raised. The Jews had a fancy that the kingdom of the Messiah would begin with the resurrection of the dead, as we have noted before; vainly indeed, as to their sense of it; but not without some truth, as to the thing itself: for from the resurrection of Christ the glorious epoch of the kingdom of God took its beginning, as we said before (which he himself also signifieth in those words [Matthew 26:29](#)); and when he arose, not a few others arose with him. What they thought of the resurrection that was to be in the days of Messiah, besides those things which we have already mentioned, you may see and smile at in this one example: "R. Jeremiah commanded, 'When you bury me, put shoes on my feet, and give me a staff in my hand, and lay me on one side; that when the Messiah comes I may be ready.'"

54. Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

[*Truly this was the Son of God.*] That is, "This was indeed the Messiah." Howsoever the Jews deny the Son of God in that sense in which we own it, that is, as the second Person in

the Holy Trinity, yet they acknowledge the Messiah for the Son of God (not indeed by nature, but by adoption and deputation; see [Matthew 26:63](#)), from those places, [1 Chronicles 17:13](#); [Psalm 2:12](#), [89:26,27](#), and such-like. The centurion had learned this from the people by conversing among them, and, seeing the miracles which accompanied the death of Christ, acknowledged him to be the Messiah of whom he had heard so many and great things spoken by the Jews. In Luke we have these words spoken by him, "Certainly this was a righteous man": which, I suppose, were not the same with these words before us; but that both they *and* these were spoken by him, "Certainly this was a righteous man: truly this was the Messiah, the Son of God." Such are the words of Nathanael, [John 1:49](#), "Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." Peter, when he declared that "Christ was the Son of the living God," [Matthew 16:16](#), spoke this in a more sublime sense than the Jews either owned or knew; as we have said at that place.

56. Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

[*Mary Magdalene.*] That Magdalene was the same with Mary the sister of Lazarus Barionius proves at large; whom see. It is confirmed enough from this very place; for if Mary Magdalene was not the same with Mary the sister of Lazarus, then either Mary the sister of Lazarus was not present at the crucifixion of Christ, and at his burial, or else she is passed over in silence by the evangelists; both which are improbable. Whence she was called *Magdalene*, doth not so plainly appear; whether from *Magdala*, a town on the lake of Gennesaret, or from the word which signifies a *plaiting* or *curling of the hair*, a thing usual with harlots. Let us see what is spoken by the Talmudists concerning *Mary Magdala*, who, they say, was mother of Ben Satda:

"They stoned the son of Satda in Lydda, and they hanged him up on the evening of the Passover. Now this son of Satda was son of Pandira. Indeed, Rabh Chasda said, 'The husband [*of his mother*] was Satda; her husband was Pandira; her husband was Papus the son of Juda: but yet I say his mother was Satda, namely, *Mary, the plaiter of women's hair*; as they say in Pumbeditha, *she departed from her husband.*'" These words are also repeated in *Schabath*: "Rabh Bibai, at a time when the angel of death was with him, said to his officer, Go, *bring me Mary the plaiter of women's hair*. He went and brought to him *Mary, the plaiter of young men's hair*," &c. The Gloss; "The angel of death reckoned up to him what he had done before: for this story of *Mary, the plaiter of women's hair*, was under the second Temple, for she was the mother of N., as it is said in *Schabath*." See the Gloss there at the place before quoted.

"There are some who find a fly in their cup, and take it out and will not drink; such was Papus Ben Judas, who locked the door upon his wife, and went out." Where the Glosser says thus; "Papus Ben Juda was the husband of *Mary, the plaiter of women's hair*; and when he went out of his house into the street, he locked his door upon his wife, that she might not

speak with anybody; which, indeed, he ought not to have done: and hence sprang a difference between them, and she broke out into adulteries."

I pronounce '*Ben Satda*,' not that I am ignorant that it is called '*Ben Stada*' by very learned men. The reason of our thus pronouncing it we fetch from hence, that we find he was called *Ben Sutdah* by the Jerusalem Talmudists; to which the word *Satda* more agrees than *Stada*. By the like agreement of sounds they call the same town both *Magdala*, and *Mugdala*, as we have observed elsewhere.

As they contumeliously reflect upon the Lord Jesus under the name of *Ben Satda*, so there is a shrewd suspicion that, under the name of *Mary Magdala*, they also cast reproach upon *Mary Magdalene*. The title which they gave their Mary is so like this of ours, that you may with good reason doubt whether she was called *Magdalene* from the town *Magdala*, or from that word of the Talmudists, *a plaiter of hair*. We leave it to the learned to decide.

[*Joses.*] *Josi*; a very usual name in the Talmudists: "Five were called *Be R. Josi*, Ismael, Lazar, Menahem, Chelpatha, Abdimus." Also, "R. Jose Ben R. Chaninah," &c. One may well inquire why this Mary is called the mother of 'James and Joses,' and not also of 'Judas and Simon,' as [Mark 6:3](#).

58. He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

[*Begged the body of Jesus.*] It was not lawful to suffer a man to hang all night upon a tree, [Deuteronomy 21:23](#): nay, nor to lie all night unburied: "*Whosoever suffers a dead body to lie all night unburied violates a negative precept*. But they that were put to death by the council were not to be buried in the sepulchres of their fathers; but two burying-places were appointed by the council, one for those that were slain by the sword and strangled, the other for those that were stoned [*who also were hanged*] and burnt." There, according to the custom, Jesus should have been buried, had not Joseph, with a pious boldness, begged of Pilate that he might be more honourably interred: which the fathers of the council, out of spite to him, would hardly have permitted, if they had been asked; and yet they did not use to deny the honour of a funeral to those whom they had put to death, if the meanness of the common burial would have been a disgrace to their family. As to the dead person himself, they thought it would be better for him to be treated dishonourably after death, and to be neither lamented nor buried; for this vilifying of him they fancied amounted to some atonement for him; as we have seen before. And yet, to avoid the disgrace of his family, they used, at the request of it, to allow the honour of a funeral.

Chapter 28

1. In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

[*In the end of the sabbath.*] In the Jerusalem Talmudists it is *in the coming forth of the sabbath*; vulgarly, *in the going out of the sabbath*: *On a certain eve of the sabbath*, namely, when the sabbath began, "there was not wine to be found in all Samaria: but *at the end of the sabbath* there was found abundance, because the Aramites had brought it, and the Cuthites had received it"...

[*Towards the first day of the week.*] The Jews reckon the days of the week thus; *One day* (or *the first day*) *of the sabbath*: *two* (or *the second day*) *of the sabbath*: "Two witnesses come and say, *The first of the sabbath* this man stole, &c., and, *on the second day of the sabbath*, judgment passed on him."

The third of the sabbath: "A virgin is married on the fourth day of the week; for they provide for the feast *the first day of the week*. *The second day of the week*: and *the third day of the week*."

"*On the fourth day of the week* they set apart him who was to burn the red heifer."

On the fifth of the sabbath. "Ezra ordained that they should read the law publicly on the second and fifth days of the sabbath, &c. He appointed that judges should sit in the cities on the second and fifth days. Ezra also appointed that they should wash their clothes *on the fifth day of the sabbath*."

The sixth day they commonly called *the eve of the sabbath*: "To wash their clothes on the fifth day of the sabbath, and eat onions on *the eve of the sabbath*." *On the fifth day of the sabbath [or week], and the eve of the sabbath, and the sabbath*.

The first day of the week, which is now changed into the sabbath or Lord's day, the Talmudists call *the Christians'*, or *the Christian day*: *On the Christians' day it is always forbidden* for a Jew to traffic with a Christian. Where the Gloss saith thus: *A Nazarene or Christian* is he who followeth the error of the man who commanded them "*to make the first day of the week a festival day to him*: and according to the words of Ismael, it is always unlawful to traffic with them three days before that day and three days after; that is, not at all the week through." We cannot here pass by the words of the Glossers on Babyl. *Rosh hashanah*; "The Baithusians desire that the first day of the Passover might be on the sabbath, so that the presenting of the sheaf might be on the first day of the week, and the feast of Pentecost on the first day of the week."

With good reason did our blessed Saviour remove the sabbath to this day, the day of his resurrection, *the day which the Lord had made*, [Psalm 118:24](#), when now *the stone which the builders refused was become the head stone of the corner*. For,

I. When Christ was to make a new world, or a new creation, it was necessary for him to make a new sabbath. The sabbath of the old creation was not proper for the new.

II. The kingdom of Christ took its beginning principally from the resurrection of Christ: when he had now overcome death and hell. (The Jews themselves confess that the kingdom of the Messiah was to begin with the resurrection of the dead, and the renewing of the world.) Therefore it was very proper that that day from which Christ's kingdom took its beginning should pass into the sabbath, rather than the old sabbath, the memorial of the creation.

III. That old sabbath was not instituted till after the giving the promise of Christ, [Genesis 3:15](#); and the rest of God on that seventh day was chiefly in having perfected the new creation in Christ; that also was the sabbatical rest of Adam. When therefore that was accomplished which was then promised, namely, the bruising of the serpent's head by the resurrection of Christ, and that was fulfilled which was typified and represented in the old sabbath, namely, the finishing of a new creation, the sabbath could not but justly be transferred to that day on which these things were done.

IV. It was necessary that the Christians should have a sabbath given them distinct from the sabbath of the Jews, that a Christian might be thereby distinguished from a Jew. For as the law took great care to provide that a Jew might be distinguished from a heathen; so it was provided by the gospel with the like care, that partly by the forsaking of those rites, partly by the bringing in of different manners and observances, a Christian might be distinguished from a Jew. The law was not more solicitous to mark out and separate a Jew from a heathen by circumcision than the gospel hath been that by the same circumcision a Christian should not Judaize. And the same care it hath deservedly taken about the sabbath: for since the Jews, among other marks of distinction, were made of a different colour, as it were, from all nations, by their keeping the sabbath, it was necessary, that by the bringing in of another sabbath (since of necessity a sabbath must be kept up), that Christians might be of a different colour from the Jews.

9. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

[*All hail.*] In the vulgar dialect of the Jews, "The Rabbins saw a certain holy man of Caphar Immi, and said *All hail.*" *How do they salute an Israelite? All hail.*

[*They held him by the feet.*] This seems to have been done to kiss his feet. [So 2 Kings 4:27](#). For this was not unusual: "As R. Janni and R. Jonathan were sitting together, a certain man came and kissed the feet of R. Jonathan." Compare the evangelists here, and you will find that this was done by Mary Magdalene only, who formerly had kissed Christ's feet, and who had gone twice to the sepulchre, however Matthew makes mention but of once going. The story, in short, is thus to be laid together: At the first dawning of the morning Christ arose, a great earthquake happening at that time. About the same time Magdalene and the other women left their houses to go to the sepulchre: while they met together and made all things ready, and took their journey to the tomb, the sun was up. When they were come, they are informed of his resurrection by the angels, and sent back to the disciples. The

matter being told to the disciples, Peter and John run to the sepulchre; Magdalene also followed after them. They having seen the signs of the resurrection return to their company, but she stays there. Being ready to return back, Christ appears to her, *she supposing him to be the gardener*. As soon as she knew him, she worships him; and embracing his feet, kisseth them. And this is the history before us, which Matthew relates in the plural number, running it over briefly and compendiously, according to his manner.

19. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

[*Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c.*] I. The enclosure is now thrown down, whereby the apostles were kept in from preaching the gospel to all the Gentiles, [Matthew 10:5](#). For, first, the Jews had now lost their privilege, nor were they henceforward to be counted a peculiar people; nay, they were now become "Lo-ammi." They had exceeded the heathens in sinning, they had slighted, trampled upon, and crucified the Creator himself, appearing visibly before their eyes in human flesh; while the heathens had only conceived amiss of the Creator, whom they neither had seen nor could see, and thereby fallen to worship the creature. Secondly, Christ had now by his blood paid a price for the heathens also. Thirdly, he had overcome Satan, who held them captive. Fourthly, he had taken away the wall of partition: and fifthly, had exhibited an infinite righteousness.

II. *Make disciples*. Bring them in by baptism, that they may be taught. They are very much out, who from these words cry down infant-baptism, and assert that it is necessary for those that are to be baptized to be taught before they are baptized. 1. Observe the words here, *make disciples*; and then after, *teaching*, in the twentieth verse. 2. Among the Jews, and also with us, and in all nations, those are made disciples that they may be taught. A certain heathen came to the great Hillel, and saith, *Make me a proselyte, that thou mayest teach me*. He was first to be proselyted, and then to be taught. Thus first, *make them disciples* by baptism; and then, *teach them to observe all things, &c.*

III. *Baptizing*. There are divers ends of baptism:--1. According to the nature of a sacrament it visibly teacheth invisible things, that is, the washing of us from all our pollutions by the blood of Christ, and by the cleansing of grace, [Ezekiel 36:25](#). 1. According to the nature of a sacrament, it is a seal of divine truth. So circumcision is called, [Romans 4:11](#); "And he received the sign of circumcision, the seal of the righteousness of faith," &c. So the Jews, when they circumcised their children, gave this very title to circumcision. The words used when a child was circumcised you have in their Talmud. Among other things, he who is to bless the action saith thus, "Blessed be he who sanctified him that was beloved from the womb, and set a sign in his flesh, *and sealed his children with the sign of the holy covenant,*" &c.

But in what sense are sacraments to be called seals? Not that they seal (or confirm) to the receiver his righteousness; but that they seal the divine truth of the covenant and

promise. Thus the apostle calls circumcision 'the seal of the righteousness of faith': that is, it is the seal of this truth and doctrine, that 'justification is by faith,' which righteousness Abraham had when he was yet uncircumcised. And that is the way whereby sacraments confirm faith, namely, because they do doctrinally exhibit the invisible things of the covenant; and, like seals, do by divine appointment sign the doctrine and truth of the covenant. 3. According to the nature of a sacrament, it obligeth the receivers to the terms of the covenant: for as the covenant itself is of mutual obligation between God and man; so the sacraments, the seals of the covenant, are of like obligation. 4. According to its nature, it is an introductory into the visible church. And, 5. It is a distinguishing sign between a Christian and no Christian, namely, between those who acknowledge and profess Christ, and Jews, Turks, and Pagans, who do not acknowledge him. *Disciple all nations, baptizing.* When they are under baptism, they are no longer under heathenism; and this sacrament puts a difference between those who are under the discipleship of Christ, and those who are not. 6. Baptism also brings its privilege along with it, while it opens the way to a partaking of holy things in the church, and placeth the baptized within the church, over which God exerciseth a more singular providence than over those that are out of the church.

And now, from what hath been said, let us argue a little in behalf of infant-baptism. Omitting that argument which is commonly raised from the words before us, namely, that when Christ had commanded to baptize all nations, infants also are to be taken in as parts of the family, these few things may be observed:

I. Baptism, as a sacrament, is a seal of the covenant. And why, I pray, may not this seal be set on infants? The seal of divine truth hath sometimes been set upon inanimate things, and that by God's appointment. The bow in the cloud is a seal of the covenant: the law engraven on the altar, [Joshua 8](#), was a seal of the covenant. The blood sprinkled on the twelve pillars that were set up to represent the twelve tribes was a seal and bond of the covenant, [Exodus 24](#). And now tell me, why are not infants capable, in like manner, of such a sealing? They were capable heretofore of circumcision; and *our* infants have an equal capacity. The sacrament doth not lose this its end, through the indisposition of the receiver. Peter and Paul, apostles, were baptized: their baptism, according to its nature, sealed to them the truth of God in his promises concerning the washing away of sins, &c. And they, from this doctrinal virtue of the sacrament, received confirmation of their faith. So also Judas and Simon Magus, hypocrites, wicked men, were baptized: did not their baptism, according to the nature of it, seal this doctrine and truth, "that there as a washing away of sins?" It did not, indeed, seal the thing itself to them; nor was it at all a sign to them of the 'washing away' of theirs: but baptism doth in itself seal this doctrine. You will grant that this axiom is most true, "Abraham received the sign of circumcision, the seal of the righteousness of faith." And is not this equally true? Esau, Ahab, Ahaz, received the sign of circumcision, the seal of the righteousness of faith: is not circumcision the same to all? Did not circumcision, to

whomsoever it was administered, sign and seal this truth, that there 'was a righteousness of faith'? The sacrament hath a sealing virtue in itself, that doth not depend *on the disposition of the receiver*.

II. Baptism, as a sacrament, is an obligation. But now infants are capable of being obliged. Heirs are sometimes obliged by their parents, though they are not yet born: see also [Deuteronomy 29:11,15](#). For that to which any one is obliged obtains a right to oblige *from the equity of the thing*, and not *from the apprehension of the person obliged*. The law is imposed upon all under this penalty, "Cursed be every one that doth not continue in all," &c. It is ill arguing from hence, that a man hath power to perform the law; but the equity of the thing itself is very well argued hence. Our duty obligeth us to every thing which the law commands; but we cannot perform the least tittle of it.

III. An infant is capable of privileges, as well as an old man; and baptism is privilegial. An infant hath been crowned king in his cradle: an infant may be made free who is born a slave. The Gemarists speak very well in this matter; "Rabh Houna saith, They baptize an infant proselyte by the command of the bench." *Upon what is this grounded?* On this, that baptism *becomes a privilege to him*. And they may endow an absent person with a privilege: or they may bestow a privilege upon one, though he be ignorant of it. Tell me then, why an infant is not capable of being brought into the visible church, and of receiving the distinguishing sign between a Christian and a heathen, as well as a grown person.

IV. One may add, that an infant is part of his parent: upon this account, [Genesis 17:14](#), an infant is to be cut off if he be not circumcised, when, indeed, the fault is his parents'; because thus the parents are punished in a part of themselves, by the cutting off of their child. And hence is that of [Exodus 20:5](#), "Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children," because children are a part of their fathers, &c. From hence ariseth also a natural reason of infant-baptism: the infants of baptized parents are to be baptized, because they are part of them, and that the whole parents may be baptized. And upon this account they used of old, with good reason, to baptize the whole family, with the master of it.

[*In the name of the Father, &c.*] I. Christ commands them to go and baptize the nations; but how much time was past before such a journey was taken! And when the time was now come that this work should be begun, Peter doth not enter upon it without a previous admonition given him from heaven. And this was occasioned hereby, that, according to the command of Christ, the gospel was first to be preached to Judea, Samaria, and Galilee.

II. He commands them to baptize *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*: but among the Jews they baptized only *in the name of Jesus*; which we have observed before, from [Acts 2:38, 8:16, 19:5](#). For this reason, that thus the baptizers might assert, and the baptized confess, Jesus to be the true Messias; which was chiefly controverted by the Jews.

Of the same nature is that apostolic blessing, "Grace and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ." Where then is the Holy Ghost? He is not excluded, however he be not named. The Jews did more easily consent to the Spirit of the Messiah, which they very much celebrate, than to the person of the Messiah. Above all others, they deny and abjure Jesus of Nazareth. It belonged to the apostles, therefore, the more earnestly to assert Jesus (to be the Messiah), by how much the more vehemently they opposed him: which being once cleared, the acknowledging of the Spirit of Christ would be introduced without delay or scruple. Moses (in [Exodus 6:14](#)) going about to reckon up all the tribes of Israel, goes no further than the tribe of Levi only; and takes up with that to which his business and story at that present related. In like manner the apostles, for the present, baptize *in the name of Jesus*, bless in the name of the Father and of Jesus, that thereby they might more firmly establish the doctrine of Jesus, which met with such sharp and virulent opposition; which doctrine being established among them, they would soon agree about the Holy Ghost.

III. Among the Jews, the controversy was about the true Messiah; among the Gentiles, about the true God; it was, therefore, proper among the Jews to baptize *in the name of Jesus*, that he might be vindicated to be the true Messiah: among the Gentiles, *In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, that they might be hereby instructed in the doctrine of the true God. Hear this, O Arian and Socinian!

IV. The Jews baptized proselytes *into the name of the Father*, that is, into the profession of God, whom they called by the name of *Father*. The apostles baptize the Jews *into the name of Jesus, the Son*: and the Gentiles, *into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*.

V. *The Father* hath revealed himself in the old covenant, *the Son* in the new; in human flesh, by his miracles, doctrine, resurrection, and ascension; *the Holy Ghost*, in his gifts and miracles. Thus the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity grew by degrees to full maturity: for the arriving at the acknowledgment of which it was incumbent upon all who professed the true God to be three in one to be baptized *into his name*.

A Chorographical Century

John Lightfoot
(1602-1675)

Chapters 1-10

Chapter 1

The Division of the Land.

The Jewish writers divide the whole world into "The land of Israel," and "Without the land": that is, the countries of the heathen. Both which phrases the book of the gospel owns: "The land of Israel," [Matthew 2:20](#): and it calls the heathens, "those that are without," [1 Corinthians 5:13](#); [1 Timothy 3:7](#), &c. And sometimes the unbelieving Jews themselves, as [Mark 4:11](#).

They distinguish all the people of the world into "Israelites," and "the nations of the world." The book of the gospel owns that phrase also, [Matthew 6:32](#); "After all these things, do the Gentiles (or *nations*) seek": which, in [Luke 12:30](#), is, "The nations of the world." Hence the word 'world' is most commonly used for the Gentiles; [John 3:16,17](#); [1 John 2:2](#), &c.

Somewhere a distinction is made into "The land [of Israel]," and "The region of the sea"; "And every foreign region is called the region of the sea, except Babylon":--they are the words of Rabbi Solomon. Which, nevertheless, fall under the censure of R. Nissim: "It is something hard (saith he) to reckon every country, which is out of the land, to be the region of the sea: for then, under that name, would be included all the neighbouring places, and which are, as it were, swallowed up by the land. They say, therefore, that the more remote places are called, 'The region of the sea.' But neither does this please me: for there is no need of so great a distance, to make any place to be called, 'The region of the sea,' &c. But it is spoken in relation to the western coast of the land of Israel; on which side there are no [*heathen*] cities near, and swallowed up by the land. But the sea sets the bounds; but it doth not set the bounds on other sides, &c. The sense, therefore, of R. Solomon, when he saith, 'that every region, without the land, is the region of the sea,' comes to this,--That every region, which is like to that region, is so called."

Heathen cities were on that western coast; but seeing they lay within the ancient bounds of the land, namely, the 'lip of the Mediterranean sea,'--they could not so properly be said to be 'without the land,' as those which were altogether 'without the limits.' Those cities and that country, therefore, are called by a peculiar title, the "coast or country by the Mediterranean sea." Which title all other cities of the like condition underwent also, wheresoever seated within the bounds of the land. Examples will not be wanting as we go along.

They commonly define the 'land of Israel' under a double notion: to wit, that "which they possessed, who went up out of Egypt"; and that "which they possessed, who went up out of Babylon." *This* was, in very many places, circumscribed within narrower limits than

that, not only by reason Samaria was rejected and shut out,--but also, because certain portions were cut off (and they neither a few nor small), which became the possessions of those, that went up out of Egypt; but, under the second Temple, had passed into the possessions of the heathen.

Now they were, upon this account, the more exact in observing their bounds, distinguishing this land by known bounds, both from all others, and, in some places, as it were, from itself; because they decreed, that very many mysteries of their religion were to be handled nowhere but within these limits. For besides the rites of that dispensation, which the Holy Scripture doth openly and evidently fix to that land, such as Sacrifices, Passovers, the Priesthood, and other appointments of that nature (which are commonly, and not improperly, called "Statutes appendant to that land,") very many others also are circumscribed within the same borders by the fathers of the traditions.

"The land of Israel (say they), above all other lands, is sanctified by ten holinesses. And what is the holiness of it? Out of it they bring the sheaf, and the first-fruits, and the two loaves. And they do not so out of any other land."

"The law of beheading the cow doth not take place any where, but in the land of Israel, and beyond Jordan."

"They do not appoint or determine concerning the new moons, nor do they intercalate the year any where but in the land of Israel: as it is said, The law shall go forth out of Sion."

"They do not prefer to eldership out of the land of Israel: no, not although they that do prefer, have themselves been preferred within the land."

And that I heap not together more, they do, in a manner, circumscribe the Holy Spirit himself within the limits of that land. For "Shechinah (say they) dwells not upon any out of the land." Compare [Acts 10:45](#).

The land, which the Jews, that came up out of Babylon, possess, they divide after this manner:--

"There are three lands (or countries)--Judea, the land beyond Jordan, and Galilee; and each of those have three countries":--those we shall take notice of in their places. To this received division our Saviour hath respect, when, sending his disciples to preach to the "lost sheep of Israel," he excludes Samaria, [Matthew 10:5](#); which, according to the condition of the nation, was not merely *heathen*, nor was it truly *Israel*. It was not *heathen*; for "The land of Samaria is reckoned clean, and the gathering together of its waters clean, and its dwellings clean, and its paths clean": which the Jewish curiosity would by no means pronounce of a heathen land. But as to many other things, they made no difference between them and the Gentiles...

Chapter 2

The Talmudic Girdle of the Land under the second Temple, taken out of the Jerusalem Sheviith, fol. 36. 3.

What *all* these things mean, I cannot so much as conjecture; yea, nor can I scarce conjecture, what the meaning is of *some* of them. Neither is there any Oedipus at hand, nor Sphinx herself, to explain and unriddle them. The Talmudists are silent from making any comments here, nor have we the advantage of any other commentator. We must, therefore, act here according to the uncertain instruction of nods and winks; and that either by saying nothing, or by mere conjecture, since that the mind of the authors is either altogether unknown, or it is wholly doubtful, whether it be known or no. Expect not, that I go from street to street to knock at all the gates of these places: it will be enough, if we can scrape out, in what regions these places lie, and are able to guess at what points of the heaven they are disposed. We will at present take in hand only the first and last clause of this place quoted; which may have some tendency towards our entrance into our present business. The rest (if there be any we can attain unto) we shall handle in their proper places.

"These (say they) are the bounds of the land of Israel, which they possessed that came out of Babylon."

"The division, or part, of the walls of the tower Sid." Nor dare I confidently to assert, that this is spoken of the 'tower of Strato,' or 'Caesarea'; nor yet do I know to what it may more fitly be applied. We observe in its place, that that tower is called by the Talmudists, "The tower Sir": which, by how very little a point it differs from this words, and how very apt it is by want of care in writing to be confounded with it, the eye of any reader is witness...

These places, concerning which the Talmudists here treat, are of a different condition from those, which were called "The region of the sea." For those places were certain towns, here and there, on this sea-coast, and elsewhere; which were, indeed, inhabited by heathens, and so could not properly be reckoned the 'land of Israel'; yet they were such, as between which, and the outmost bounds of the land, was again the land of Israel. But these places, which we are now handling, are those, which were the utmost bounds, and beyond which were no places at all, but what was reckoned the 'land of the heathen': the Phoenicians, Syrians, or other Gentiles, possessing all that coast thence forward unto the shore of the Mediterranean sea.

We cannot also pass by those things, that are said by the Gemarists in the very same page, from whence the scheme before-mentioned is taken. "You see isles in the sea; and if a line were drawn from the mountains of Amana to the river of Egypt,--whatsoever is within the line, belongs to the *land of Israel*; whatsoever is without the line, is *without the land*." After the same manner speaks the Targum of Jerusalem upon [Numbers 34:4](#): "And their western bounds shall be the great sea, and the isles of it." Isles? What isles? Let the authors of the maps well weigh these passages.

Chapter 3

A great part of south Judea cut off under the second Temple. Jewish Idumean.

The Talmudic girdle ends, as you see, in "Kadesh, Barnea, and Ascalon." Hence it cannot but be observed, that these two places are placed, as it were, in parallel; and whatsoever space lies between Ascalon and the river of Egypt, is excluded,--to wit, fifty-four miles. And one might, indeed, almost see some footsteps of that exclusion under the first Temple, in that very common expression, "From Dan even to Beer-sheba."

This country, that was excluded, was something barren. The Talmudists speak thus of it; "That tract, which lies in Gerariku [*Gerar*] is ill to dwell in. How far? To the river of Egypt." And Strabo thus; "The country, which follows Gaza, is barren and sandy," &c.

It was anciently inhabited by the Avites,--namely, from Gaza to the river of Egypt. "The Avims dwelt in Hazerim," [Deuteronomy 2:23](#). *Hazar* is a word of most frequent mention in that southern land, "Hazar-Addar, Hazar-Gaddah, Hazar-Shua, Hazar-Susah," &c. And it seems to denote some champaign plain and level, lying between the mountains. Hence the habitation of the Avites is called 'Hazerim'; who are numbered with the Philistines, but yet by themselves, [Joshua 13:3](#):--for see there, how the holy text promising to number *five* nations only, numbers *six*.

This excluded portion is passed into the name of Idumea. Hence Pliny: "Presently from the rising up of the lake Sirbon, begins Idumea and Palestine." Nor that alone, but another very great part of Judea. Hence the sea of Sodom, is said, by Diodorus Siculus, to be "about the middle of Idumea." And in Josephus, and the Book of the Maccabees, we find very many places mentioned under the name of Idumea, which were almost in the very middle of Judea. For example's sake; "He came even to the Gadari, and the plains of Idumea, and Azotus, and Jamnia." And again; "And Judas and his brethren left not off fighting with the Idumeans: but fell upon them everywhere: and taking the city Chebron, &c. and the city Marissa, &c. And having come unto Azotus," &c. And more to this purpose may be read here and there. So that distinction may be made, between Idumea the Greater and the Less. Simon of Gerasa overran the towns along the mountainous country, &c. And he overran Acrabatene, and the parts as far as Idumea the Great. And there is mention of "Idumean, called the Upper." With these passages, compare [Mark 3:8](#).

Whilst the Jews were absent from their own country, enduring the seventy years' bondage in Babylon,--it is easy to be believed, that their ancient enemies, the Edomites, and that were so from the very first original of them, had invaded their possessions, as much as they could, and had fixed their roots in that country especially, which was nearest their own: but at length, by the powerful arms of the Maccabees, and the Asmoneans, they were either rooted out, or constrained to embrace Judaism. So Josephus speaks of Hyrcanus: "Hyrcanus takes Ador and Marissa, cities of Idumea: and, having subdued all the Idumeans, suffered them to remain in the country, on condition they were willing to be circumcised, and to use the Jewish laws. And they, out of a desire of their own country, underwent circumcision, and conformed to the same course of life with the Jews." Hence there became a mingled

generation in that country, between Jew and Edomite: and the name of the place was mingled also, and called both Idumea and Judea: "And Palestine was divided into five countries,-- Idumea, Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and the country beyond Jordan."

Chapter 4

The seven Seas according to the Talmudists, and the four Rivers compassing the Land.

"Seven seas (say they) and four rivers compass the land of Israel. I. The Great Sea, or the Mediterranean. II. The sea of Tiberias. III. The sea of Sodom. IV. The lake of Samocho...

The three first named among the seven are sufficiently known, and there is no doubt of the fourth:--only the three names of it are not to be passed by.

IV. 1. The Sibbichaeon. The word seems to be derived from a *bush*. 2. ... 3. ...

V. Perhaps the *sandy sea*. Which fits very well to the lake of Sirbon, joining the commentary of Diodorus Siculus. For he relates, that that lake, for the most part, is so covered with sand, that it hath often deceived and supplanted travellers, yea, whole armies, thinking it to be firm land...

After these seas, mentioned by the Talmudists, hear also no lean story of theirs concerning the fish: "R. Chaninah Bar R. Abhu said, Seven hundred kinds of clean fish, and eight hundred kinds of clean locusts, and of birds an infinite number, travelled with Israel into Babylon, and returned when Israel returned, except [a certain] fish. But how did the fish travel? R. Houna Bar Joseph saith, they travelled by the way of the deep, and by the deep they came back." Surely it requires a Jewish invention (which is able to frame any thing out of any thing), to trace a way, either by any sea, or by any river, through which fish might swim out of Palestine into Babylon. By the same art they bring Jonah in the belly of the whale, out of the Phoenician sea, into the Red sea.

That, indeed, is somewhat hard, yet not to be doubted of, what is said, [2 Chronicles 8:18](#), concerning Hiram sending ships to Solomon into the Red sea. What! ships to come from Tyre into the Red sea? Which way sailed they? It is answered, He sent such Tyrian ships, which had much and long traded before in the Red sea, to accompany Solomon's fleet. To this belongs that, that it is said there likewise (and in [1 Kings 9:27](#)), that "he sent seamen, that had knowledge of the sea"; that is, knowledge of that sea: and they probably not such, who had never yet adventured themselves into the Red sea, but had experience of it before, and were not ignorant of the Ophir voyage.

The four rivers for the compassing of the land (they say) are, 1. *Jordan*; that is sufficiently known. II. *Jarmoch*. In Pliny, 'Hieramax': "Gaddara (saith he), Hieramax flowing before it." III. *Kirmion*. IV. *Pigah*. Concerning which, thus the Aruch: "Kirmion is a river in the way to Damascus, and is the same with Amanah. Pigah is Pharphar. and Jarmoch is also a river in the way to Damascus." And the Talmudists: "The waters of Kirmion and Pigah are not fit" (to sprinkle the unclean), "because they are muddy waters. The waters also of Jordan,

and the waters of Jarmoch, are not fit, because they are mixed waters":--that is, as the Gloss speaks, mixed with the waters of other rivers, which they receive within themselves.

To the seven seas, concerning which we have spoken, those things which are said by Midras Tillim, do refer: "I have created seven seas, saith the Lord, but out of them all I have chosen none, but the sea of Gennesaret."--And of the river of Amanah, of which the Aruch speaks, mention is made in the Targum upon [Canticles 4:8](#): "They that dwell upon the river Amanah, shall offer thee a gift," &c.

Chapter 5

The Sea of Sodom

The bounds of Judea, on both sides, are the sea; the western bound is the Mediterranean,--the eastern, the Dead sea, or the sea of Sodom. This the Jewish writers every where call, which you may not so properly interpret here, "the *salt* sea," as "the *bituminous* sea." In which sense word for word, "Sodom's salt," but properly "Sodom's bitumen," doth very frequently occur among them. The use of it was in the holy incense. They mingled 'bitumen,' 'the amber of Jordan,' and [an herb known to few], with the spices that made that incense.

"The lake Asphaltitis is distant from Jerusalem three hundred furlongs":--about eight-and-thirty miles.

"It is extended in length five hundred and eighty furlongs"; seventy-two miles.--"In breadth a hundred and fifty furlongs"; eighteen miles.

Pliny speaks thus of it: "In length it is more than a hundred miles: in its greatest breadth, it makes five-and-twenty,--in its least, six." What agreement is there between these two? I suppose Josephus does not comprehend within his measure the *tongue* of the sea, of which mention is made, [Joshua 15:2](#)--and defines the breadth, as it was generally every where diffused. Concerning its distance from Jerusalem, Solinus also speaks: "In a long retreat from Jerusalem (saith he) a sad bay openeth itself; which that it was struck from heaven, the ground, black and dissolved into ashes, testifies. There were two towns there, one named Sodom, the other Gomorrhah." But that distance was not directly southward, but by a very long declination eastward.

The Talmudists devote "to the sea of Sodom," any thing, that is destined to rejection and cursing, and that by no means is to be used.

"Let him devote the use of such a thing to the bituminous sea." "Let the price of an oblation for sin, the owner whereof is dead, depart into the salt sea."

"The proselyte Aquila divided the inheritance with his brother a Gentile, and devoted the use and benefit of it to the salt sea. Of three doctors one saith, That he devoted the moneys of idolatry into the salt sea." Hence is that allusion, [Revelation 20:14](#), "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire."

It doth not please me, that Sodom, in the maps, is placed in the northern bounds of the Asphaltites; when it seems rather to be placed in the southern extremity of it. For,

I. The bounds of the land are thus defined by Moses, [Genesis 10:19](#): "The borders of the Canaanites were from Sidon" (on the north) "unto Gaza" (on the south), "as thou goest forward, or until thou comest to Sodom." Are not the bounds here bent from Gaza to the farthest term opposite to it on the east?

II. Josephus, in the description of the Asphaltites, which we quoted a little above, hath these words: "The length of it is five hundred and eighty furlongs: and it is stretched out as far as Zoar of Arabia." Note, that the farthest coast of the extension of it southward, is to Zoar. But now Zoar was not far distant from Sodom, when Lot, with his company, got thither before the rising of the sun, [Genesis 19:23](#). "It is written (say the Gemarists), 'The sun was risen upon the earth, when Lot entered into Sodom.'--Now Sodom was four miles from Zoar."

The maps show you Zoar and Lot's Cave in Judea, at the northern coast almost of the Asphaltites:--by what authority, I do not apprehend. The Talmudists, indeed, do mention a certain Zoar, which they also call, "The City of Palms."--"There is a story (say they) of some Levites, who travelled to Zoar, the city of palms: and one of them fell sick, whom they brought to an inn, and there he died." But I should sooner believe, that there were two Zoars, than I should believe, that the father of the Moabites were not conceived and born near Zoar of the land of Moab. See [Isaiah 15:5](#).

Concerning the age of Sodom, when it perished, see the places in the margin, and weigh them well.

Chapter 6

The Coast of the Asphaltites, The Essenes. En-gedi.

"On the western shore" (of the Asphaltites) "dwell the Essenes; whom persons, guilty of any crimes, fly from on every side. A nation it is that lives alone, and of all other nations in the whole world, most to be admired; they are without any woman; all lust banished, &c. Below these, was the town Engadda, the next to Jerusalem for fruitfulness, and groves of palm-trees, now another burying-place. From thence stands Massada, a castle in a rock, and this castle not far from the Asphaltites."

Solinus, Pliny's shadow, speaks the like things: "The Essenes possess the inner parts of Judea, which look to the west. The town Engadda lay beneath the Essenes; but it is now destroyed: but its glory for the famous groves, that are there, doth still endure: and in regard of its most lofty woods of palms, it hath received no disparagement either by age or war. The castle Massada is the bounds of Judea."

We are looking for the places, not the men:--we might otherwise begin the history of the Essenes from those words, [Judges 1:16](#): "And the sons of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went out of the city of palms, with the sons of Judah, into the deserts of Judah." From these we suppose came the Rechabites,--and from their stock, or example, the Essenes. Which if it be true, we make this an argument of the ill placing of En-gedi in the maps, being

set too much towards the north, when it ought to have been placed towards the utmost southern coasts.

If the Essenes were the same with the Kenites in seat and place, and the Kenites dwelt beyond Arad southward, or indeed even with Arad, which is asserted in the text alleged,--and if below these were En-gedi, which is also asserted by the authors cited,--certainly, then, the maps have laid it a long way distant from its own proper place, too much northward. View them, and think of these things. To which we also add this:--

The southern borders of the land, [Ezekiel 47:19](#) (the very same which are mentioned [Numbers 34](#) and [Joshua 15:2](#)), are thus declared; "The southern coast southward from Tamar to the waters of Meribah in Cadash," &c. But now Tamar and En-gedi are the same, [2 Chronicles 20:2](#). Nor have we any reason why we should seek another Tamar elsewhere. Certainly, the Chaldee paraphrast, and Rabbi Sol. Jarchi, and Kimchi following him, have rendered Tamar, in Ezekiel, *Jericho*. But upon what reason? For how, I beseech you, was it possible, that Jericho should be the bounds of the south land, when it was the utmost bounds of Judea northward? It was this, without all doubt, drove them to that version of the word, because *Jericho* is called the *City of Palms*,--and *Tamar* signifies a *palm*; since En-gedi would not give place to Jericho, one inch in regard of the glory of palm-groves.

Whether Tadmor, [1 Kings 9:18](#), be the same with this our Tamar,--and whether Tadmor in the Talmudists be the same with that Tadmor,--we leave to the reader to consider. We produce these few things concerning it, which are related by them--for the sake of such consideration:--

"They receive proselytes from those of Cardya and Tadmor. Rab. Abhu, in the name of R. Jochanan, saith, The tradition asserts, that the proselytes of Tadmor are fit to enter into the congregation." It was said a little before; "Haggai the prophet taught these three lessons:--The rival of a daughter" (of a priest) "may be married by a priest. The Moabites and Ammonites ought to tithe the poor's tithe the seventh year. And the proselytes of Tadmor are fit to enter into the congregation."

This story is recited, in the Jerusalem Misna: "Mary, of Tadmor, having part of the blood sprinkled upon her" (whereby she was to be purified), "heard in that very juncture of time, that her daughter was dead," &c. But the Babylonian calls her "of Tarmod."--"From the place Tarmud," saith the Gloss.--The 'Tarmudeans,' are said, by those of the Babylonian Talmud, to be certain poor people, who got themselves a livelihood by gathering up wood, and selling it.

R. Jochanan said, "Blessed is he, who shall see the destruction of Tadmor: for she communicated in the destruction of the first and second Temple. In the destruction of the first, she brought eighty thousand archers: and so she did, in the destruction of the second."

Chapter 7

Kadesh. Rekam, and that double. Inquiry is made, Whether the doubling it in the Maps is well done.

The readers of the eastern interpreters will observe, that *Kadesh* is rendered by all *Rekam*, or in a sound very near it. In the Chaldee, it is 'Rekam': in the Syriac, 'Rekem': in the Arabic, 'Rakim'...

There are two places noted by the name *Rekam* in the very bounds of the land,--to wit, the southern and eastern: that is, a double *Kadesh*.

I. Of *Kadesh*, or *Rekam*, in the south part, there is no doubt.

II. Of it, in the eastern part, there is this mention: "From *Rekam* to the east, and *Rekam* is as the east": that is, R. Nissim interpreting, "*Rekam* itself is reckoned for the east of the world" (that is, for the land of the heathen), "not for the land of Israel." Behold! a *Rekam*, or a *Kadesh*, also, on the east. But the maps have feigned to themselves another *Kadesh*, besides *Barnea*, and this eastern *Rekam*; whither, they think, the people of Israel came in the fortieth year of their travel, [Numbers 20](#). These, we suppose, were some of the reasons, whereby the authors of them were drawn to it.

I. Because *Kadesh-barnea* was in the desert of *Paran*, [Numbers 12:16, 14:1](#). But the *Kadesh*, whither they came the fortieth year, was in the desert of *Zin*, [Numbers 20:1](#).--I answer, The searchers of the land, departing from *Kadesh-barnea*, are said, also, to go out of the deserts of *Zin*, [Number 13:21](#). *Paran* was the general name of that dreadful desert; *Zin* only one part of it.

II. In *Kadesh-barnea* they encamped many days, [Deuteronomy 1:46](#). But in that *Kadesh*, concerning which mention is made, [Numbers 20](#), there was not provision sufficient, whereby they might be sustained one day. For they complain, that it was a place altogether destitute of seed, figs, vines, and pomegranates, [Numbers 20:5](#): which they did not at all complain of, while they remained in *Kadesh-barnea*.--I answer, Omitting, that wheresoever they encamped, they were fed by manna; the complaint arose among them, not so much of the place itself, as of the ill boding and prejudice, as I may so say, of the place; because, from the barrenness of this place, they prejudged of the like barrenness of that land, into which they were to enter,--and the porch, as it were, of which, was *Kadesh-barnea*. When they came hither first, now thirty-eight years before, "Ye came to the mountain of the Amorites (saith Moses) which the Lord giveth you," [Deuteronomy 1:20,21](#). 'Is it so?' (think they with themselves) 'Does the first entrance of the land of promise, promise no better? There is little hope of the land itself, if the beginnings of it are such. It is convenient, therefore, that we send before us spies, who may bring us word, whether it is of so great account, that we should tire and hazard ourselves by going to that soil, whose first appearance is so horrid and desperate.'--And hence was that unhappy argument before their eyes, by the inducement of which the whole multitude, by so unanimous a vote, concluded and resolved against the

land. And since now, after so much time passed, they are come back to the same place, they think, distrust, and complain of the same things.

III. In Kadesh-barnea, they had a supply of water; in Kadesh, whither they came the fortieth year, there was no water, [Numbers 20](#), &c.--I answer, They drank, when they first came to Kadesh-barnea, of the rock, which followed them ([1 Cor 10:2](#)), which dried up, when they were now ready to enter into the land. If you ask, Why had those rivers that followed them, dried up, as soon as they came at Kadesh-barnea, which before had not dried up when they came thither;--then I ask also, Why had they dried up, when they came to another Kadesh?

IV. Concerning the Kadesh, whither they came the last year of their travel, it is said, that the city was in the utmost bounds of the land of Edom: and therefore, they desire leave of the king to pass through the land of Edom, [Numbers 20:16,17](#).--I answer, Nothing at all hinders, but these things may be spoke of Kadesh-barnea, which lying contiguous to the mountain of the Amorites, that is, to mountainous Judea, showed so great an access, and promised it; only that access was winding, and very difficult to be passed. They desire, therefore, a more level way of the king of Edom, but obtain it not.

V. Perhaps that which chiefly moved them, was this; that supposing one Kadesh only, to wit, Barnea,--it will be scarce possible not to confound the encampings of Israel in the wilderness, and their movings from place to place.--I answer, There will be the same easiness of ordering them, if you do but reduce the sixth and seventh verses of [Deuteronomy 10](#), into a true sense, and into agreement with [Numbers 33](#) from verses 31 to 41; which is not hard to do. But let these things suffice, for the present, to have spoke besides our scope. That that Kadesh, to which they came in the fortieth year (which is called Meribah, [Numbers 20:13](#)), is the same with Kadesh-barnea, is clear enough from hence,--that Meribah in Kadesh is assigned for the southern border of the land, [Ezekiel 47:19](#); which border of old was Kadesh-barnea, [Numbers 34:4](#); [Joshua 15:3](#).

Chapter 8

The River of Egypt, Rhinocorura. The Lake of Sirbon.

Pliny writes, "From Pelusium are the intrinchements of Chabrias: mount Casius: the temple of Jupiter Casius: the tomb of Pompey the Great: Ostracine: Arabia is bounded sixty-five miles from Pelusium: soon after begins Idumea and Palestine from the rising up of the Sirbon lake." Either my eyes deceive me, while I read these things,--or mount Casius lies nearer Pelusium, than the lake of Sirbon. The maps have ill placed the Sirbon between mount Casius and Pelusium.

Sirbon implies *burning*; the name of the lake being derived from its nature, which is fiery and bituminous. It is described by Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, and others, whom you may look upon. A lake like to that of Sodom, and perhaps was of the like fate and original; to wit, an example of divine indignation. What if it be the monument of that dreadful

earthquake in the days of Uzziah, [Amos 1:1](#), [Zechariah 14:5](#)? when God contended also in fire, [Amos 7:4](#): so that some cities perished after the manner of Sodom and Gomorrhah, [Amos 4:11](#); [Isaiah 1:9](#).

The farthest border of the land of Israel southward is not *Nile* in Egypt, but Shihor in the way to Egypt, [Joshua 13:3](#); [Jeremiah 2:18](#). In the Seventy interpreters, it is Rhinocorura; for they render that in [Isaiah 27:12](#), "unto the stream of Egypt." "Unto Rhinocorura." Of which place and name, derived from the 'cutting of nostrils,' see Diodorus Siculus, lib. 1. [60.]

Chapter 9

A Sight of Judea

"In Judea is the mountainous country, the plain, and the vale. What is the mountainous country of Judea? It is the king's mountain. The plain of it is the plain of the south. The vale is from En-gedi to Jericho. The plain of Lydda is as the plain of the south: and its mountainous country is as the king's mountainous country. From Beth-horon to the sea is one circumjacent region. Rabbi Jochanan saith, Yet it hath a mountainous part, a plain, and a vale. From Beth-horon to Emmaus is mountainous,--from Emmaus to Lydda is plain,--from Lydda to the sea is valley."

Judea is not divided amiss into four parts:--namely, into the country, which formerly was the Philistines', which takes up the western part. To this joins, on the east, the mountainous country of Judea, which is also called "The king's mount." To the mountainous country, on the east, joins a plain, a country more low and level than the mountains, which nevertheless here and there hath its hills..."A valley, lying between mountains, is reckoned with the mountains, and mountains in a valley are numbered with the valley." To the plain eastwardly joins a valley, lower than the plain,--namely, the coast of the sea of Sodom, and at length of Jordan.

The land of Benjamin, in like manner, which is numbered with Judea, in respect of its superficies, was of the same nature; which, although "it was a portion of the narrowest limits, by reason of the goodness of the soil," yet had its mountainous part, its plain, and vale: and that, not only towards Lydda, and the great sea, but towards Jericho and Jordan.

Judea did excel all the other parts of the land of Israel in very many privileges. For, besides that in it was seated Jerusalem, the metropolis of the whole nation, and in Jerusalem stood the Temple, and in the Temple sat the Sanhedrim:--this was also peculiar to it out of the Canons, that "it was not lawful to intercalate the year out of Judea, while they might do it in Judea." Maimonides gives the reason of the thing, "Because there dwelt the divine glory."-"Nor was the sheaf of the first-fruits of the barley to be fetched elsewhere, than from Judea, and as near as might be to Jerusalem." Once it was fetched a great way off, &c.

Chapter 10

A Description of the Sea-coast, out of Pliny and Strabo.

"Idumea and Palestine begin from the rising up of the Sirbon lake. The towns of Rhinocorura, and within Raphea. Gaza, and within Anthedon. Mount Angaris. The country along the coast, Samaria. The free town Ascalon, Azotus. The two Jamnes, the one a village" (otherwise Jamne within). "Joppe of the Phoenicians. Thence Apollonia. The tower of Strato; the same is Caesarea. The bounds of Palestine are a hundred and eighty-nine miles from the confines of Arabia. Then begins Phoenice."

And chapter 19: "We must go back to the coast, and Phoenice. There was the town Crocodilon; it is now a river. Rains of some cities. Dorum. Sycaminum. The promontory Carmel: and, in the mountain, a town of the same name, heretofore called Ecbatana. Near that, Getta, Lebba, the river Pagida or Belus, mingling glassy sand with its small shore: it flows from the lake Cendevia, at the root of Carmel. Next that is Ptolemais, a colony of Claudius Caesar, which heretofore was called Ace. The town Ecdippa. The White Promontory. Tyrus, heretofore an island, &c. It is in compass nineteen miles, Palae-Tyre, lying within, being included. The town itself contains two-and-twenty furlongs. Then the towns, Enhydra, Sarepta, and Ornithon; and Sidon, the artist of glass, and the mother of Thebes in Boeotia."

Strabo goes backward: "Tyrus is not distant from Sidon above two hundred furlongs":-
-five-and-twenty miles.

The masters of the Jews have observed this neighbourhood in that canon, whereby provision is made, that nobody betake himself to sail in the Mediterranean sea within three days before the sabbath: "But if any (say they) will sail from Tyre to Sidon, he may, even on the eve of the sabbath: because it is well known, that that space may be sailed, while it is yet day."

"Between Tyre and Sidon there is the little city Ornithon" (the city of *birds*). "At Tyre a river goes out."

"Thirty furlongs beyond Tyre is Palae-Tyrus": three miles three quarters. When, therefore, Pliny saith, the compass of Tyre is nineteen miles, "Palae-Tyre, that lies within, being included," he shows manifestly, that it is not to be understood of the compass of the city itself, since he saith, "The town itself held two-and-twenty furlongs": nor can it well be taken of the whole circumference of the Tyrian jurisdiction, but rather of the extent of the bounds of it that way, which he went.

"Moreover, from Tyre" (southward) "is Ptolemais, formerly called Ace. And between Ace and Tyre, is a shore heaped with sands fit to make glass."

"Beyond Ace is the tower of Strato. The mountain Carmel lies between: and the names of some small cities, and nothing more. The cities of Sycamines, of Herdsmen, of Crocodiles, and others. And going thence, is a certain great wood."

"After that, Joppa; next which, the shore of Egypt, which before had stretched out towards sun-rising, does remarkably bend towards the north. There some talk, that Andromeda was

exposed to the whale. A place sufficiently high; so high, indeed, that from thence (they report) Jerusalem may be seen, the metropolis of the Jews. The Jews, also, that go down to the sea, use this port. But these ports are receptacles for robbers. And so was the wood and Carmel."

"And this place was so well peopled, that, out of Jamnia, a near village, and the dwellings neighbouring about, might be armed forty thousand men."

"Thence to mount Casius towards Pelusium, the distance is a thousand furlongs, and a little more. And three hundred more to Pelusium."

Here we must stop, and see how these two authors do agree. For, according to Strabo's account, one thousand three hundred furlongs, and a little more, run out from Pelusium to Joppa: that is, one hundred and sixty three miles, or thereabouts: but according to Pliny's, at first sight, more by far. For "Arabia (saith he) is bounded sixty-five miles from Pelusium: and the end of Palestine is one hundred and eighty-nine miles from the confines of Arabia. And then begins Phoenice." The sum is two hundred and fifty-four miles. He had named Joppa before, 'Joppa of the Phoenicians.' But now, supposing he makes Joppa the border of Palestine, and the beginning of Phoenice, there are from Pelusium to Joppa, himself reckoning, almost a hundred miles more than in Strabo. Nor is there any thing to answer from the difference of the measure of Strabo's furlongs, and Pliny's miles. For they go by the same measure, themselves being witnesses: for to Strabo, "Eight furlongs make a mile"; and, to Pliny, "A furlong makes a hundred and twenty-five of our paces":--which comes to the same thing.

We must therefore say, that by the 'end of Palestine,' in Pliny, is properly signified the end of it, touching upon Phoenicia properly so called;--that is, upon the borders of Tyre and Sidon. For when he calls Joppa, "Joppa of the Phoenicians,"--he does not conclude Joppa within Phoenicia; but because the sea, washing upon that shore of Palestine, was divided in common speech into the Phoenician and the Egyptian sea (so Strabo before, "Afterward Joppe; after that, the shore of Egypt," &c.); and because the Phoenicians were famous for navigation,--he ascribed their name to Joppa, a very eminent haven of that shore. But he stretched the borders of Palestine a great way farther;--namely, so far till they meet with the borders of Tyre and Sidon. So far, therefore, doth Pliny's measure extend itself; to wit,--that, from Idumea, and the rising of the Sirbon lake, to the borders of Tyre and Sidon, there be one hundred and eighty-nine miles. The place that divided these meeting-bounds to the Jews, was Acon, or Ptolemais; which we shall note, when we come thither:--but whether it was so to Pliny, remains obscure. But it is a more probable opinion, that he computed according to the vulgar and most known distinction.

Gulielmus Tyrius, measuring the borders of the Tyre of his time southward, extends them to four or five miles: "For it is extended southward towards Ptolemais, as far as to that place, which, at this day, is called 'the district of Scandarion,' which is four or five miles." If,

therefore, it should be granted, that Pliny's measure extended so far, we might compute the length of the land from the Sirbon, where also is the river of Egypt, to Sidon, by this account:

I. From the Sirbon to the borders of Phoenice, one hundred and eighty-nine miles.--
Pliny.

II. From the first borders of Phoenice to Tyre, five miles.--Gul. Tyrius.

III. From Tyre to Sidon, twenty-five miles.--Strabo.

Sum total is two hundred and nineteen miles.

A Chorographical Century

John Lightfoot
(1602-1675)

Chapters 11-20

Chapter 11

The mountainous Country of Judea.

"What is the mountainous country of Judea? It is the king's mountain."

However Judea, here and there, doth swell out much with mountains, yet its chief swelling appears in that broad back of mountains, that runs from the utmost southern coast as far as Hebron, and almost as Jerusalem itself. Which the Holy Scripture called "The hill-country of Judah," [Joshua 21:11](#); [Luke 1:39](#).

Unless I am very much mistaken,--the maps of Adricomus, Tirinius, and others, ought to be corrected, which have feigned to themselves a very long back of mountains, beginning almost at the Red Sea, and reaching almost to the land of Canaan, and that with this inscription, "The Amorrhean Mountain." Those authors are mistaken by an ill interpretation of [a] phrase rendering it, "in the way by" (or *near*) "the mountain of the Amorites,"--when it should be rendered, "in the way *to* the mountain of the Amorites." Let the reader consult [Deuteronomy 1:19,20](#): "We departed from Horeb, and went through all that great and terrible desert, which ye saw, in the way leading to the mountain of the Amorite, as our Lord commanded us, and came to Cadesh-barnea. Then I said unto you, You are now come to the mountain of the Amorites," &c.

The mountain of the Amorites took its beginning from Cadesh-barnea, the southern border, of the land of Israel,--and, by a hardened gibbosity, thrust forward itself into Judea beyond Hebron, the name only being changed into the "Hill-country of Judea." Whence is that of Samson to be understood, that he carried not the gates of Gaza near to Hebron, or to the mountain, whence Hebron might be seen;--but to the top of this mountainous country, which runs out to Hebron:--and so are the words to be rendered, [Judges 16:3](#), "He carried them to the top of a mountainous place, which is before Hebron."

This mountainous country is called "The mountainous desert," [Psalm 75:6](#), because it is not from the east, nor from the west, nor from the desert of the mountains. Where the Targum thus; "Nor from the south, the mountainous place."

It remains doubtful, why it is called by the Talmudists "The King's mountain." Whether because it was king among all the other mountains of Judea? or, because the royal dignity of David's house sprang hence,--to wit, from Hebron? There is much mention of it in the Jewish writers.

The Chaldee paraphrast upon [Judges 4:5](#): "Deborah had white dust in the King's Mountain." That is, as it seems, potter's clay: for the Gemarists, speaking somewhere concerning potters say, "That they work in black dust, or in white dust."

"In the days of R. Hoshai, some went about to get a freedom from some tithes for the Mount of the King."

Rabbi Simeon had vine-dressers in the Mount of the King. He was minded to let out his vineyard to heathens.

R. Chaijah, R. Issai, and R. Immai, went up to the King's Mountain. They saw a certain heathen, who was suspicious concerning their wine.

A myriad of cities stood in the Mountain-royal, of which R. Eliezer Ben Harsum possessed a thousand. This mountainous country is not, therefore, called "The mountainous desert," because it was void of cities and towns, but because it was a more barren and rough country.

"The Royal Mountain was laid waste by reason of a cock and a hen. It was the custom, when they brought forth the bridegroom and the bride, to lead before them a cock and a hen: as if they should say, Increase and multiply, as they. On a certain day a regiment of Romans passed by, and wrested the cock and the hen from them: these, therefore, rose up against them, and beat them. Away, therefore, they go to Caesar, and told him, The Jews rebel against thee, &c. R. Asai saith, Three hundred thousand drew sword, and went up to the Royal Mountain, and there slew for three days and three nights," &c.

Rabbi Asai saith, "Janneus the king had sixty myriads of cities in the Royal Mountain: and in each the number was equal to them, that went out of Egypt,--excepting three cities, in which that number was doubted. And these were, I. *Caphar Bish* (that is, the *Ill Town*); therefore called so because it afforded not a house of hospitality. II. [A town,] that had its name from a certain herb, because by that herb they were nourished. III. *The town of males*; so called, saith R. Jochanan, because their wives first brought forth males, and then females, and so left off."

This story is recited by the Jerusalem Talmudists, who say *the town of males* is so called, because, unless the women departed thence somewhere else, they could not bring forth male children.

"But (saith Ulla) I saw that place, and it is not able to contain even sixty myriads of nests. Therefore, said a certain sectary of R. Chaninah, Ye lie, ye lie. To whom he replied, That land is called 'the land of a Kid': but now 'a kid' hath a skin, that does not contain his flesh: so the land of Israel, while it is inhabited, is spacious; but, when uninhabited, more contracted."

Chapter 12

The South Country. Judea called 'the South,' in respect of Galilee.

Rabban Gamaliel, and the elders sitting together at the ascent into the gallery, in the mount of the Temple, had Jochanan, the priest, and the amanuensis, sitting with them. They said to him, "Go to, write to our brethren, the inhabitants of Upper Galilee, and Nether Galilee, health: we certify you, that the time is come of separating the tithes. And to our brethren, that inhabit the Upper South Country, and that inhabit the Nether South Country, health: we certify you," &c.

The 'Upper South country' consisted of that part of the country, which was hilly; the 'Nether,' of a plain, and valley sinking on both sides. Which country, although it were barren above all other parts of the land, yet had its inhabitants, and those many, as well as other countries of the land.

He that turns over the Talmudical books, will meet very frequently with the name of the 'South,' taken for 'whole Judea' in opposition to 'Galilee.' "Those of Zippor enjoined a fast to obtain rain, but the rain came not down. Therefore, said they of Zippor, R. Joshua Ben Levi obtained rain for the southern people: but R. Chaninah hinders it from coming upon the people of Zippor. They were called, therefore, together to a second fast. R. Chaninah sent to fetch R. Joshua Ben Levi. And both went out to the fast, and yet rain fell not. He stood forth, therefore, and said before them, Neither doth Joshua Ben Levi obtain rain for the southern people, nor does R. Chaninah restrain it from the people of Zippor: but the southern people have a soft heart, to hear the words of the law and be humbled: but the people of Zippor have a hard heart." But now R. Joshua Ben Levi, who was called "the southern," was of Lydda: and those southern people, for whom he obtained rain, were of Lydda, and such as dwelt in that country.

"A devout disciple learned the intercalation of the year before his master, three years and a half: he came, and intercalated for Galilee: but he could not intercalate for the *south*," that is, for *Judea*

Hence you may understand, in what sense some Rabbins are called *southern*: as "R. Jacob of the south" ..."R. Samlai of the south"; whom you have disputing with certain, whom the Gemarists call *heretics*: whom I think rather to have been 'Christians.' And it seems to be the disputation of a Christian purposed to assert a trinity of persons in the Deity, but nevertheless a unity of the Deity. After you have heard the matter, perhaps you will be of my judgment. View the place.

Chapter 13

Gaza

After very many histories of this place in the Holy Bible, which there is no need to repeat here,--in this city did Alexander the Great, at length, besiege Babemeses the Persian, by the space of two months. "And that city, which before-time was most famous, was laid waste by him, and rendered desert." Not that he had destroyed the building of the city, or consumed it with fire; for presently after his death, Antigonus and Ptolemy, his captains, fighting, it

had walls, gates, and fortifications: but that he divested it of its ancient glory, so that it was at last melted into a new city of that name built nearer the sea, where formerly had been 'the haven of the Gazaeans.' That is called by Diodorus, 'old Gaza'; and 'Gaza desert,' by Strabo, and the New Testament, [Acts 8:26](#). At last it was called 'New Maijuma,' and after that 'Constantia':--concerning which, see Eusebius, of 'the Life of Constantine,' book iv. chap. 28; and Sozomen's 'Ecclesiastical History,' book v. chap. 3...

There is mentioned the 'mart of Gaza,' one of the three more famed marts,--to wit, that of Gaza, and of Aco, and of *Botna*.

There was a place also without the city, which was called, 'The waste (or desert) of the leper's cloister.'

Chapter 14

Ascalon. Gerar. The Story of the Eighty Witches.

'Ascalon,' in the Samaritan interpreter, is the same with 'Gerar,' [Genesis 21](#).

The word *Gerar*, among the Talmudists, seems to have passed into 'Gerariku.' "Wherefore (say they) have they not determined of that country, which is in Gerariku? Because it is ill to dwell in. How far? To the river of Egypt. But behold, Gaza is pleasant to dwell in," &c.

In the author of Aruch it is, *Gardiki*. "Bereshith Rabbah (saith he) renders *Gardiki*." "The king of Gerar,' [Genesis 20:2](#), with the Jerusalem Targumist, is "The king of Arad." Note the affinity of Arad, Gerar, and Ascalon; and thence, unless I am deceived, will grow some light, to illustrate those places in the Holy Bible, where we meet with these names.

Ascalon was distant from Jerusalem five hundred and twenty furlongs: that is, sixty-five miles. Which is to be understood of the older Ascalon. For Benjamin Tudelensis makes mention of a double Ascalon,--(this our) old, and the new. For thus he writes: "Then" (from Azotus) "is new Ascalon distant two parsae, or leagues" (that is, eight miles); "which Ezra, the priest, of blessed memory, built at the seashore...now that is distant from old Ascalon, now destroyed, four leagues."

So that, from Azotus to Ascalon, of which we are speaking, and of which alone the Holy Scripture speaks, were, by his computation, four-and-twenty miles; and by the computation of Adrichomius, two hundred furlongs, that is, five-and-twenty miles.

"Ten miles from Gaza" (says our countryman Sandes [Sandys], an eyewitness), "and near the sea, is placed Ascalon, now of no note, anciently a venerable place to the heathen for the temple of Dagon, and the festivals of Semiramis' birthday."

From Gaza to Azotus, Diodorus Siculus being witness, are two-hundred and seventy furlongs: which amount to four-and-thirty miles: namely, from Gaza to Ascalon, ten miles, and thence to Azotus four-and-twenty.

That is a common saying, "From Ascalon onward to the south, is the heathen country, and Ascalon itself is reputed for a heathen country." And yet something of Ascalon was within the land of Israel. The *apple-gardens* or *orchards*, did bound the land of Ascalon on

that coast, which we have observed before. And yet, "when R. Ismael Ben R. Josi, and Ben Hakkaphar, were set over the space of Ascalon" (that is, when it was intrusted to them to judge concerning the spaces or parts of Ascalon,--namely, what were within the land, and what without, &c.) "They pronounced it clean from the authority of R. Phinchasi Ben Jair, who said, We went down to the corn-market of Ascalon, and thence we received wheat, and going up into our city we washed, and ate our Thruma"; i.e. The portion of first-fruits belonging to the priests. The greatest part of the city, if not the whole, was esteemed, under the second Temple, to be without the limits of the land: but some part, or at least the apple-yards, and the places next adjacent, were within the land.

Mention is made of a certain temple in Ascalon among the "five more famous temples,--viz. the temple of Bel in Babylon, the temple of Nebo in Cursi, of Tiratha in Mapheg, of Zeripha in Ascalon, and of Nishra in Arabia."

And there is a story of a fast enjoined, because some sign appeared of a blast of the corn in Ascalon: "The elders went down from Jerusalem into their cities, and enjoined a fast, because so much of a blast was seen in Ascalon as the space of the mouth of an oven may contain."

But most famous of all is the story of the eighty women, that were witches, hanged by Simeon Ben Shetach in one and the same day. We will not think much to relate the thing in the words of the Gemarists:--"When as two disciples of the wise men in Ascalon were intent upon the study of the law, one of them, at length dying, had no funerals performed for him,--when yet a publican, dying at that time, had. To the student, that survived, are revealed the joys of his saved companion, and likewise the punishments of the damned publican." Let the learned reader turn this clause into English; unless my conjecture fail me, it savours of spite and poison. I should thus render it: "He saw Mary, the daughter of Eli, in the shades, hung up by the kernels of the breasts; and when he inquired, How long she was to suffer those things? it was answered, Until Simon Ben Shetach came to supply her place. But, said he, for what crime? It is answered, Therefore, because he sometime swore against his soul, and said, If I shall ever become a prince, I will destroy all wizards. But behold, he is become a prince, and yet he hath not done this: for eighty women, that are witches, lie hid in a cave at Ascalon, and kill the world. Go, and tell him, &c. He went to him, therefore, and related these things, &c. On a certain rainy day, therefore, having eighty young men in company with him, he goes to the cave, knocks, professes himself one of the bewitching society, and is let in. He sees them exercising their art. For, muttering certain words together, one brings morsels of meat,--another, wine,--another, boiled flesh, &c. But what can you do, say they? Saith he, I will twice utter my voice, and I will bring in eighty youths handsomely habited, themselves merry, and shall make you so. They say to him, Such we would have. He utters his voice the first time, and the young men put on their clean clothes" (free from the rains, for they had carried them with them covered and safe in certain vessels for the

same purpose). "Crying out the second time, in they all come: and a sign being given, that each man should lift up from the earth one woman (for so their magical power would perish), he said to her which had brought the morsels, Bring hither now the morsels; but she brought them not. Therefore, said he, Carry her away to the gallows. Bring wine, but she brought it not; Carry her also away, saith he, to hanging. And so it was done with them all. Hence is the tradition, Simeon Ben Shetach hung eighty women in Ascalon. But they do not judge two persons in the same day: but this he did out of the necessity of the time." Where the Gloss thus; "He was compelled to do this, because the women of Israel had very much broke out into witchcraft. Therefore, he made a hedge to the time, and hanged them, to expose the thing publicly. And this in one and the same day, that their kindred might no way conspire to deliver them."

Chapter 15

Jabneh. Jamnia.

...Pliny doth dispose the towns here in this order;--"Azotus, the two Jamnes, Joppe."-- R. Benjamin, in the order backward, thus,--"Joppah, Jabneh, Azotus." That is Jabneh with this author, that is Jaminia with the other.

A remembrance of this place is in [2 Chronicles 26:6](#): but the chief fame of it is for the Sanhedrim, that was placed there, both before the destruction of Jerusalem and after.

Rabban Gamaliel, St. Paul's master, first presided there. Under whom came forth that cursed form of prayer, which they called "The prayer against heretics," composed by Samuel the Little, who died before the destruction of the city. Gamaliel died eighteen years before the Temple was destroyed; and his son Rabban Simeon succeeded him, who perished with the city.

Jerusalem being destroyed, Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai obtained of Titus the conqueror, that he might still receive and retain the Sanhedrim of Jabneh: which being granted by him, Jochanan himself was first president there; and after him, Rabban Gamaliel the second: and after him, R. Akibah. And this place was famous above all the other universities, except only the latest of all,--viz. Tiberias: so that "The vineyard of Jabneh" became a proverb. "For there they sat in order, as a vineyard." And it is reported, "that there were there three hundred classes of scholars,--or, at least, eighty." How long time Rabban Jochanan sat here, is doubted.

There are some, who attribute to him two years only; and others five: with whom we consent. This Rabban Jochanan I very much suspect to be the same with that John, mentioned [Acts 4:6](#). Omitting those things, which were done by him, while he remained at Jabneh,--let me produce his dying words, as they are recited by his friends: "When Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai now lay languishing, his scholars came to visit him: whom he seeing began to weep. To whom they said, 'O thou light of Israel, thou right-hand pillar, thou strong hammer, whence are those tears?' To whom he replied, 'If men were about to carry me before a king of flesh and blood, who today is here, and tomorrow is in his grave,--if he were angry with

me, his anger is not everlasting; if he should cast me into bonds, his bonds are not eternal; if he should kill me, his killing would not be eternal: and I might perhaps pacify him with words, or soften him with a gift. But they are ready to lead me before the King of kings, the Lord, holy and blessed, who lives and lasts for ever, and for ever and ever; who if he be angry with me, his anger is eternal; if he bind me, his bond is eternal; if he kill me, his killing is eternal; and whom I cannot either appease with words, or soften with a gift. And moreover, there are two ways before me, one to paradise, another to hell; and I know not which way they will lead me. Should I not therefore weep?" Ah! the miserable and fainting confidence of a Pharisee in death!

Rabban Gamaliel of Jabneh, a busy and severe man, succeeded Jochanan. Being to be slain with his father, Rabban Simeon,--by the intercession of Rabban Jochanan he was delivered. Being also sought for to be slain, when Turnus Rufus (in Josephus, Terentius Rufus) ploughed up the floor of the Temple, he was delivered by a way scarcely credible. Sitting in Jabneh he removed R. Akibah, head at that time of the school of Lydda, from his headship; and he at last was removed from his, and over him was placed R. Eleazar Ben Azarias. R. Akibah succeeded him, and sat forty years, and died a fool, being deceived by Ben Cozba, and slain with him: and the university was removed from Jabneh to Usha.

"Jabneh stands two *parsae*" (that is, eight miles) "from Azotus: and was at last called *Ivelyn*." They are the words of Benjamin, in his Itinerary [p. 51].

Chapter 16

Lydda

"Lydda was a village, not yielding to a city in greatness."

Concerning its situation, and distance from Jerusalem, the Misna hath these words: "The vineyard of four years" (that is, the fruit of a vineyard now of four years' growth; for, for the first three years, they were trees, as it were, not circumcised) "was brought to Jerusalem, in the space of a day's journey on every side. Now these were the bounds of it; Elath on the south; Acrabatta on the north; Lydda on the west; and Jordan on the east." The Gloss; "The wise men appointed, that the second tenth of the fruits, growing within the space of a day's journey from Jerusalem, should be carried thither to be eaten, and should not be redeemed. That the streets of Jerusalem might be crowned with fruits."

When you consider this distance, you may well wonder what that means, which is almost become a proverb, "The women of Lydda knead their dough, go up to the Temple, pray, and come back, before it be leavened." Not that the distance of the places is made less; but that hence may be shewn, that no disadvantage accrued to these women, who paid their vows and performed their religion.

I very much wonder, that the authors of the maps have held Lod and Lydda for two towns; Lod not far from Jordan and Jericho; Lydda not far from the Mediterranean sea. A

Jew, or one versed in Jewish affairs, will laugh at these things; when Lod and Lydda have no difference at all between them,--unless that that is Hebrew,--this, Greek.

When the Sanhedrim sat in Jabneh, there flourished eminent schools in Lydda. Yea, Lydda had her schools and her learned men, when the university was gone away into Galilee, and Jabneh lamented her loss of scholars.

There R. Akibah bore the headship of the school, removed, as I said before, from his government by Rabban Gamaliel, "because he detained at Lydda more than forty pair of men travelling" (towards Jabneh) "to give their testimony to the Sanhedrim concerning the new moon; and suffered them not to go forwards."

Gamaliel being dead, or rather removed,--when R. Akibah was head in Jabneh, R. Tarphon was rector of the school of Lydda, whom you have sometimes disputing with R. Akibah, but at last yielding to him with this commendation; "He that separates himself from you, is as if he separated himself from his own life."

We read of five elders teaching and erring before Tarphon at Lydda. We read also of a fast enjoined at Lydda for the obtaining of rain, and Tarphon the moderator of the solemnity. The stories of this place are infinite; we will gather a few.

Helena the queen celebrated the feast of tabernacles at Lydda.

R. Eliezar and R. Joshua were sometime present in the same place at the feast of dedication: but being not enough satisfied concerning the fast at that time enjoined, one went to the bath,--the other, to the barber's shop.

Here it was, that Ben Satdah was surprised and taken, and brought before the Sanhedrim, and stoned...

Since it was not lawful to intercalate the year any where but in Judea, "a great many went to Lydda out of the school of the Rabbi" (Judah Haccodesh, viz. out of Galilee. And a little after: "R. Jeremiah asked before R. Zeira, Is not Lydda a part of Judea? Yes, saith he. Wherefore, then, do they not transact the intercalation of the year there?--Because they are obstinate, and unskillful in the law."

"Lydda is a part of Judea." Let some maps mark this, which have placed a certain Lod, which never was any where, not far from Jericho, as was said before; because Lod, in the land of Benjamin, is brought in, [Nehemiah 11:35](#): but they set Lydda far beyond the bounds of Judea in the land of Ephraim.

"Koshab Bar Ulla sometime got away to Lydda to Rabbi Josua Ben Levi, dwelling there, when he fled from the Romans. The Romans pursued him, and besieged the city. Unless you deliver him to us, say they, we will destroy the city. R. Josua Ben Levi persuaded him, and he was delivered to the Romans."

I might produce numberless things celebrating the name of Lydda; such as, "The chamber of Beth-Arum in Lydda." "The chamber of Beth-lebaza in Lydda." "The chamber of Beth-Nethaza in Lydda."--We suppose these were schools.

I might mention very many names of Rabbins residing at Lydda, besides those whom I have remembered before: such are, R. Chama Bar Chanina, and R. Hoshaiia with him. R. Illai, and R. Eliezer; and others, who are vulgarly called *the Southern*, in the sense we produced before. Concerning R. Josua Ben Levi, by name, the author of Juchasin hath these words, "His habitation, or college, was in the south of the land of Israel." He means Lydda.

R. Eliezer, dying at Caesarea, desired to be buried at Lydda, whom R. Akibah bewailed as well with blood as tears. "For when he met his hearse betwixt Caesarea and Lydda, he beat himself in that manner, that blood flowed down upon the earth. Lamenting, thus he spoke,--O my father, my father, the chariot and horsemen of Israel. I have much money, but I want a moneyer, to change it." The Gloss is this, "I have very many questions; but now there is no man, to whom I may propound them."

There is a place between Jamnia and Lydda, which was called *Bekiin*; of which there is this mention: "R. Jochanan Ben Brucha, and R. Eliezer the blind, travelling from Jabneh to Lydda, met R. Josua in Bekiin," &c.

From Jamnia to Joppe (according to Benjamin, in his Itinerary [p. 51]) are three leagues, or parsae: "Now Lydda was nigh to Joppa," [Acts 9:38](#).

Chapter 17

Sharon. Caphar Lodim. The Village of those of Lydda.

Between Lydda and the sea, a spacious valley runs out, here and there widely spreading itself, and sprinkled with villages. The holy page of the New Testament [[Acts 9:35](#)] calls it Saron: and that of the Old calls the whole, perhaps, or some part of it, 'the plain of Ono,' [Nehemiah 6:2, 11:35; 1 Chronicles 8:12...](#)

The wine of Sharon is of great fame, with which they mixed two parts water: and remarkable is that they say concerning the houses of Sharon. R. Lazar saith, "He that builds a brick house in Sharon, let him not return back": which was allowed to others, [Deuteronomy 20:5](#),--namely, that they should return back from the war, if they had built a new house, and it were not yet dedicated. "But the men of Sharon withdrew not themselves back" (they are the words of the Jerusalem Gemara), "because they repaired their houses within seven years: and the chief priest also prayed for them on the day of expiation, that their house might not become their graves." The Gloss upon the Babylonian Talmud thus; "Sharon was the name of a place, whose ground was not fit for bricks: and therefore, they often repaired their houses within seven years."

Among the villages, scattered up and down in this pleasant vale, we meet with Caphar Lodim, between Lydda and the sea. There is mention of it in the book Gittin, in the very beginning: "He that brings a bill of divorce from a heathen country is bound to witness thus,--This bill was written I being present, and was sealed I being present.--R. Eleazar saith, Yea, he that brings it from Caphar Lodim to Lydda": R. Nissim, explaining the place, saith thus; "Caphar Lodim was without the land of Israel, neighbour to Lydda, which was within

[*the land*], and partook of its name, because some people of Lydda were always present there."

Chapter 18

Caphar Tebi.

And this village neighboured upon Lydda, situate on the east of it. "R. Eleazar had a vineyard of four years' growth; on the east of Lydda, near Caphar Tebi." Of it there is this mention also:--

"They sometime brought a chest full of bones from Caphar Tebi, and they placed it openly in the entrance to Lydda. Tudrus the physician and the rest of the physicians go forth"--(namely, that they might judge, whether they were the bones of men or no; and thereby, whether they were to be esteemed clean or unclean). "Tudrus said, Here is neither the backbone nor the skull of a man. They said, therefore, Since here are some, who reckon them clean, others that hold them unclean, let the matter be decided by votes. R. Akibah began, and he pronounced them clean, &c."

The name *Tebi*, given to this village, seems to be derived from the *kids* skipping up and down in this fruitful vale. The word also gave name to men; and that, as it seems, with some delight. The woman Tabitha is of eternal memory, [Acts 9](#); and, in the pages of the Talmudists, "Tebi the servant of Rabban Gamaliel; and Tabitha his maid-servant. Yea, every maid-servant of his was called Mother Tabitha,--and every man-servant, Father Tebi."

Chapter 19

The northern coast of Judea. Beth-horon.

This coast is marked out [Joshua 18:12](#); where, at verse 14, are very many versions to be corrected, which render *the sea*; such are, the Syriac, the Seventy, the Vulgar, the Italian, ours, &c.: whence ariseth a sense of insuperable difficulty to a chorographical eye: when it should, indeed, be rendered *of the west*, as the Chaldee, Arabic, R. Solomon, &c. rightly do.

We read of a double Beth-horon in the Old Testament, but one only under the second Temple...

At that place that great Canaanitish army perished, [Joshua 10](#), not with hail (the Jews being judges), which presently melted,--but with stones, which hardened, and lasted unto all following ages. Hence is that, "Whosoever shall see the place, where the Israelites passed through the sea, where they passed through Jordan, where they passed by the rivers of Arnon, or those great stones in the going down of Beth-horon,--is bound to bless."

They believe, in the same place, also, the army of Sennacherib fell. For so the Gloss upon the words before spoken, "The going down of Beth-horon was the place where the army of Sennacherib fell."

This was a highway. Josephus, in the place above cited, relating a story of one Stephen, a servant of Caesar, who suffered hardly by robbers in this place, saith, that it was "in the

public way of Beth-horon,"--namely, in the king's highway, which goes from Jerusalem to Caesarea.

Yet the passage and ascent here was very strait; which the Talmudists do thus describe: "If two camels go up together in the ascent of Beth-horon, both fall." The Gloss, "The ascent of Beth-horon was a strait place; nor was there room to bend to the right hand or to the left."

The story of Cestius, the Roman captain, in Josephus, is sad, but not unseasonable in this place. He intrenched against Jerusalem, in a place called *the Scope* on the north part of the city (which we shall show hereafter): and being at length forced by the Jews to retreat, "he came near to Gabaon, to his former camp." And being pressed farther by them, he betook himself to Beth-horon; "He led his forces to Beth-horon."

"But the Jews, whilst he marched along places where there was room, did not much press him; but they getting before the Romans who were shut up within the straits of the descent (of Beth-horon), stopped them from going out: others thrust them that came in the rear down into the valley. And the whole multitude being spread at the opening of the way, covered the army with their darts."

Behold! the way leading from Jerusalem to Beth-horon:--

I. From the city to Scopo (of which we shall speak afterward), is seven furlongs.

II. From Scopo to Gabao, or Geba, forty-three furlongs. For Gabao was distant from Jerusalem...Josephus relating it, fifty furlongs,--that is, six miles and more.

III. From Geba to Beth-horon fifty furlongs, or thereabouts. And about Beth-horon was a very great roughness of hills, and a very narrow passage.

Chapter 20

Beth-el. Beth-aven.

Josephus thus describes the land of Benjamin; "The Benjamites' portion of land was from the river Jordan to the sea, in length: in breadth, it was bounded by Jerusalem and Beth-el." Let these last words be marked, "The breadth of the land of Benjamin was bounded by Jerusalem and Beth-el." May we not justly conclude, from these words, that Jerusalem and Beth-el were opposite, as it were, in a right line? But if you look upon the maps, there are some that separate these by a very large tract of land, and make them bend and slope from one another.

Beth-el heretofore was Luz: of which the Rabbins upon [Judges 1:23](#), &c. do not a little trifle. Sometimes it is called Beth-aven. So the Talmudists; "That town, which sometimes was called Beth-el, afterward was called Beth-aven." And the Chaldee upon [Hosea 4:15](#): "Go not up to *Beth-el*"; for the Hebrew, "Go not up to *Beth-aven*." So also chapter 10:5,8. Not that there was not another town, named Beth-aven (see [Joshua 18:12,13](#)): but that Beth-el too deservedly bore the reproach of that name, in the same manner as Jerusalem bore the name of Sodom, [Isaiah 1:10](#).

It is said of Deborah, that she lived "between Ramah and Beth-el in mount Ephraim," [Judges 4:5](#): where the Targum thus; "She had gardens in Ramatha, olive-trees making oil in the valley, a house of watering in Beth-el." Not that Beth-el properly was in the hill-country of Ephraim, since that town stood upon the very boundaries of Judea; but that the dwelling of Deborah was at the beginning of that hill-country, a valley running between that hill-country and those boundaries. Beth-el itself was situate in a hilly country, [Joshua 16:1](#); which yet one would scarcely call the hill-country of Ephraim (since there was a time, when Beth-el and her towns belonged to Judea, [2 Chronicles 13:19](#): hence the idolatry of those of Judah is sometimes mixed with the Ephraimites', of which they hear often enough from the prophets); but it was a certain hilly place, running out between Judea and the land of Ephraim: see [Joshua 18:12](#).

On the east of Beth-el heretofore was Hai, [Genesis 12:8](#); [Joshua 8:9](#), &c. But upon the very first entrance almost of Israel into the land of promise, it became thenceforth of no name, being reduced into eternal ashes by Joshua. The town Beth-aven was not far from it, [Joshua 7:2](#), which gave name to the wilderness adjacent, [Joshua 18:12](#). In which we suppose Ephraim stood, [2 Chronicles 13:19](#). Which Ephraim, in the New Testament, is called "the region near the wilderness," [John 11:54](#); concerning which we shall speak afterward.

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica

John Lightfoot
(1602-1675)
A Chorographical Century
Chapters 21-30
Chapter 21

Jerusalem

The first name of this city was Shalem, [Genesis 14:18](#), [Psalm 76:2](#), and it is still retained in the writing, however it is read *Jerushalaim*.

"The name of that place is Jehovah-jireh. Abraham called the place Jireh; Shem called it Shalem. Saith God, If I shall call it Jireh, it will displease Shem the Just; if I shall call it Shalem, it will displease Abraham the Just. I will therefore put that name upon it which was put upon it by both, *Jireh, Shalem,--Jerusalem.*"--"We do not, therefore, put Jod between the letters Lamed and Mem in the word Jerusalem, that the word *Shalem* may be retained."

By the computation of Aben Ezra, it is situate in the three-and-thirtieth degree of latitude. For so he speaks, "The latitude of Egypt is less than thirty degrees. And the latitude of Jerusalem is three-and-thirty degrees."

Jerusalem was not divided among the tribes: for the tradition is, That houses are not hired out at Jerusalem, because they were no man's own. R. Eleazar Bar Zadok said, Nor beds also. Therefore, the master of the family received the skins of the sacrifices from the guests. Abai saith, You may learn this from hence, That it is a custom, that a man leave his earthen jug, and also the skin of his sacrifices, to his host. The Gloss: "The inhabitants of Jerusalem did not let out their houses at a price to those that came to the feasts, but granted them to them gratis." Compare [Matthew 26:17](#).

Nevertheless, the city was divided between the tribe of Judah and Benjamin, and the distinguishing line went through the very court of the Temple: "What was in the lot of Judah? The mountain of the Temple, the Chambers of them that kept it, the Courts. And what in the lot of Benjamin? The Porch of the Temple, and the Temple, and the Holy of Holies. And a line went out of the lot of Judah, and passed on into the lot of Benjamin, and in it was the altar built." The Gloss; "The whole breadth of the outmost Court, on the east part, the whole Court of the Women, the whole Court of Israel, eleven cubits of the Court of the Priests" (these were within the lot of Judah). "From thence the altar, and thenceforward to the west, is within the lot of Benjamin."

In so exact distinction were these lots observed, that the south-east corner of the altar had no foundation; because that small part was in the portion of Judah, when the whole altar ought to have been within the portion of Benjamin.

"Jerusalem was holy above other cities, girt with walls, because in it they ate the lighter holy things, and the second tithe. These also are those things which are spoken of Jerusalem. They do not permit a dead body to remain a night in it: they do not carry the bones of a dead body through it: they do not let out houses in it: in it they do not let out a place to a *proselyte inhabitant*: in it they do not allow a sepulchre, except the sepulchres of the house of David, and the sepulchre of Huldah the prophetess; which were there from the days of the former prophets: nor in it do they suffer a dunghill by reason of creeping things; nor do they bring out of it into the streets scaffolds set up against the walls by reason of defilement: nor in it do they make chimneys, by reason of the smoke: nor do they nourish cocks in it for the sake of the holy things: nor do the priests nourish cocks throughout the whole land of Israel, for the sake of purity: nor is there in it a house for shutting out suspected of the leprosy: nor is it polluted with leprosy: nor is it become any way a city to be cursed for idolatry," &c.

"Never did serpent or scorpion harm any one within Jerusalem. Nor did ever any one say to his neighbour, 'The place wherein I am entertained at Jerusalem is too strait for me.'"

"There is no anathema at Jerusalem, nor hath any man stumbled. Nor hath a fire or a ruin happened there: nor hath any one said to his neighbour, 'I found not a hearth to roast my passover,' or 'I found not a bed to lie on.' In it they do not plant trees, except gardens of roses, which were there from the days of the former prophets: they do not nourish in it peacocks, or cocks, much less hogs," &c.

The fathers of the traditions give this reason, why they do not allow gardens in the city: "They make no gardens or paradises in Jerusalem, because of the stink." The Gloss, "Because of the stink from weeds, which are thrown out; and it is a custom to dung gardens, and from thence comes a stink."

The same Gloss, in the same place, gives this reason also, why they might not keep cocks: "It is also forbidden the Israelites to keep cocks in Jerusalem" (the priests may no where do it), "because of the holy things. For there they have eaten the flesh of the peace-offerings, and thank-offerings. And it is customary for dunghill cocks to scrape dunghills, and thence perhaps they might rake up the bones of creeping things; whence those holy things, which are to be eaten, might be polluted."

Gardens without the city were very frequent, and they stretching out a good way from the very walls of the city. Hence that in Josephus, concerning the hazard Titus ran, whilst he rode about the city to spy it. "It was impossible for him to go forward; for all things from the walls were fenced up with deep ditches for the gardening, and gardens lay cross, and many walls, that parted them."

The Talmudists relate also these wonders of the Temple: "Ten miracles were done for our fathers in the sanctuary. No woman ever miscarried by the smell of the holy flesh; nor did the holy flesh ever stink, or breed worms; nor was there ever seen fly in the house [or

place] for slaughter; nor did ever the gonorrhoea happen to the high-priest on the day of expiation; nor rains put out the fire of the altar; nor the wind prevail over the pillar of smoke; nor was any profane thing found in the sheaf of first-fruits, or the two loaves (*of the high-priest*), or in the show-bread. They stood (*in the Court*) crowded" (the Gloss explains it thus, "They did so press one another by reason of the multitude, that their feet scarcely touched the ground"); "but when they worshipped, they had room enough," &c.

"All Jerusalem was Carmelith, because it was like a common court." What *Carmelith* is, the Lexicons will teach us, and the Gemarists in the tract Shabbath; "There are four capacities of the sabbath" (or respects of places, as walking on the sabbath), "public, private, Carmelith, and covered lobbies. R. Chaijah saith, Carmelith is a place, neither public nor private. R. Jissa, in the name of R. Jochanan, saith, Carmelith is as the shop of Bar Justini," &c.

..."R. Ismael saith, A countryman, or a villager, who takes a field from a man of Jerusalem, the second tenth belongs to the Jerusalem man. But the wise men say, The countryman may go up to Jerusalem, and eat it there." The Gloss, Kartani &c., "A *Kartani* is one of those that dwell in villages."

Chapter 22

The parts of the City. Sion. The Upper City: which was on the north part.

There is one who asserts Jerusalem to stand on seven hills; but whether upon a reason more light, or more obscure, is not easy to say. "The whale showed Jonah (saith he) the Temple of the Lord, as it is said, 'I went down to the bottom of the mountains': whence we learn that Jerusalem was seated upon seven mountains." One may sooner almost prove the thing itself, than approve of his argument. Let him enjoy his argument to himself; we must fetch the situation elsewhere.

"The city itself (saith Josephus) was built upon two hills, divided with a valley between, whereby, in an opposite aspect, it viewed itself; in which valley the buildings, meeting, ended."

"Of these hills, that, which contained the Upper City was by far the higher, and more stretched out in length: and because it was very well fortified, it was called by king David *The Castle*: but by us it is called 'the Upper Town.'"

"But the other, which was called *Acra*, bearing on it the lower town, was steep on both sides."

"Against this was a third hill [*Moriah*], lower than *Acra*, and disjoined from it by a broad valley. But when the Asmoneans reigned, they filled up the valley, desiring that the Temple might touch the city; and they took the top of *Acra* lower, that the Temple might overlook it."

Bezetha and Ophel were other hills also: of which in their place, when we shall first have taken a view of these two, Sion and *Acra*, and the situation of each.

It is an old dispute, and lasts to this day, whether Sion or Jerusalem lay on the north part of the city. We place Sion on the north, convinced by these reasons:--

I. [Psalm 48:2](#): "The joy of the whole earth is mount Sion, on the north side." Where Aben Ezra hath this note; "Mount Sion is on the north side of Jerusalem": and Lyranus, "Mount Sion is in the north part of Jerusalem." The Seventy, "The mountains of Sion on the sides of the north."

Sion's fair hills stand on cold Boreas' coast. *Apollinar*. [Metaphr. Ps.]

II. When the prophet Ezekiel takes a prospect of the new Jerusalem in a vision,--he saith, that he stood upon "a very high mountain, near which was, as it were, the building of a city on the south," [Ezekiel 40:2](#). On which place Kimchi thus; "He placed me upon a very lofty mountain. That mountain was the Mount of the Temple: for the Temple was to be built in a mountain, as before. And the city Jerusalem is near it on the south." And Lyranus again, after the reciting the explication of some upon that verse, and his rejecting it; "And therefore (saith he) the Hebrews say, and better, as it seems, that the prophet saw two things,--namely, the city and the Temple,--and that the Temple was in the north part,--but the city in the south part."

Behold! reader, Zion on the north part in the *Psalmist*, and the city on the south part in the *prophet*!

The things which make for this in Josephus are various, and plain enough; which nevertheless we cannot frame into arguments, before the buildings of better note in Sion, or in the Upper City, be viewed:--of which the reader must be mindful; namely, that the name of *Sion*, after the return out of Babylon, was grown into disuse,--but the more vulgar was, *the Upper Town*.

Chapter 23

The buildings of more eminent note in Sion.

We shall first take knowledge of the buildings themselves,--and then, as much as we may, of their situation.

I. The 'king's court' claims the first place in our view. Concerning which are those words, "Cestius" (having wasted the other places of the city) "came at length into the Upper City [*Sion*], and encamped against the king's court."

When the Romans had fired Acra, and levelled it with the ground, "the seditious rushing into the court, into which, by reason of the strength of the place, they had conveyed their goods, call away the Romans thither." And afterward: "But, when it was in vain to assault the Upper City without ramparts, as being every where of step access. Caesar applies his army to the work," &c.

II. The House of the Asmoneans, and the *Xystus*, or *open gallery*. King Agrippa calls the people of Jerusalem together into the *Xystus*, and sets his sister Berenice in their view,

"upon the House of the Asmoneans, which was above the Xystus, in the farther part of the Upper City."

III. There was a bridge, leading from the Xystus unto the Temple, and joining the Temple to Sion. "A bridge joined the Temple to the Xystus." When Pompey assaulted the city, the Jews took the Temple, "and broke down the bridge that led thence into the city. But others received the army, and delivered the city and the king's court to Pompey."

And Titus, when he besieged the seditious in the court in the Upper City, raises the engines of four legions, "on the west side of the city, against the king's court. But the associated multitude, and the rest of the people, were before the Xystus and the bridge."

You see, these places were in the Upper City: and you learn from Josephus, that the Upper City was the same with the Castle of David, or Sion. But now, that these places were on the north side of the city, learn of the same author from these passages that follow:--

He saith plainly, that the towers built by Herod,--the Psephin tower, the Hippic tower, &c.--were on the north. "Titus (saith he) intrenched two furlongs from the city on the angular part of the wall near the Psephin tower, where the circuit of the wall bends from the north towards the west." And in the chapter next after; "The Psephin tower lifted up itself at the corner of the north, and so westward." And in the same chapter, describing the compass of the outmost wall, "It began on the north at the Hippic tower, and went on to the Xystus."-- And when he had described those towers, he adds these words, "To those towers, situate on the north, was joined, on the inside, the Court." What can be clearer? The court was in the Upper City, or Sion; but the court was joined to the outmost northern wall: therefore, Sion was on the north.

Add to these, those things that follow in the story of Pompey, produced before. When the court was surrendered into Pompey's hands, "he encamped on the north part of the Temple." And of Cestius, "Being come to the Upper City, he pitched against the king's court." And a little after, "He attempted the Temple on the north side."

We shall not urge more at this time. There will occur here and there to us, as we proceed, such things as may defend this our opinion: against which what things are objected, we know well enough; which we leave to the reader to consider impartially. But these two we cannot pass over in silence, which seem, with an open face, to make against us:--

I. It may be objected, and that not without cause, that Sion was in the tribe of Judah, but Jerusalem in the tribe of Benjamin. But now, when the land of Judah was on the south part of Jerusalem, and mount Sion is to be reckoned within the lot of Judah,--how could this be, when Jerusalem, which was of the lot of Benjamin, lay between Judea and Sion?

I answer, 1. No necessity compels us to circumscribe Sion precisely within the portion of Judah; when David conquered it, not as he was sprung of Judah, but as he was the king of the whole nation.

2. But let it be allowed, that Sion is to be ascribed to Judah,--that dividing line, between the portion of Judah and Benjamin, concerning which we made mention before, went not from the east to the west; for so, indeed, it had separated all Jerusalem from all Sion: but it went from south to north, and so it cut Jerusalem in two, and Sion in two: so that both were in both tribes,--and so also was mount Moriah.

II. It is objected, that, at this day, a hill and ruins are shown to travellers under the name of Sion, and the tower of David, on the south part of the city.

I answer, But let us have leave not to esteem all things for oracles, which they say, who now show those places; since it is plain enough that they mistake in many other things: and let it be without all controversy, that they study not so much truth in that affair, as their own gain. I wish less credit had been given to them, and more search had been made out of Scripture, and other writers, concerning the situation of the places.

Chapter 24

Some buildings in Acra. Bezeiha. Millo.

Mount Sion did not thrust itself so far eastward as mount Acra: and hence it is, that mount Moriah is said, by Josephus, to be "situate over-against Acra," rather than over-against the Upper City: for, describing Acra thus, which we produced before, "There is another hill, called Acra, which bears the Lower City upon it, steep on both sides": in the next words he subjoins this, "Over-against this was a third hill," speaking of Moriah.

The same author thus describes the burning of the Lower City: "Then they fired the Archivum and Acra, and the council-house, and Ophla: and the fire destroyed unto the palaces of Helen, which were in the middle of Acra."

I. *The Archivum.* Whether he means *the magistrates' court*, or *the repository of the ancient records*, according to the different signification of the word, we do not determine. There were certainly sacred records in the Temple, and civil records no doubt in the city, where writings and memorials of sales, contracts, donations, and public acts, &c. were laid up. I should more readily understand this of their *repository*, than of *the magistrates' court*, because, presently after, the council-house is distinctly named.

II. *Acra*: that is, either the buildings, which were upon the very head and top of the mount, or some garrison or castle in the mount. In which sense that word doth not seldom occur in the history of the Maccabees, and in Josephus.

III. *The Council-house.* He mentions elsewhere the *council*, and that, as it seems, in the Upper City. For he saith, that "the outmost wall on the north began at the Hippic tower, and went forward to the Xystus; and thence, touching upon *the council*" (or *the court*), "it went onward opposite against the west walk of the Temple." The council in the Upper City you may not improperly interpret the 'Court of the King': the council-house in the Lower City, the council of the Sanhedrim, whither it went, when it departed from the Tabernae.

IV. *Ophla.* Ophel, [Nehemiah 3:26](#).

There was also a fourth hill, saith the same Josephus, "which was called Bezetha, situate over-against Antonia, and divided from it with a deep ditch. Now Bezetha, if you would render it in Greek, one might call it 'The New City.'" And yet there is a place where he seems to distinguish between Bezetha and the New City: for he saith concerning Cestius, "But Cestius, passing over, set fire upon Bezetha, so called, and the New City."

Bezetha was seated on the north part of Antonia, and that and Caenopolis (or the New City) filled up that space, where Sion ended on the east, and was not stretched out so far as Acra was. "(The city), abounding with people, crept, by little and little, out of the walls: and on the north side of the Temple, at the hill, making a city, went onward not a little; and a fourth hill is inhabited, which is called Bezetha," &c.

Interpreters differ about Millo. There is one, who supposes it to be a large place, appointed for public meetings and assemblies. Another interprets it of heaps of earth, thrown up against the wall within, whence they might more easily get up upon the wall: and when David is said to build Millo, that he erected towers upon these heaps, and banks. Some others there are, who understand it of the valley or street that runs between Jerusalem and Sion; and so it is commonly marked out in the maps,--when, in truth, Millo was a part of Sion, or some hillock cast up against it on the west side.

Let that be observed, [2 Chronicles 32:5](#); "And he restored, or fortified, Millo, of the city of David": or, as our English reads, "*in* the city of David." The Seventy read, "the fortification of the city of David." When, therefore, David is said to build "Millo, and more inwards," it is all one as if he had said, 'he built on the uttermost part of Sion, which was called Millo, more inwardly to his own castle.' And Joab repaired the rest, [1 Chronicles 11:8](#).

The street or valley, running between Sion and Acra, was called, as if one should say, *The valley* or *street of cheesemongers*. There was also, *The market of beams*, which Josephus joins with Bezetha, and the New City. "Cestius (saith he) wasted Bezetha and Caenopolis, and that which is called the beam-market, with flames."

Chapter 25

Gihon, the same with the Fountain of Siloam.

I. In [1 Kings 1:33,38](#), that which is, in the Hebrew, "Bring ye Solomon to Gihon: and they brought him to Gihon"; is rendered by the Chaldee, "Bring ye him to Siloam: and they brought him to Siloam." Where Kimchi thus; "Gihon is Siloam, and it is called by a double name. And David commanded, that they should anoint Solomon at Gihon for a good omen, to wit, that, as the waters of the fountain are everlasting, so might his kingdom be." So also the Jerusalem writers; "They do not anoint the king, but at a fountain; as it is said, 'Bring Solomon to Gihon.'"

The bubblings up of Siloam yielded a type of the kingdom of David, [Isaiah 8:6](#). "Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Siloah that go softly," &c. Where the Chaldee paraphrast thus; "Because this people are weary of the house of David, which deals gently

with them, as the waters of Siloam slide away gently." And R. Solomon; "Siloam is a fountain, whose name is Gihon and Siloam."

II. That fountain was situated on the west part of the city, but not far from the southwest corner.

Josephus, speaking of that deep valley which runs between Sion and Acra, saith, "it is extended to Siloam; for so we call the sweet and large fountain." But now the mounts Sion and Acra, and likewise the valley that cut between them, did run out from east to west. And the same author, in the same place, speaking of the compass of the outermost wall, saith these things among others, "And thence it bends to the south behind the fountain Siloam." After the tumult raised at Jerusalem by the Jews under Florus,--the Neapolitan tribune, coming thither with king Agrippa, is besought by the Jews, "that taking only one servant, he would go about through the city as far as Siloam" (that is, from the east to the west, through the whole city): and that thence, from the peaceable and quiet behavior of the people towards him, he might perceive, that the people were not in a heat against all the Romans, but against Florus only.

III. Siloam was on the back of Jerusalem, not of Sion. Let that of Josephus be noted; "The Romans, when they had drove out the seditious from the Lower City, burnt it all to Siloam." This we therefore observe, because we may see some maps, which, placing Siloam behind Sion, do deceive here, and are deceived: when in truth it ought to be placed behind Acra. The pool, indeed, of Siloam was behind some part of Sion, westward; but the fountain of Siloam was behind Acra.

IV. It emptied itself, by a double rivulet, into a double pool, to wit, the upper and the lower, [2 Kings 18:17](#); [Isaiah 7:3](#). The lower was on the west, and is called 'The pool of Siloam,' [John 9:7](#); [Nehemiah 3:15](#). The upper, perhaps, was that which is called by Josephus, 'the pool of Solomon,' in the place lately quoted. "And thence (saith he) the outermost wall bends to the south behind the fountain of Siloam: and thence again bends to the east at the pool of Solomon." See [2 Chronicles 32:30](#); [Isaiah 22:9,11](#).

V. They drew waters out of the fountain of Siloam, in that solemn festivity of the feast of Tabernacles, which they called, "The pouring out of water": concerning which the fathers of the traditions thus; "The pouring out of water, in what manner was it? There was a golden cup, containing three logs, which one filled out of Siloam," &c. The Gemarists inquire, "Whence was this custom? From thence, that it is said, 'And ye shall draw waters with joy out of the wells of salvation.'" R. Levi saith, "Why is it called The place of draught?--Because thence they draw out the Holy Spirit."

Thence, also, they drew the water that was to be mingled with the ashes of the red cow, when any unclean person was to be sprinkled.

The priests, eating more liberally of the holy things, drank the waters of Siloam for digestion's sake.

Let us also add these things; but let the reader unriddle them:--"He that is unclean by a dead carcass entereth not into the Mountain of the Temple. It is said, That they that should appear should appear in the court. Whence do you measure? From the wall, or from the houses? Samuel delivers it, From Siloam, &c. And Siloam was in the middle of the city."

Chapter 26

The Girdle of the City. **Nehemiah 3.**

The beginning of the circumference was from 'the sheep-gate.' That, we suppose, was seated on the south part, yet but little removed from that corner, which looks south-east. Within was the pool of Bethesda, famous for healings.

Going forward, on the south part, was the tower *Meah*: and beyond that, "the tower of Hananeel": in the Chaldee paraphrast it is, 'The tower *Piccus*,' **Zechariah 14:10**; *Piccus*, **Jeremiah 31:38**.--I should suspect that to be, *the Hippic* tower, were not that placed on the north side, this on the south. The words of Jeremiah are well to be weighed; "The city shall be built to the Lord, from the tower of Hananeel to the gate of the corner. And a line shall go out thence, measuring near it to the hill of Gareb, and it shall go about to Goath. And all the valley of dead carcasses, and of ashes, and all the fields to the brook Kidron, even to the corner of the horse-gate on the east, shall be Holiness to the Lord," &c.

The hill of Gareb:--not that Gareb certainly, where the idol of Micah was, [**Judges 17**] concerning which the Talmudists thus; "R. Nathan saith, From Gareb to Shiloh were three miles, and the smoke of the altar was mixed with the smoke of Micah's idol":--but, as Lyranus, not amiss, "The mount of Calvary."

Goathah: the Chaldee, 'the calves' pool,' following the etymology of the word, from *bel-owing*. Lyranus, *Golgotha*.

The valley of carcasses and ashes. The Chaldee paraphrast and the Rabbins understand this of the place where the army of the Assyrians perished: nor very subtly; for they seem to have perished, if so be they perished near Jerusalem, in the valley of Tophet, or Ben-Hinnom, **Isaiah 30:33**. And Jeremiah speaks of that valley, namely, the sink and burying-place of the city,--a place, above all others that compassed the city, the most foul and abominable: foretelling that that valley, which now was so detestable, should hereafter be clean, and taken into the compass of the city: but this mystically, and in a more spiritual sense. Hence we argue, that "the tower of Hananeel" was on the south side of the city: on which side also was the valley of Ben-Hinnom; yet bending also towards the east: as the valley of Kidron bent from the east also towards the north. It will be impossible, unless I am very much mistaken, if you take the beginning of that circumference in Nehemiah, for the corner looking north-east, which some do,--to interpret these words of Jeremiah in any plain or probable sense; unless you imagine that which is most false,--that the Valley of Hinnom was situate northwardly.

[Nehemiah 3:3](#): The Seventy render it by, *The fish-gate*. That was also southward. Of it mention is made, [Zephaniah 1:10](#); where the Seventy have something obscure. Many conjecture this gate was called the 'Fish-gate,' because fish were carried into the city through it: I rather, because it was the 'fish-market': as the Sheep-gate was the market for sheep. Zephaniah addeth, "And he shall howl from the second." The Chaldee reads; R. Solomon, 'from the Bird-gate': perhaps the gate, near unto which fowls were sold. Kimchi reads, 'from Ophel'; more plain indeed,--but I ask, whether more true? This Bird-gate perhaps was that which is called the Old-gate, [Nehemiah 3:6](#).

Near the corner, looking south-west, we suppose, the fountain of Siloam was; and that, partly, being persuaded by the words of Josephus before alleged,--partly, being induced to it by reason itself. For hence flowed that fountain by the south wall eastwardly to the Sheep-gate, as we suppose; thence the river, somewhat sloping, bends towards the north into the valley, and ends, at length, in the pool of Siloam, at the foot of mount Sion.

On the west was, 1. "The gate of the valley," verse 13, being now gotten to the foot of mount Acra. And, 2. A thousand cubits thence, "The Esquiline, or Dung-gate," verse 14. And, 3. "The Fountain-gate," verse 15; not that of Siloam, nor of Draco; but another.

And now we are come to the pool of Siloam, and to the foot of Sion, whither they went up by certain steps, verse 15. The pool of Siloam was first a fountain, and a river, on the west, without the walls: but at last, Manasseh the king enclosed all, [2 Chronicles 33:14](#), that the city might be more secured of water, in case of a siege: taught it by the example of his grandfather Hezekiah, but more incommodious, [2 Chronicles 32:3](#).

The wall went forward along "burying-places of David, another pool, and the House of the strong," verse 16. And, not much after it, bended eastwardly.--And now we are come to the north side. See verses 19, 20.

At the turning of this corner, Herod built the most famous Psephin tower, of which Josephus thus; "On the north-west corner, the admired Psephin tower lifts up itself, near which Titus encamped," &c.

There was no gate on this north side. The buildings, which were inward, are mentioned, [Nehemiah 3:20-24](#); and the Hippic tower is mentioned by Josephus.

On the east were, 1. A tower, advancing itself in the very bending of the north-east corner. Within was the 'King's House,' and the court of the prison, verse 25. 2. The Water-gate, of which is mention, [Nehemiah 12:37](#). 3. Ophel, and the Horse-gate, [Nehemiah 3:27,28](#); of which mention is also made, [Jeremiah 31:40](#). Whence was the beginning of the valley of Ben-Hinnom: which, running out below the city southward, at last bent into the west. Therefore, the Water-gate led into the valley of Kedron: but the Horse-gate into the valley of Hinnom, at that place touching on the valley of Kedron. 4. The Gate Miphkad: the Vulgar calls it, The Gate of Judgment. 5. Not far distant thence was the south-east corner. And thence a little on the south side was the Sheep-gate, whence we first set out.

Let us add the words of Josephus, describing how the outmost wall went. "It began on the north at the Hippic (or *horse*) tower, and extended to the Xystus (or *open gallery*); then touching upon the Council-house, it ended at the east walk of the Temple. On the other side, westwardly, beginning from the same tower, it stretched along by a place called Bethos, to the gate of the Essenes; and thence it inclined to the south behind the fountain Siloam: and hence it bowed again eastwardly unto Solomon's pool, and passed on to a certain place, which they call Ophla, and joined to the east walk of the Temple."

In which words let us observe two things for the asserting the procession that we have gone:--1. That this description proceeds from the north to the west, the south, and the east. 2. That Ophla, or Ophel, lay between the south-east corner and the porch of the Temple; which cannot at all be conceived, if you begin Nehemiah's delineation at any other place than where we have. To these may be added, the situation of Siloam, of which those things, spoken in Josephus and the Scripture, can in no manner be said, if you reckon it to be near Sion.

Let us add also the processions of the choir, [Nehemiah 12:31](#). They went up upon the wall, and went forward on the right hand to the Dung-gate, the Fountain-gate, the city of David, &c. verse 37. Let those words, "They went forward on the right hand," verse 31, be observed: which could not be, unless according to the procession which we have laid down,--if so be they went up on the wall on the inside of the wall, which it is rough and strange not to think.

The other part of the choir went on the left hand, towards the south west, and to the gate of Ephraim, and the Old-gate, and the Fish-gate, &c. verse 29. Of the gate of Ephraim nothing was said in the delineation given chapter 3. Mention also is made of it, [2 Kings 14:13](#); where the Corner-gate is also spoken of; concerning which, also, here is nothing said.

In Nehemiah, seems to be understood that place, where formerly was a gate of that name,--but now, under the second Temple, was vanished.

Chapter 27

Mount Moriah

"Wherefore is it called mount Moriah? R. Levi Bar Chama and R. Chaninah differ about this matter. One saith, Because thence *instruction* should go forth to Israel. The other saith, Because thence should go forth *fear* to the nations of the world."

"It is a tradition received by all, that the place, where David built an altar in the threshing-floor of Araunah, was the place where Abraham built his, upon which he bound Isaac; where Noah built his, when he went out of the ark: that in the same place was the altar, upon which Cain and Abel offered: that Adam offered there, when he was created; and that he was created from thence. The wise men say, He had the same place of expiation as he had of creation."

Mount Moriah was so seated, that "the city, in the manner of a theatre, lay about the Temple": on this side Sion, then Acra, and a little on the back of Bezetha.

The mount of the Temple (that is, the place where the buildings of the Temple were) was a square of five hundred cubits (see [Ezekiel 42:16,17](#)), compassed with a most noble wall,--and that *fortified* (shall I say?) with double galleries or halls, or *adorned* with them, or both. It went out beyond this wall, towards the north-west corner, to such a dimension,--that there the tower Antonio was built, of most renowned workmanship and story.

The whole space of the courts was hollow under-ground: "And the whole platform stood upon arches and pillars," that so no sepulchre might be made within this sacred space, whereby either the holy things or the people might gather pollution.

Chapter 28

The Court of the Gentiles. The Mountain of the House, in the Rabbins.

In the Jewish writers, it is ordinarily called "The Mountain of the house"; or the "Common Court." Hence is it, that a gate, descending hither from the Court of the Women, is called "The gate whence they go out from the Court of the Women into the Common Court." Hence the author of Tosapthoth, "They go out by the gate leading from the Court of the Women *into the Common Court*. And some vessels of stone were fastened to the wall of the steps going up into the Women's Court, and their covers are seen *in the Common Court*."

And that, because hither the heathen might come: "Rabban Gamaliel, walking *in the Court of the Gentiles*, saw a heathen woman, and blessed concerning her."

And those that were excommunicated and lamented. "All that entered into the mount of the Temple, enter the right-hand way, and go about: but they go out the left-hand way: except him, to whom any accident happens: for he goes about to the left hand. To him that asks, 'What is the matter with you, that you go about to the left hand?'--he answers, 'Because I lament': and he replies to him, 'He that dwells in this temple comfort thee.' Or, 'Because I am excommunicated': and to him he replies, 'He that dwells in this house, put it into their heart to receive thee.'"

And not seldom those that are unclean. Yea, he that carries away the scape-goat might enter into the very court, although he were then unclean. "Is he polluted, who is to take away the goat? He entereth unclean even into the court, and takes him away."

"The greatest space of the Court of the Gentiles was on the south; the next to it, on the east; the third, on the north; but the least space was on the west. Of that place, where the space was greater, the use was greater also."

In the wall compassing this space were five gates: and within, joining to the wall, were "double galleries" or "halls," which yielded delightful walks, and defence also from rains.

There was only one gate eastward, and that was called, the Gate of Shushan; because the figure of Shushan, the metropolis of Persia, was engraven in it, in token of subjection. In this gate sat a council of three and twenty. At the gate, on both sides, were *shops*; and the whole gallery-walk, on this east side, was called "Solomon's porch."

On the south were two gates, both called the Gate of Huldah: of the reason of the name we are not solicitous. These looked towards Jerusalem, or Acra. The hall or gallery, gracing this south side, was called "The king's walk," which was trebled, and of stately building.

On the west was the gate *Kiponus*; haply so named from 'Cophonius,' governor of Judea. By this gate they went down into Sion, the bridge and way bending thither.

On the north was the gate *Tedi* or *Teri*, of no use: for so is the tradition, "The gate of Tedi on the north was of no use." On this side was the castle Antonia, where the Romans kept guard; and from hence perhaps might be the reason the gate was deserted.

Chapter 29

Chel. The Court of the Women.

The Court of the Gentiles compassed the Temple and the courts on every side. The same also did *Chel*, or the Ante-murale. "That space was ten cubits broad, divided from the Court of the Gentiles by a fence, ten hand-breadths high; in which were thirteen breaches, which the kings of Greece had made: but the Jews had again repaired them, and had appointed thirteen adorations answering to them."

Maimonides writes: "Inwards" (from the Court of the Gentiles) "was a fence, that encompassed on every side, ten hand-breadths in height, and within the fence *Chel*, or the Ante-murale: of which it is said, in the Lamentations, 'And he caused *Chel* and the Wall to lament,'" [Lamentations 2:8](#).

Josephus writes, "The second circuit was gone up to by a few steps: which the partition of a stone wall surrounded: where was an inscription, forbidding any of another nation to enter, upon pain of death." Hence happened that danger to Paul because of Trophimus the Ephesian, [Acts 21:29](#).

"The *Chel* or Ante-murale" (or second enclosure about the Temple), "was more sacred than the Court of the Gentiles: for hither no heathen, nor any unclean by that which died of itself, nor who lay with a menstruous woman, might come."

"From hence they ascended into the Court of the Women by twelve steps."

On the east it had only one gate, called in the Holy Scripture, 'Beautiful,' [Acts 3:2](#). In Josephus, the 'Corinthian' gate: saith he; "Of the gates, nine of them were every where overlaid with gold and silver, likewise the posts, and the lintels. But one, without the Temple, made of Corinthian brass, did much exceed, in glory, those, that were overlaid with silver and gold. And two gates of every court were each thirty cubits high, and fifteen broad."

On the south was only one gate also, and one on the north: and galleries; or court-walks within, joining to the wall, in the same manner as in the outer court, but not double. Before which were the treasuries placed, or thirteen chests, called by the Talmudists, *Shopharoth*; in which was put the money offered for the various services of the Temple; and, according to that variety, the chests had various titles written on them: whence the offerer might know into which to put his offering, according to his quality.

Upon one was inscribed, "The new shekels"; into which were cast the shekels of that year. Upon another, "The old shekels"; into which were gathered the shekels owing the last year. Upon another, "pigeons and turtles." Upon another, "The burnt sacrifice." Upon another, "The wood." Upon another, "Frankincense." Upon another, "Gold for the propitiation." And six chests had written on them, "Voluntary sacrifice."

"The length of the Women's Court was a hundred thirty-five cubits, and the breadth a hundred thirty-five cubits. And there were four chambers in the four corners of it, each forty cubits, but not roofed." See [Ezekiel 46:21,22](#).

"At the south-east was the court of the Nazarites: because there the Nazarites boiled their thank-offerings, and cut their hair, and put it under the pot."

"At the north-east was the chamber of wood: where the priests, defiled with any spot, searched the wood, whether it was unclean by worms. And all wood in which a worm was found was not fit for the altar."

"At the north-west was the chamber of the Leprous."

"At the south-west was the chamber of wine and oil."

"On the highest sides" (we follow the version of the famous Constantine L'Empereur), "was the smooth and plain Court of the Women; but they bounded it round about with an inward gallery, that the women might see from above, and the men from below, that they might not be mingled."

In this Court of the Women was celebrated the sacred and festival dance, in the feast of Tabernacles, called the "Pouring out of Water": the ritual of which you have in the place cited in the margin.

"The Court of the Women was more sacred than *the Chel*; because any, who had contracted such an uncleanness that was to be cleansed the same day, might not enter into it."

Chapter 30

The Gate of Nicanor, or the East Gate of the Court of Israel.

From hence they went up from the Court of the Women fifteen steps. "There were fifteen steps (saith Josephus) ascending from the partition wall of the women to the greater gate." Concerning these steps, the Talmudists, relating the custom of the dance just now mentioned, speak thus: "The religious men, and the men of good works, holding torches in their hands, danced and sang. The Levites, with harps, lyres, cymbals, trumpets, and infinite other musical instruments, stood upon the fifteen steps going down out of the Court of Israel into the Women's Court, singing according to the number of the fifteen psalms of degrees," &c.

The east gate of the Court of Israel was called the "gate of Nicanor."--"All the gates were changed to be of gold, except the gate of Nicanor; because concerning that a miracle was shown: others say, because the brass of it did exceedingly shine."

In the gate of Nicanor, they made the suspected wife drink the bitter waters; they purified the woman after childbirth, and the leper.

Of the miracle, done about the folding-doors of this gate, see Constantine L'Empereur, *Middoth*, p. 57, and Juchasin, fol. 65. 2, &c.: who also produceth another reason of the name, in these words: "In the book of Josephus Ben Gorion it is said, that the gate of Nicanor was so called, because a miracle was there shown, namely, that there they slew Nicanor, a captain of the Grecians, in the days of the Asmoneans: which may also be seen in the end of the second chapter of the tract *Taanith*."

The history alleged is thus:--Nicanor was one of the captains of the Greeks; and every day he wagged his hand towards Judea and Jerusalem, and said, "Oh! when will it be in my power, to lay them waste!" But when the Asmonean family prevailed, they subdued them, and slew him, and hung up his thumbs and great toes upon the gates of Jerusalem. Hence 'Nicanor's day' is in the Jewish calendar.

This gate was 'fifty cubits in height'; the doors contained forty cubits, and very richly adorned with silver and gold, laid on to a great thickness.

In that gate sat a council of three and twenty; as there was another in the gate of Susan. None of the gates had (a small scroll of paper fixed to the posts), but the gate of Nicanor.

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica

John Lightfoot

(1602-1675)

A Chorographical Century

Chapters 31-40

Chapter 31

Concerning the Gates and Chambers lying on the South Side of the Court.

Here, concerning the chambers, they differ. The tract Middoth assigns these to the south side; "The chamber of wood, the chamber of the spring water, the chamber Gazith."--The Babylonian Gemara and Maimonides assign them to the north side. In Middoth, "the chamber of salt, the chamber of Happarva, the chamber of them that was," were on the north side: in those, they are said to be on the south. The matter is hardly of so great moment, that we should weary ourselves in deciding this controversy. We enter not into disputes, but follow those things that are more probable, the Middoth being our guide.

I. Therefore we suppose, first, that the chamber Gazith was on the south side of the court, near the east corner: and that upon this reason,--that since, according to all the Jews (howsoever differing on what side it was placed), this chamber was not in the middle of the three chambers before named, but on the outside, either on the one hand or on the other,--the council could not sit in the lot Judah, if Gazith were not seated about that place which we assign.

"The chamber Gazith was in the form of a great court walk. And half of it was in the Holy Place, and the other half in that which was common: and it had two doors; whereof one opened towards the Holy Place,--the other towards that which was common":--that is, one into the court, the other to the Chel. The great Sanhedrim sat in that part, which was in Chel; for "none might sit in the court, unless kings only of the stock of David."

"In the chamber of Gazith sat the council of Israel, and judged concerning the priests. Whosoever was found touched with any spot was clothed in black, and was veiled in black, and went away. Whoever was without spot, being clothed and veiled in white, went into the court, and ministered with his brethren."

"The president sat in the west part of the chamber"; and "Ab Beth Din [the next in rank to the president], on his right hand, and the elders on both sides, in a half circle."

How the Sanhedrim was driven from this chamber, and when and why, we observe elsewhere.

II. "The chamber of the spring" was next to this, westwardly: "where was a well, and a pulley: whence water was supplied to the whole court."

III. Contiguous to this was the "gate of waters"; so called, either because the water, to be poured out upon the altar, on the feast of Tabernacles, was brought in through this gate; or because the water-course, conveyed into the Temple from the fountain Etam, went along through this gate into the chamber of the spring. "Abai saith, That fountain was deeper than the pavement of the court three and twenty cubits."--"And I think (saith the author of the Gloss), that the fountain Etam was the same with the waters of Nephtoah, of which mention is made in the book of Joshua, 15:9; from thence it descends and slopes into the east and west, and that place was the highest in the land of Israel."

IV. After this gate was the 'chamber of wood'; and above that, "the chamber of the magistrates"; or, as it was commonly called, "the chamber of the counsellors": where there was a sessions of the priests, consulting about the affairs of the Temple and Service. The 'wood-chamber' seems to be called so upon this account, because the wood was conveyed hither, after the search about it was made in the 'chamber of wood' (which was in the corner of the Women's Court,) whether there were any worms in it: that which was found fit for the altar was laid-up here, that it might be more in readiness.

V. Beyond that was "the gate of offering": and, after that, "the gate of kindling."

Chapter 32

The Gates and Doors on the North Side.

I. First, we meet with the "gate and chamber Nitsots"; where the priests and Levites watched. This was also called "the gate of a song."

II. The "chamber of them that wash" was next to that: and the "chamber of Happarva," joining to that. In that, they washed the inwards of the sacrifices; in this, they salted the skins of the sacrifices. Some believe one Parva, a magician, built this chamber; others, that that magician, Parva, made a secret hole in the wall of this chamber, that through that he might see what was here done by the high priest: "For in a covered place of this chamber there was a bath for the great priest, in the day of expiation."

III. Thence was the 'gate of offering,' or of 'Corban': this was also called 'the gate of the women.' The reason rendered of the former name is, "that by this gate they brought in the Most Holy sacrifices, which were slain on the north." But the reason of the latter is more obscure: perhaps before that gate the women delivered their sacrifices into the hands of the priests.

IV. After that gate, westward, was the "chamber of salt": where salt was laid up for the offerings.

V. Following that was the "gate Beth Mokadh," or the "gate of burning": so called from a chamber adjoining, where a fire continually burnt for the use of the priests. This also was called the "gate Corban": for, between this and the gate last named was the chamber, where the public treasure of the Temple was laid up. In 'Beth-Mokadh' were four chambers:--1. 'The chamber of lambs': where they were kept for the use of the altar. 2. 'The chamber of

the show-bread.' 3. The chamber, where the stones of the altar were laid up by the Asmoneans, when the kings of Greece had profaned the altar. 4. The chamber, whence they went down into the bath.

Chapter 33

The Court itself.

"The floor of the whole sacred earth was not level, but rising: when any went on, from the east gate of the Court of the Gentiles, to the farthest part of the *Chel*,--he went all in a level. From the *Chel*, he went up into the Court of the Women, twelve steps,--whereof every step was half a cubit in height. Along the whole Court of the Women he went in a level; and thence went up into the Court of Israel fifteen steps, every step half a cubit in height."

The Court of Israel was a hundred and thirty-five cubits in length, eleven in breadth.

Through all this court one went in a level; and thence went up into the Court of the Priests by one step of a cubit high: on which was set a pulpit (where the choir of the Levites that sang stood), and in it were three steps, each half a cubit. Therefore, the Court of the Priests is found to be two cubits and a half higher than the court of Israel.

The Court of the Priests was a hundred thirty-five cubits in length, eleven in breadth. And they divided the heads of the beams between the Court of Israel and the Court of the Priests.

They went through the Court of the Priests in a level; and the same they did along the space by the altar, and along the space between the altar and the Pronaon, or the 'Porch of the Temple.' Thither they ascended by twelve steps, each half a cubit high. The floor of the Pronaon and the Temple was all level: and was higher than the floor of the east gate of the Court of the Gentiles, two and twenty cubits.

The length of the whole court was a hundred eighty-seven cubits, that is, from east to west. To wit,

The breadth of the Court of Israel -
11

The breadth of the Court of the
Priests - 11

The breadth of the altar - 32

The space between the altar and the
Pronaon - 22

The length of the Pronaon and the
Temple - 100

Behind the Temple to the west wall -
11

Chapter 34

The Altar. The Rings. The Laver.

The altar was, on every side, two-and-thirty cubits; after the ascent of one cubit, it was so straitened, that it was less by one cubit in the whole square,--that is, on every side thirty cubits. It went up five cubits, and again was straitened a cubit; so that there it was eight and twenty cubits on every side. The place of the horns on every part was the space of one cubit; so that now it was six and twenty cubits every way. The place of the priests' walk, hither and thither, was one cubit; so that the place of burning extended four and twenty cubits round about.

A scarlet thread begirt the middle of the altar, to discern between the upper bloods and the lower.

The basis of the altar towards the south-east had no corner, because that part was not within the portion of Judah.

At the horn between the west and the south were two holes, like nostrils, through which the sprinkled blood descended, and flowed into the brook Kedron.

The ascent to the altar was, on the south, two and thirty cubits, and the breadth sixteen cubits. There was a time, when, upon this ascent, one priest stabbed another priest with his knife, while they strove who should first get up to the altar.

On the north were six orders of rings, each of which contained four. There are some who assert there were four orders, and each contained six, at which they killed the sacrifices: there, therefore, was the place of slaughter. Near by were low pillars set up, upon which were laid, overthwart, beams of cedar: in these were fastened iron hooks, on which the sacrifices were hung; and they were flayed on marble tables, which were between those pillars.

There was a laver or cistern between the porch and the altar, and it lay a little to the south. "Ben Kattin made twelve cocks for it, which before had but two. He also made *the machine of the cistern*": that is, as the Gloss explains it, "Ben Kattin, when he was the chief priest, made those cocks for the cistern, that the waters might flow out of them; he made also a pulley, or a wheel, whereby water might be drawn for the use of the cistern."

Between the altar and the *porch* was the space of two and twenty cubits. They went up thither by twelve steps, each half a cubit in height.

The Temple was strait on the hinder part, but broad on the fore part; and resembled the figure of a lion, because it is said, "Woe to Ariel" (the lion of the Lord), "to Ariel, the city where David encamped." As the lion is narrower behind, and broader before, so also was the Temple. For the porch was broader than the Temple fifteen cubits on the north, and fifteen cubits on the south; and that space, jetting out on both sides, was called "The place of knives,"--namely, where the holy knives, used in killing of the sacrifices, were laid up.

The length of the Temple contained a hundred cubits,--the breadth seventy: including within this measure the porch, the chambers, and the thickness of the outward wall; to trace

all which would be too much. And these things, which we have said, we have, therefore, run through with the more haste, both because the famous Constantine L'Empereur hath, very learnedly and largely, treated of them; and because we ourselves largely enough, though much more unlearnedly, have heretofore done these things in a just volume, in our English tongue.

Chapter 35

Some other memorable Places of the City.

I. There was a street leading from the Gate of Waters to the mount of the Temple, which seems to be called "the street of the Temple," [Ezra 10:9](#). This way they went from the Temple to mount Olivet.

II. The ascent to the mount of the Temple was not so difficult but cattle and oxen might be driven thither; nor so easy, but that it required some pains of those that went up. "A child was free from presenting himself in the Temple at the three feasts, until" (according to the school of Hillel) "he was able, his father taking him by the hand, to go up with him into the mount of the Temple."

III. "The vale of the *Tyropaei*" (or *the cheesemongers*), "that divided between the hill of the Upper City and the Lower, went down unto Siloam." The entrance into this vale, probably, was eastward by the Horse-gate, and the street (the most noted of the whole city) went onward to the west.

IV. The Upper Street.--"Any spittle, found in the city, was clean, except that which was found in the upper street." The Gloss thus; "The spittle of any unclean person is unclean, and defiles. But strangers of another country are as unclean among us, as those that have a flux. Now the strangers dwelt in the upper street." Here I remember the story of Ismael Ben Camithi, the high priest; who when he went out on the day of expiation to speak with a certain (heathen) captain, some spittle was sprinkled upon his clothes from the other's mouth: whereby being defiled, he could not perform the service of that day: his brother therefore officiated for him.

V. "The street of the butchers." [*Saginatorum*, Buxtorf.]

VI. "The street of those that dealt in wool."

"In the butchers' street, which was at Jerusalem, they locked the door" (on the sabbath), "and laid the key in the window which was above the door. R. Jose saith, That this was in the street of those that dealt in wool."

Josephus hath these words, "In the new city there was a wool-market, and braziers' shops, and a market of garments."

VII. "At Jerusalem was a great court, called *Beth Jaazek*, where the cities were gathered together,"--namely, that they might testify concerning the new moon: "and there the Sanhedrim took them into examination; and delicious feasts were made ready for them there, that they might the more willingly come thither for the sake thereof."

VIII. Some courts also were built upon a rock, under which there was made a hollow, that by no means any sepulchre might be there. Hither they brought some teeming women, that they might be delivered there, and might there also bring up their children. And the reason of that curiosity was, that those children, there born and brought up, where they were so secure from being touched by a sepulchre, might be clean without doubt, and fit to sprinkle, with purifying water, such as were polluted with a dead carcass. The children were shut up in those courts, until they became seven or eight years old. (So R. Solomon, who also cites Tosapthoth, where nevertheless it is, "until they are eighteen years of age.") And when the sprinkling of any one is to be performed, they are brought with the like care and curiosity to the place, where the thing is to be done, riding upon oxen, because their bellies, being so thick, might defend them the more securely from the defilement of any sepulchre in the way.

IX. There were not a few caves in the city, hollowed out of the rock, which we observed concerning the hollowed floor of the Temple. Into one of these Simon the tyrant betook himself with his accomplices, when he despaired of his affairs. Of whom you have a memorable story in the place quoted.

X. Besides the pool of Siloam, of Bethesda, of Solomon, (if that were not the same with Bethesda,) there was "the Sparrow-pool," before Antonia; and "the Almond-pool," on the north side of the city.

XI. We cannot also pass over "The stone of things lost": where publicaiton was made concerning any thing lost or missing.

XII. We conclude with the trench brought round the city by Titus, wherein he shut it up in the siege. "Beginning from the tents of the Assyrians, where he encamped, he brought a trench to the nether new city" (the Upper was the hill Bezetha, the Nether was a place somewhat lower on the east of Sion), "and thence along Kedron to mount Olivet. Thence bending to the south, he shut up the mountain round, to the rock called the Dove-cote,-- and the hill beyond, which lies over the valley of Siloam. From thence bending on the west, he came even into the vale of the fountain. After which, ascending along the sepulchre of Anan the chief priest, and enclosing the mountain where Pompey pitched his tents, he bended to the north side, and going forward as far as the village, which is called, '*the house, or place of turpentine*'; "and after that taking in the sepulchre of Herod, he came eastwardly to his own intrenchment."

Chapter 36

Synagogues in the City; and Schools.

"R. Phinehas, in the name of R. Hoshai, saith, There were four hundred and sixty synagogues in Jerusalem: every one of which had a house of the book, and a house of doctrine," "A house of the book for the Scripture," that is, where the Scripture might be read: "and a house of doctrine for traditions," that is, the *Beth Midrash*, where traditions might be taught.

These things are recited elsewhere, and there the number ariseth to four hundred and eighty. "R. Phinehas, in the name of R. Hoshaia, saith, There were four hundred and eighty synagogues in Jerusalem," &c. We do not make inquiry here concerning the numbers being varied: the latter is more received: and it is made out by *gematry*, as they call it, out of the word 'full,' [Isaiah 1:21](#). "We find in Pesikta: R. Menahem, from R. Hoshaia, saith, Four hundred and eighty synagogues were in Jerusalem, according to the arithmetical value of the word *full*" [mem, lamed, aleph, tav, yod]. Note, that the letter aleph is not computed. [men=40, lamed=30, tav=400, yod=10]

"The synagogue of the Alexandrians," is mentioned by the Talmudists: concerning which also the Holy Scripture speaks, [Acts 6:9](#).

"Eleazar Ben R. Zadok received (*for a price*) the synagogue of the Alexandrians, and did his necessary works in it. The Alexandrians had built it at their own charge." This story is recited by the Babylonian Talmudists, and they for Alexandrians have *The Braziers*. For so they write: "The synagogue of the Braziers, which was at Jerusalem, they themselves sold to R. Eleazar," &c. The Gloss renders 'the braziers' by 'workmen by brass.'--The reason why the Alexandrians were so called, you may fetch, perhaps, from this story: "There was a brass cymbal in the Temple; and there being a crack in it, the wise men brought artificers from Alexandria to mend it, &c. There was also a brass mortar in the Temple, in which they beat their spices; and there being a crack in it, the wise men brought artificers in brass from Alexandria to mend it," &c.

Consider well, what "The language of Tursi," means in that legend. "Bigthan and Teresh (*perhaps*) were two Tarsians": or, if you will, 'two artificers': "and they talked together in the language of Tursi" (where the Gloss, 'Tursi is the name of a place'); "and they knew not that Mordecai was one of the elders in the chamber Gazith, and that he understood seventy languages," &c.

In the place noted in the margin, these words are related concerning the sending away the goat Azazel, or the scape-goat: "The chief priests permitted not an Israelite to lead away the scape-goat into the wilderness: but once, one Arsela, who was an Israelite, led him away: and they made him a footstool because of the Babylonians, who used to pull off his hair, and to say, Take it, and go." The Gemara thus; "Rabba Bar Bar Channah saith, They were not Babylonians, but Alexandrians; but, because they hated the Babylonians, therefore they called them by their name. Take it, and go. Why does this goat tarry, when the sins of this generation are so many?" Where the Gloss thus; "They made him a footstool, or something to put under his feet, that he might be higher: and upon this he went out of the court, and out of the city: and this, lest the Babylonians should touch the goat: for they used to pull off his hair, and to say, Go, make haste, begone, delay not, our sins are yet upon us." And after; "The inhabitants of the land of Israel hated the Babylonians; every one, therefore, carrying himself irreverently and indecently, they called by their name."

'The synagogue of the Libertines,' [Acts 6:9](#): "The synagogue of those, that are made free": of whom the Talmudists speak infinitely.

Chapter 37

Bethphage

There is very frequent mention of this place in the Talmudists: and, certainly, a more careful comparison of the maps with those things which are said by them of the situation of this place is worthy to be made; when *they* place it in mount Olivet, *these* make it contiguous to the buildings of Jerusalem.

I. In the place cited in the margin, the case "of a stubborn judge" (or elder) is handling. For when, by the prescript of the law, difficult matters, and such things as concerning which the lower councils could not judge, were to be brought unto the chief council, unto the place which God should choose, [Deuteronomy 17:8](#);--and when that judge of the lower council, who, after the determination and sentence pronounced in that cause, which he propounded, shall refuse to obey, and shall deny to behave himself according to their sentence,--is guilty of death, verse 12, inquiry is made, "Whether if he shall find the Sanhedrim sitting in Bethphage, and shall rebel against the sentence pronounced by them there, that stubbornness be to be judged for rebellion," which, according to the law, is to be punished with death: and it is answered, "The text saith, 'Thou shalt arise, and go up to the place,' &c. Whence it is taught, that the place itself" (the chamber Gazith only) "adds force to the sentence."--The Gloss writes thus, "Bethphage was a place within the walls of the city, and was reckoned as Jerusalem itself, in respect of all things." Observe, 'Bethphage was within the walls of Jerusalem': so that if the sentence of the Sanhedrim, pronounced at Jerusalem (out of the chamber Gazith), obtained in the case propounded,--it had obtained, when pronounced in Bethphage.

II. "He that kills a sacrifice of thanksgiving within the wall, and the bread of it is without the wall, the bread is not holy. What is without the wall? R. Jochanan saith, Without the wall of Bethphage; but without the wall of the court, it is holy."--The Gloss thus; "Bethphage is the outmost place in Jerusalem: and whosoever is without the walls of Bethphage, is without Jerusalem, where is no place to eat the holy things."

III. It is disputed, whether the passover be to be slain in the name of a person in prison singly; and, among other things, it is thus determined: "If he be within the walls of Bethphage, let them kill it for him singly. Why? Because it is possible, to come to him, and he may eat it."--The Gloss; "Bethphage is the outmost place in Jerusalem: and thither they carry the passover to the person imprisoned, that he may eat it, because he is there within Jerusalem." For it was by no means lawful to eat the passover without Jerusalem.

IV. "The two loaves" (daily offered by the chief priest) "and the show-bread are baked aright either in the court or in Bethphage."

V. That which we produced first concerning the cause "of the stubborn elder," is recited also elsewhere; and these words are added, "He found the council sitting in Bethphage: for

example's sake, if he betook himself thither to measure for the beheading of the cow, or to add to the space of the city, or the courts."

VI. "He thrashes within the walls of Bethphage."--The Gloss; "Bethphage is the outmost circuit of Jerusalem." The Aruch;--"The wall of Bethphage is the wall of Jerusalem."

Now consult the maps and the commentaries of Christians, and you have Bethphage seated far from the walls of the city, not very far from the top of mount Olivet: where, also, the footsteps of it (even at this day) are falsely shown to travellers. So our countryman Sandys, an eyewitness, writes concerning it: "We now ascend mount Olivet (saith he), another way bending more northwards" (for before, he had described the ascent to Bethany). "On the right hand, not far from the top, was Bethphage seated, whose very foundations are confounded; from whence Christ, sitting upon the foal of an ass, went in triumph to Jerusalem: the father-guardian every Palm Sunday now superstitiously imitating him."

They took their resolutions concerning the situation of this place not elsewhere certainly than from the gospel history, which seems openly to delineate Bethphage at the mount Olivet. True, indeed; and yet nothing hinders, but we may believe the Jews, asserting it to be within the walls of Jerusalem, since they illustrate the thing with so many examples; nor is there any reason, why they should either feign or dissemble any thing in this matter.

To the determining, therefore, of the business, we must have recourse, first, to the derivation of the word: Bethphage is rendered by some a 'house or place of a fountain,' from the Greek "a fountain": but this is something hard: by the Glosser in Bava Mezia, in the place last cited, it is rendered, a paved 'causeway'; "The outmost compass of Jerusalem (saith he), which they added to it, is called Bethphage, and seems to me to denote a *beaten way*." To which that of the Targumists seems to agree, who render "At the valley of Shaveh," [Genesis 14:17](#). But what needs is there of wandering abroad either into a strange or more unusual dialect,--when the word *Phagi* most vulgarly, and in all men's mouths, denotes "green figs," which mount Olivet was not a little famous for? For although it took its name from 'Olives' yet it produced both 'fig' trees and 'palms'; and according to the variety of these, growing in divers tracts of the mount, so various names were imposed upon those tracts, which we note elsewhere. That lowest part, therefore, of the mountain, which runs out next the city, is called, from the green figs, "Bethphage": by which name also that part of Jerusalem, next adjacent, is called, by reason of the vicinity of that place. And from these things, well regarded, one may, more rightly and plainly, understand the story of Christ coming this way.

He had lodged in Bethany, the town of Lazarus, [John 12:1](#). From thence, in the morning, going onward, he is said to come to Bethphage, and Bethany, [Mark 11:1](#); that is, to that place, where those tracts of the mountain, known by those names, did touch upon one another. And when he was about to ascend into heaven, he is said to lead out his disciples, "as far as Bethany," [Luke 24:50](#); but not farther than a sabbath-day's journey, [Acts 1:12](#); whereas the town, where Lazarus dwelt, was almost twice as far, [John 11:18](#). He went, therefore, out

of Jerusalem through Bethphage within the walls, and Bethphage without the walls,--and measuring a sabbath-day's journey, or thereabouts, arrived at that place and tract of Olivet, where the name of Bethphage ceased, and the name of Bethany began; and there he ascended. I doubt, therefore, whether there was any town in Olivet called Bethphage; but rather a great tract of the mountain was so called; and the outermost street of Jerusalem within the walls was called by the same name, by reason of its nearness to that tract.

Chapter 38

Kedron

"A deep bottom, called Kedron, bounds the mount of Olives, which lies against the city eastward." "They built a foot-causeway, or a foot-bridge, upheld with arches, from the mount of the Temple to the mount of Olives, upon which they led away the red cow (*to be burned*). In like manner, such a foot-causeway they made, upon which they led away the scape-goat: both were built at the charges of the public treasure, which was in the Temple." The reason of that curiosity concerning the red cow was this:--when the ashes of that cow were especially purifying above all other things (for they cleansed from the uncleanness contracted by the touch of a dead person), they thought no caution enough to keep him safe from uncleanness, who was to burn the cow. When, therefore, there might be, perhaps, some sepulchres not seen, in the way he was to go, whereby he might be defiled, and so the whole action be rendered useless,--they made him a path, at no small cost, all the way, upon arches joining to one another, where it was not possible to touch a place of burial. The like care and curiosity was used in leading away the scape-goat.

The sheaf of first-fruits was reaped from the Ashes'-valley of the brook Kedron. The first day of the feast of the Passover, certain persons, deputed from the Sanhedrim, went forth into that valley, a great company attending them; and very many out of the neighbouring towns flocked together, that the thing might be done, a great multitude being present. And the reason of the pomp was fetched thence, because the Baithuseans, or Sadducees, did not think well of doing that action on that day: therefore, that they might cross that crossing opinion, they performed the business with as much show as could be. "When it was now even, he, on whom the office of reaping laid, saith, 'The sun is set'; and they answered, 'Well.'--'The sun is set'; and they answered, 'Well.'--'With this reaping-hook'; and they answered, 'Well.'--'With this reaping-hook'; and they answered, 'Well.'--'In this basket'; and they answered, 'Well.'--'In this basket'; and they answered, 'Well.'--'If it were the sabbath, he said, 'On this sabbath'; and they answered, 'Well.'--'On this sabbath'; and they answered, 'Well.'--'I will reap'; and they answered, 'Reap.'--'I will reap'; and they answered, 'Reap.' This he said thrice; and they answered thrice, 'Well.'"

In the place, marked in the margin, they are treating concerning removing a sepulchre, seated in an inconvenient place, that it might not pollute any man. Examples are brought-in of the sepulchres of the house of David, which were moved out of their places,--and of

the sepulchres of the sons of Huldah, which were within Jerusalem, and were not moved out of their places. "Hence it appears (saith R. Akibah), that there was a certain cave, whereby filth and uncleanness was carried down into the valley of Kedron."

By such a pipe and evacuation under-ground, did the filth of the Court of the Temple run into the valley of Kedron. "The blood poured at the foot of the altar *flowed into a pipe*, and emptied itself into the valley of Kedron: and it was sold to the gardeners to dung their gardens."

Chapter 39

The Valley of Hinnom.

A great part of the valley of Kedron was called also the 'Valley of Hinnom.' Jeremiah, going forth into the valley of Hinnom, went out by the gate "*Hacharsith*, the Sun-gate," [Jeremiah 19:2](#); that is, the Rabbins and others being interpreters, 'by the East-gate.' For thence was the beginning of the valley of Hinnom, which, after some space, bending itself westward, ran out along the south side of the city.

There is no need to repeat those very many things, which are related of this place in the Old Testament; they are historical. The mention of it in the New is only mystical and metaphorical, and is transferred to denote the place of the damned. Under the second Temple, when those things were vanished, which had set an eternal mark of infamy upon this place, to wit, idolatry, and the howlings of infants roasted to Moloch,--yet so much of the filthiness, and of the abominable name remained, that even now it did as much bear to the life the representation of hell, as it had done before.

It was the common sink of the whole city; whither all filth, and all kind of nastiness, met. It was, probably, the common burying-place of the city (if so be, they did now bury within so small a distance from the city). "They shall bury in Tophet, until there be no more any place," [Jeremiah 7:32](#). And there was there also a continual fire, whereby bones, and other filthy things, were consumed, lest they might offend or infect the city. "There was a tradition according to the school of Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai. There are two palm-trees in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, between which a smoke arises: and this is that we learn, 'The palms of the mountain are fit for iron.' And, 'This is the door of Gehenna.'"

Some of the Rabbins apply that of Isaiah hither, chapter 66, verse the last: "They shall go out, and see the dead carcasses of the men, that rebel against me; for their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched."--"Those Gentiles (saith Kimchi upon the place) who come to worship from month to month, and from sabbath to sabbath, shall go out without Jerusalem into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and shall see the carcasses of Gog and Magog," &c. And a little after; "The just shall go out without Jerusalem into the valley of Hinnom, and shall see those that rebel," &c.

What is to be resolved concerning the 'valley of Jehoshaphat,' he himself doubts, and leaves undetermined: "For either Jehoshaphat (saith he) here erected some building, or did

some work, or it is called 'the valley of Jehoshaphat' because of judgment." So also Jarchi [on [Joel 3:2](#)]; "Jehoshaphat means all one with the 'judgments of the Lord.'"

Chapter 40

Mount Olivet. The Mount of Olives, 2 Samuel 15:30.

[Zechariah 14:4](#). *In the Rabbin commonly, The Mount of Oil.*

"The mount called the mount of Olives, lying over against the city, is distant five furlongs." But Luke saith, [Acts 1:12](#), "Then they returned from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath-day's journey." But now a sabbath-day's journey contained eight furlongs, or a whole mile. Neither yet, for all this, doth Luke fight against Josephus. For this last measures the space to the first foundation of Olivet; the other, to that place of Olivet, where our Saviour ascended. The first foot of the mount was distant five furlongs from the city; but Christ, being about to ascend, went up the mountain three furlongs farther.

The mount had its name from the *Olive*-trees, however other trees grew in it; and that, because the number of these perhaps was greater, and the fruit better. Among other trees, two cedars are mentioned, or rather two monsters of cedars. "Two cedars (they say) were in the mount of Olivet, under one of which were four shops, where all things needful for purifications were sold: out of the other, they fetched, every month, forty seahs" (certain measures) "of pigeons, whence all the women to be purified were supplied."

It is a dream like that story, that, beneath this mountain, all the dead are to be raised. "When the dead shall live again (say they), mount Olivet is to be rent in two, and all the dead of Israel shall come out thence; yea, those righteous persons, who died in captivity, shall be rolled under the earth, and shall come forth under the mount of Olivet."

There was a place in the mount, directly opposite against the east gate of the Temple, to which the priest, that was to burn the red cow, went along a foot-bridge laid upon arches, as it was said before. And when he sprinkled its blood there, he directly levelled his eyes at the Holy of Holies.

Those signal flames also, accustomed to be waved up and down on the top of this mount in token of the new moon now stated, are worthy of mention. The custom and manner is thus described: "Formerly, they held up flames; but when the Cutheans spoiled this, it was decreed, that they should send messengers." The Gloss is this; "They held up the flames presently after the time of the new moon was stated: and there was no need to send messengers to those, that were afar off in captivity, to give them notice of the time; for those flames gave notice: and the Cutheans sometime held up flames in an undue time, and so deceived Israel."

The text goes forward: "How did they hold up the flames? They took long staves of cedar, and canes, and fat-wood, and the coarse part of the flax, and bound these together with a thread. And one, going up to the mount, put fire to it, and shakes the flame up and down, this way and that way, until he sees another doing so in a second mountain, and another so

in a third mountain. But whence did they lift up these flames first? *From the mount of Olivet to Sartaba*; from Sartaba to Gryphena; from Gryphena to Hauran; from Hauran to Beth Baltin. And he who held up the flame in Beth Baltin, departed not thence, but waved his flame up and down, this way and that way, until he saw the whole captivity *abounding in flames*. The Gemarists inquire, what 'from Beth Baltin' means? This is Biram. What the captivity means? Rabh Joseph saith, This is Pumbeditha. What means *abounding in flames*? There is a tradition, that every one taking a torch in his hand, goes up upon his house," &c.

The Jews believe, the Messiah shall converse very much in this mountain: which is agreeable to truth and reason. For when they think his primary seat shall be at Jerusalem, they cannot but believe some such thing of that mount. R. Janna saith, "*The Divine Majesty* stood three years and a half in mount Olivet, and preached, saying, 'Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found; call upon him, while he is near.'"

And now let us from this mountain look back upon the city. Imagine yourself sitting in that place, where the priest stood, while he burnt the red cow, directly over against the east gate of the Temple. Between the mount and the city you might see a valley running between, compassing Sion on the right hand, and Jerusalem on the left: the Gate of Waters against you, leading to the Temple; on the left hand, Ophla and the Horse-gate. From thence, as we have said, was the beginning of the valley of Hinnom, which, at length, bowed towards the south side of the city. In that place, near the wall, was the Fullers' field; which whether it was so called from wood framed together, where fullers dried their cloth; or 'from a fuller's monument,' of which Josephus writes,--we do not dispute.

From the Horse-gate, westward, runs out the valley Kedron, in which is a brook, whence the valley takes its name--embracing Sion also on the north, and spreading abroad itself in a more spacious breadth.

"Below the city, there was a place" (we do not dare to mark it out) "which was called *Motza*: hither they came down" (in the feast of Tabernacles) "and cropped off thence long boughs of willow" (it may be, from the banks of the brook Kedron); "and, going away, placed them near the sides of the altar,--bended after that manner, that their heads might bow over the top of the altar," &c.

It is no marvel, if there were a multitude of gardens without the city, when there were none within. Among them "a garden of Jerusalem is famed, wherein figs grew, which were sold for three or four assarii each: and yet neither the Truma, nor the Tenth, was ever taken of them."

Josephus hath these words, "The gardening was all compassed about from the wall with trenches; and every thing was divided with crooked gardens, and many walls."

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica

John Lightfoot
(1602-1675)

A Chorographical Century
Chapters 41-50

Chapter 41

Bethany. Beth-hene.

Bethany seems to be the same with Beth-hene among the Talmudists. Of which they write thus. They treat in the place, noted in the margin, concerning eating of fruits the seventh year, and concerning *Beor*, of which we have spoke before. They inquire, How long one may eat of these or the other fruits?--And they state the business thus: "They eat Olives (say they) until the last ceases in Tekoa. R. Eleazar saith, Until the last ceases in Gush Chalab" (in the tribe of Asher). "They eat dry figs, until green figs cease in *Beth-hene*. R. Judah saith, The green figs of Beth-hene are not mentioned; unless in respect of the tenths; as the tradition is. The figs of Beth-hene, and the dates of Tubni, are bound to be tithed." The Gloss is this; "They are not mentioned in the schools among fruits, unless in respect of tithing." These words are recited in Erubhin: where the word *Beth-hene* is writ, *Beth-jone*, and *Tubni* is writ *Tubina*.

Beth-hene certainly seems to be the same altogether with our *Bethany*; and the name to be drawn from the word *Ahene*, which signifies the "dates of palm-trees," not come to ripeness: as the figs also signifies "green-figs," that is, such figs as are not yet ripe.

And now take a prospect a little of mount Olivet. Here you may see olive-trees; and in that place is Gethsemane, "The place of oil-presses." There you may see palm-trees growing; and that place is called Bethany, "The place of dates." And we may observe in the gospel-history, how those that met Christ, as he was going forward from Bethany, had branches of palm-trees ready at hand. There you may see fig-trees growing; and that place was called Bethphage, "The place of green-figs."

Therefore, some part of Olivet was called Bethany from the palm-trees; there was a town also, called of the same name, over-against it. The town was fifteen furlongs distant from Jerusalem. And the coast of that name went on, till it reached the distance of a sabbath-day's journey only from the city.

Chapter 42

Scopo

In that manner as mount Olivet lay over-against the city on the east, the valley of Kedron running between,--so, on the north, behind a valley somewhat broader, stretched out from

Sion northward, the land swelled into a hill, at the place which from thence was called Zophim; because thence there was a prospect on all sides, but especially towards the city.

Concerning it Josephus thus: "Caesar, when he had received a legion by night from Ammaus, the day after moving his tents thence, He entered into Scopo so called. Where the city appeared, and the greatness of the Temple shining out: as that plain tract of land, touching upon the north coast of the city, is truly called *Scopus*, The Viewer."

Hence those canons and cautions: "He that pisseth, let him turn his face to the north: he that easeth nature, to the south. R. Josi Ben R. Bon saith, The tradition is, From Zophim and within":--that is, if this be done by any one from Zophim inwards, when he is now within the prospect of the city; when he pisseth, let him turn his face to the north, that he do not expose his modest parts before the Temple: when he easeth nature, let him turn his face to the south, that he expose not his buttocks before it.

"If any one, being gone out of Jerusalem, shall remember, that holy flesh is in his hand, if he be now gone beyond Zophim, let him burn it in the place where he is." (For it is polluted by being carried out of the walls of Jerusalem.) "But if he be not beyond Zophim, let him go back, and burn it before the Temple." Where the Gloss thus; "Zophim is a place whence the Temple may be seen." But another Gloss doth not understand the thing here of that proper place, but of the whole compass about the city, wheresoever the city could first be seen. So R. Eliezer, of Abraham, going from the south to Jerusalem, "The third day they came to Zophim: but when he came to Zophim, he saw the glory of the Divine Majesty sitting upon the Mount" (Moriah).

Chapter 43

Ramah. Ramathaim Zophim. Gibeah.

There was a certain Ramah, in the tribe of Benjamin, [Joshua 18:25](#), and that within sight of Jerusalem, as it seems, [Judges 19:13](#); where it is named with Gibeah:--and elsewhere, [Hosea 5:8](#); which towns were not much distant. See [1 Samuel 22:6](#); "Saul sat in Gibeah, under a grove in Ramah." Here the Gemarists trifle: "Whence is it (say they) that Ramah is placed near Gibeah? To hint to you, that the speech of Samuel of Ramah was the cause, why Saul remained two years and a half in Gibeah." They blindly look over Ramah in the tribe of Benjamin,--and look only at Ramah in Ephraim, where Samuel was born.

His native town is very often called Ramah, once Ramathaim Zophim, [1 Samuel 1:1](#). "There was a certain man of Ramathaim": that is, one of the two Ramaths, which were sur-named also 'Zophim.' A like form of speech is that [1 Samuel 18:21](#); "In one of the two, thou shalt be my son-in-law." That town of Samuel was Ramath Zophim; and this of Benjamin, was Ramath Zophim also: but by a different etymology, as it seems:--that, it may be, from Zuph, Saul's great-great-grandfather, whence that country was so called, [1 Samuel 9:5](#); this, from Zophim, of which place we have spoke in the foregoing chapter.

Gibeah was Saul's town. "The town called Gabath-Saul. This signifieth Saul's-hill, which is distant from Jerusalem about thirty furlongs." Hence you may guess at the distance of Rama from Jerusalem. Josephus calls the neighbouring place of Gibeah, "the long Valley of Thorns": perhaps, the valley under the rock *Seneh*: of which mention is made, [1 Samuel 14:4](#).

Chapter 44

Nob. Bahurim.

That Nob was placed in the land of Benjamin, not far from Jerusalem, whence Jerusalem also might be seen,--the words of the Chaldee paraphrast, upon [Isaiah 10:32](#), do argue. For so he speaks; "Sennacherib came and stood in Nob, a city of the priests, before the walls of Jerusalem; and said to his army, 'Is not this the city of Jerusalem, against which I have raised my whole army, and have subdued all the provinces of it? Is it not small and weak in comparison of all the fortifications of the Gentiles, which I have subdued by the valour of my hand?' He stood nodding with his head against it, and wagging his hand up and down," &c. Where Kimchi thus; "Jerusalem might be seen from Nob. Which when he saw from thence, he wagged his hand, as a man is wont to do, when he despiseth any thing," &c. And Jarchi thus; "When he stood at Nob, he saw Jerusalem," &c.

The Talmudists do concur also in the same sense with the Chaldee paraphrast, and in his very words; adding this moreover,--that all those places, which are numbered-up by Isaiah in the place alleged, were travelled through by the enemy with his army in one day.

The tabernacle sometime resided at Nob, when that was destroyed, it was translated to Gibeon. "And the days of Nob and Gibeon" (they are the words of Maimonides) "were seven-and-fifty years."

We meet with mention of Bahurim, [2 Samuel 16:5](#). It was a Levitical city, the same with Almon, [Joshua 21:18](#); which is also called Alemeth, [1 Chronicles 6:60](#). Those words, "And David came to Bahurim," in the place alleged in the Book of Samuel, the Chaldee renders, "And David the king came to Almath." Where Kimchi thus; "Bahurim was a city of the Benjamites, and is called in the Books of the Chronicles, 'Alemeth'; for Bahurim and Alemeth are the same." Both sound as much as, *young men*.

Chapter 45

Emmaus. Kiriath-jearim.

"From Beth-horon to Emmaus it was hilly."--It was sixty furlongs distant from Jerusalem.--"To eight hundred only, dismissed the army, (Vespasian) gave a place, called Ammaus, for them to inhabit: it is sixty furlongs distant from Jerusalem."

I inquire, whether this word hath the same etymology with Emmaus near Tiberias, which, from the 'warm baths,' was called *Chammath*. The Jews certainly do write this otherwise...

"The family (say they) of Beth-Pegarim, and Beth Zipperia was *out of Emmaus*."--The Gloss is this; "Emmaus was the name of a place, whose inhabitants were Israelite gentlemen, and the priests married their daughters."

Josephus, mentioning some noblemen, slain by Simeon the tyrant, numbers one Aristeus, who was "a scribe of the council, and *by extraction from Ammaus*." By the same author is mentioned also, "Ananus of Ammaus," one of the seditious of Jerusalem; who nevertheless at last fled over to Caesar.

Kiriath-jearim was before-time called *Baale*, [2 Samuel 6:2](#); or *Baalath*, [1 Chronicles 13:6](#). Concerning it, the Jerusalem writers speak thus; "We find, that they intercalated the year in Baalath. But Baalath was sometimes assigned to Judah, and sometimes to Dan. Eltekah, and Gibbethon, and Baaeth; behold, these are *Judah*." (Here is a mistake of the transcribers, for it should be written, of *Dan*, [Joshua 19:44](#).) "Balah, and Jiim, and Azem,--behold, these are of *Dan*" (it should be written, of *Judah*, [Joshua 15:29](#)); "namely, the houses were of Judah,--the fields of Dan."

In [Psalm 132:6](#); "We heard of it" (the ark) "in Ephratah" (that is, Shiloh, a city of Ephraim); "we found it in the fields of the wood" (that is, in Kiriath-jearim, [1 Samuel 7:1](#), &c.).

Chapter 46

The country of Jericho, and the situation of the City.

Here we will borrow Josephus' pencil, "Jericho is seated in a plain, yet a certain barren mountain hangs over it, narrow, indeed, but long; for it runs out northward to the country of Scythopolis,--and southward, to the country of Sodom, and the utmost coast of the Asphaltites."

Of this mountain mention is made, [Joshua 2:22](#), where the two spies, sent by Joshua, and received by Rahab, are said to "conceal themselves."

"Opposite against this, lies a mountain on the other side Jordan, beginning from Julias on the north, and stretched southward as far as Somorrha, which bounds the rock of Arabia. In this is a mountain, which is called the *Iron* mountain, reaching out as far as the land of Moab. But the country which lies between these two mountainous places, is called *the Great Plain*, extended from the village Ginnaber to the lake Asphaltites, in length a thousand two hundred furlongs" (a hundred and fifty miles), "in breadth, a hundred and twenty furlongs" (fifteen miles); "and Jordan cuts it in the middle."

Hence you may understand more plainly those things that are related of "the plains of Jericho," [2 Kings 25:5](#); and what "the region about Jordan," means, [Matthew 3:5](#).

"Jericho is distant from Jerusalem a hundred and fifty furlongs" (eighteen miles and three quarters), "and from Jordan sixty furlongs" (seven miles and a half). "The space from thence to Jerusalem is desert and rocky; but to Jordan and the Asphaltites, more plain, indeed, but alike desert, and barren."

This our author asserts the same distance between Jericho and Jordan elsewhere, in these words: "But the Israelites, travelling forward fifty furlongs from Jordan, encamped the distance of ten furlongs from Jericho": that is, in Gilgal, in the east coast of Jericho, [Joshua 4:19](#).

But concerning the distance between Jericho and Jerusalem, he does not seem to agree with his countrymen. For, however they, according to their hyperbolical style, feign very many things to be heard from Jerusalem as far as Jericho,--to wit, the sound of the gate of the Temple, when it was opened,--the sound of Migrephah, or the little bell, &c. yet there are some of them, who make it to be the distance of 'ten parsae.' "Rabbath Bar Bar Channah saith, Rabbi Jochanan saith, *from Jerusalem to Jericho were ten parsae*: and yet, from thence thither the voice of the high priest, in the day of expiation, pronouncing the name *Jehovah*, was heard, &c. The hinges of the gates of the Temple are heard *as far as the eighth bound of the sabbath*"; that is, as far as a sabbath-day's journey eight times numbered. The Gloss hath these words; "The hinges, indeed, not farther, but the gates themselves are heard to Jericho." There is an hyperbole in their measuring of the space, as well as in the rest.

"And that plain burns in the summer, and, by too much heat, renders the air unhealthful: for it is all without water, except Jordan; the palms that grow in whose banks are more flourishing and more fruitful than those that grow more remote."

"Near Jericho is a very plentiful spring, and very rich for watering and moistening the ground; it riseth near the old city, and Jesus the son of Nave took it. Of which spring there is a report, that, in former times, it did not only make the fruits of the earth and of the trees to decay, but also the offspring of women; and was universally unwholesome and harmful to all: but it was changed into a better condition by Elizeus, &c. (see [2 Kings 2:21](#)). So that those waters, which before were the cause of barrenness and famine, did thenceforth produce fruitfulness and abundance: and they have so great a virtue in their watering, that whatsoever place they touch, they bring on to a very speedy ripeness."

"And they overflow the plain seventy furlongs in length, and twenty in breadth: and there they nourish very fair and thick gardens of palm-trees of divers kinds, &c. That place also feeds bees, and produceth opobalsamum, and cyprinum, and myrobalanum: so that one might not call it amiss, 'a divine country,'" &c.

Strabo speaks like things, "Jericho is a plain surrounded with mountains, which in some places bend to it after the manner of a theatre. A grove of palm-trees is there, with which are mixed also other garden plants, a fruitful place, abounding with palm-trees for the space of a hundred furlongs, all well watered, and full of habitations. The royal court and paradise of balsam is there," &c.

And Pliny; "Jericho, planted with groves of palms, and well watered with springs," &c.

Hence the city is called, the "city of palm-trees," [Deuteronomy 34:3](#), and [Judges 1:16](#): where for that, which, in the Hebrew, is *From the city of palm-trees*, the Targum hath *From*

the city Jericho: which nevertheless Kimchi approves not of, reckoning *the city of palm-trees* to be near Hebron: whom see. See also the Targum upon [Judges 3:13](#), and Kimchi there; and the Targum upon [Judges 4:5](#).

When you take a view of that famous fountain, as it is described by Josephus, thence you understand what waters of Jericho the Holy Ghost points out in [Joshua 16:1](#).--And when you think of that most pleasant country watered from thence, let that Rabbinical story come into your mind, of *The gift of Jericho*, of five hundred cubits square, granted to the sons of Hobab, Moses' father-in-law: of which see Baal Turim, upon [Numbers 10:29](#), and the Rabbins upon [Judges 1](#).

Chapter 47

Jericho itself.

We read, that this city was not only wasted by Joshua with fire and sword, but cursed also. "Cursed be he before the Lord, who shall rise up and build that city Jericho," [Joshua 6:26](#). "Nor was another city to be built (says the Talmudists), which was to be called by the name of Jericho: nor was Jericho itself to be built, although to be called by another name." And yet I know not by what chance this city crept out of dust and rubbish, lived again, and flourished, and became the second city to Jerusalem. The same persons which were just now cited, suppose that the restorer of it was Hiel, the son of Jehoshaphat, to wit, the same with Jechiel, [2 Chronicles 21:2](#); "Hiel (say they) was of Jehoshaphat, and Jericho of Benjamin." And that is a just scruple, which R. David objects,--how it came about, that the pious king Jehoshaphat should suffer such a horrid thing to be done within his kingdom? Much more, how this should have been done by his son? Let them dispute the business; we hasten somewhere else.

That, which ought not to be done,--being once done, stands good. Hiel did a cursed thing in building Jericho: yet Jericho was not to be cursed, being now built. A little after its restoration, it was made noble by the schools of the prophets, [2 Kings 2:5](#); and it flourished with the rest of the cities of Judea unto the destruction of the nation by the Babylonians.

It flourished more under the second Temple, so that it gave place to no city in Judea; yea, all gave place to it, besides Jerusalem. A royal palace was in it, where Herod ended his days: a Hippodromus, where the Jewish nobility, being imprisoned by him, were to be slain, when he expired: an amphitheatre, where his will was publicly opened, and read over; and sometime a sessions of the Sanhedrim, and "a noble troop of those, that waited in their courses at the Temple."

"The elders sometime assembled together in the chamber Beth-gadia in Jericho: the Bath Kol went forth, and said to them, There are two among you, who are fit to receive the Holy Ghost, and Hillel is one of them: they cast their eyes upon Samuel the Little, as the second. Another time the elders assembled together in a chamber in Jafne; the Bath Kol went forth, and said, There are two among you, who are fit to receive the Holy Ghost, and

Samuel the Little is one of them: they cast their eyes upon R. Lazar. And they rejoiced, that their judgment agreed with the sentence of the Holy Ghost."

"There is a tradition, that there were, at Jerusalem, twenty-four thousand men of the station; and half a station" (that is, twelve thousand men) "at Jericho. Jericho also could have produced a whole station; but because she would give place to Jerusalem, she produced only the half of a station."

Behold! five hundred men of every course residing at Jericho! But what were they? They were ready at hand to supply any courses that wanted, if there were any such at Jerusalem; and they took care of supplying them with necessaries, who officiated at Jerusalem. Hence it is the less to be wondered at, if you hear of a priest and a Levite passing along in the parable of him, that travelled between Jerusalem and Jericho, [Luke 10:31,32](#).

In so famous and populous a town, there could not but be some council of three-and-twenty, one, at least, of more remark, if not more,--when so many of the stations dwelling there were at hand, who were fit to be employed in government; and so many to be governed.

"*The men of Jericho* are famed for six things done by them: in three of which the chief council consented to them, but in the other three they consented not." Those things, concerning which they opposed them not, were these:--

I. "They ingrafted, or folded, together, palm-trees every day." Here is need of a long commentary, and they produce one, but very obscure. The business of the men of Jericho was about palm-trees; which they either joined together, and mingled males with females, or they ingrafted, or (as they commonly say) inoculated the more tender sprouts of the branches into those, that were older. So much indulgence was granted them by the wise men concerning the time, wherein these things are done, which elsewhere, would scarcely have been suffered; unless, as it seems, the nature of the place, and of the groves of palms, required it.

II. "They folded up the recitations of their phylacteries": that is, either not speaking them out distinctly; or omitting some doxologies or prayers; or pronouncing them with too shrill a voice. See the Gemara and the Gloss.

III. "They reaped, and gathered-in their sheaves, before the sheaf [*of first-fruits*] was offered": and this, partly, because of the too early ripeness of their corn in that place; and, partly, because their corn grew in a very low valley, and therefore it was not accounted fit to be offered unto the Mincha, or daily sacrifice. See the Gloss.

The three things, concerning which the wise men consented not to them, were these:--

I. Such fruits and branches, also certain fruits of the sycamine-trees, which their fathers had devoted to sacred uses,--they alienated into common.

II. "They ate, on the sabbath-day, under the tree, such fruits, as fell from the tree," although they were uncertain whether they had fallen on the sabbath-day or the eve of the sabbath: for such as fell on the sabbath were forbidden.

III. They granted a corner of the garden for herbs, in the same manner as a corner of the field was granted for corn.

Let the description of this city and place be concluded with those words of the Talmud, in the place noted in the margin: "Do they use a certain form of prayer upon balsam? Blessed be he, who hath created the ointment of our land." The Gloss is, "The ointment of our land: for it grows at Jericho; and, for its smell, it is called *Jericho*: and it is that Pannag of which mention is made in the Book of Ezekiel. 'Judah and the land of Israel were thy merchants in wheat of Minnith and Pannag.' This I have seen in the book of Josephus Ben Gorion." Judge, reader.

Chapter 48

Some miscellaneous matters belonging to the Country about Jericho.

Let us begin from the last encampings of Israel beyond Jordan.

[Numbers 33:49](#): "They encamped near Jordan from Beth-jeshimoth unto Abel-shittim."--"From Beth-jeshimoth to Abel-shittim were twelve miles." It is a most received opinion among the Jews, that the tents of the Israelites in the wilderness contained a square of twelve miles. So the Targum of Jonathan, upon Number 2:2; "The encamping of Israel was twelve miles in length, and twelve miles in breadth." And the Gemarists say, "It is forbidden a scholar to teach a tradition before his master, yea, not to do it, until he be twelve miles distant from him, according to the space of the encamping of Israel. But whence is that space proved? 'And they encamped near Jordan from Beth-jeshimoth to Abel-shittim.'--How far is that? Twelve miles."

They believe, also, that the bulk of the host took up the same space, while they passed Jordan. Nor is it unfit so to believe: for it, indeed, seems at least to have taken up a very large space in its passage: this especially being observed, that, while the ark stood in the middle of Jordan, none might come within two thousand cubits near it, [Joshua 3:4](#). When, therefore, it is said, "that the people passed over against Jordan," it is to be understood of the middle of the host,--or of those that carried the ark, and of those that went next after the ark.

From Abel to Jordan, were sixty furlongs (seven miles and a half). The breadth of Jordan from bank to bank was but of a moderate space. The Jerusalem Talmudists do write thus of it, in some part of it: "A fire sometime passed over Jordan" (that is, a flame kindled on this bank flew over to that). "But how far is the flame carried? R. Eleazar saith, For the most part to sixteen cubits; but when the wind drives it, to thirty.--R. Judah saith, To thirty cubits; and, when the wind drives it, to fifty.--R. Akibah saith, To fifty cubits; and when the wind blows, to a hundred."

From Jordan to Gilgal were fifty furlongs (six miles and a quarter). Therefore the whole journey of that day, from Abel to Gilgal, was fourteen miles, or thereabouts. The Talmudists, being deceived by the ambiguity of the word *Gilgal*, extend it to sixty miles, and more: whom

see afterward quoted in the eighty-eighth chapter. It is thus said in Midras Tillin, "Saul went, in one day, threescore miles."

Of the stones, set up by Joshua in Jordan and Gilgal, the Gemarists have these words:- "R. Judah saith, Aba Chalaphtha, and R. Eleazar Ben Mathia, and Chaninah Ben Chakinai, stood upon those stones, and reckoned them to weigh forty sata each."

Chapter 49

Hebron

From Jericho we proceed to Hebron, far off in situation, but next to it in dignity: yea, there was a time, when it went before Jerusalem itself in name and honour;--namely, while the first foundations of the kingdom of David were laid; and, at that time, Jericho was buried in rubbish, and Jerusalem was trampled upon by the profane feet of the Jebusites.

Hebron was placed, as in the mountainous country of Judea, so in a place very rocky, but yet in a very fruitful coast.

"There is no place, in all the land of Israel, more stony than Hebron: thence, a burying-place of the dead is there." The Gemarists sift what that means: "Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt, [Numbers 13:22](#)." And they reduce it to this sense, which you may find cited also in R. Solomon, upon that text of Moses, "There is no land more excellent than Egypt; as it is said, 'As the garden of the Lord, as Egypt': nor is there in Egypt any place more excellent than Zoan; as it is said, 'Her princes were in Zoan'; and yet Hebron was seven times nobler, however it were rocky, than Zoan." For this tradition obtained among them, "Rams from Moab, lambs from Hebron." And to this they apply that of Absalom, "Let me go, I pray, to Hebron, that I may pay my vow.--And why to Hebron?--R. Bar Bar Chanan saith, He went thither, that thence he might fetch lambs for sacrifice. For the turf was fine, yielding grass acceptable to sheep," &c.

You may observe the situation of Hebron, in respect of Jerusalem, from those things which are related of a daily custom and rite in the Temple. "The president of the service in the Temple was wont to say every morning, Go, and see whether it be time to kill the sacrifice. If it were time, he, that was sent to see, said, It is light. Mathia Ben Samuel said, The whole face of the east is light unto Hebron: to whom another answers, Well," &c. Upon which words Rambam thus; "There was a high place in the Temple, whither he who was sent to see went up; and when he saw the face of the east shining, he said, It is light, &c. And they who were in the court, said, What! As the light is unto Hebron?--That is, Is the light come so far, that thine eyes may see Hebron?--And he answered, Yes." So also the Gloss upon Tamid; "The morning (saith he, who is on the roof) is seen as far as Hebron; because they could see Hebron thence."

"And therefore they made mention of Hebron, (although the east was on that coast), that the memory of the merit of those, that were buried in Hebron, might occur at the daily sacrifice." They are the words of the author of Juchaisn, out of which those are especially to

be marked, "Though the east was on that coast"; or, "Though the east were on that quarter of the heaven." Consider which words, and consult the Gemarists upon the place quoted: for they understand those words,--"What! As the light is unto Hebron?"--of the light reaching as far as Hebron; just as the Gloss understands them of his eyes reaching thither that went to look. All which things compared, come at last to this,--if credit may be given to these authors,--that Hebron, however it be placed south of Jerusalem, yet did decline somewhat towards the east, and might be seen from the high towers in the Temple and in Jerusalem. Let the reader judge.

Of Machpelah, the burying-place near Hebron, very many things are said by very many men. The city was called Hebron, that is, *a consociation*,--perhaps, from the *pairs* there buried, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their wives.

Not a few believe Adam was buried there in like manner: some, that he was buried once, and buried again. "Adam said, (say they), After my death, they will come perhaps, and, taking my bones, will worship them; but I will hide my coffin very deep in the earth, 'in a cave within a cave.' It is therefore called, the cave Machpelah, or the *doubled* cave."

Chapter 50

Of the cities of Refuge.

Hebron, the most eminent among them, excites us to remember the rest. "The Rabbins deliver this; Moses separated three cities of refuge beyond Jordan, [Deut 4:41-43;] and, against them, Joshua separated three cities in the land of Canaan, [Josh 20:7,8]. And these were placed by one another, just as two ranks of vines are in a vineyard: Hebron in Judea against Bezer in the wilderness: Shechem in mount Ephraim against Ramoth in Gilead: Kedesh in mount Napthali against Golan in Basan. And these three were so equally disposed, that there was so much space from the south coast of the land of Israel to Hebron, as there was from Hebron to Shechem; and as much from Hebron to Shechem, as from Shechem to Kedesh; and as much from Shechem to Kedesh, as from Kedesh to the north coast of the land."

It was the Sanhedrim's business to make the ways to those cities convenient, by enlarging them, and by removing every stop, against which one might either stumble or dash his foot. No hillock or river was allowed to be in the way, over which there was not a bridge: and the way, leading thither, was, at least, two-and-thirty cubits broad. And in every double way, or in the parting of the ways, was written "Refuge, refuge,"--lest he that fled thither might mistake the way.

The mothers of the high priest used to feed and clothe those, that for murder were shut up in the cities of refuge, that they might not pray for the death of their sons,--since the fugitive was to be restored to his country and friends at the death of the high priest: but if he died before in the city of refuge, his bones were to be restored after the death of the high priest.

The Jews dream, that in the days of the Messiah, three other cities are to be added to those six which are mentioned in the Holy Scripture,--and they to be among the Kenites, the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites.

"Let him that kills the high priest by a sudden chance, fly to a city of refuge; but let him never return thence."

A Commentary of the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica

John Lightfoot

(1602-1675)

A Chorographical Century

Chapters 51-60

Chapter 51

Beth-lehem

The Jews are very silent about this city: nor do I remember that I have read any thing in them concerning it, besides those things which are produced out of the Old Testament; this only excepted, that the Jerusalem Gemarists do confess that the Messiah was born there before their times.

"Beth-lehem is a certain town in the land of the Jews, thirty-five furlongs distant from Jerusalem": and that towards the south.

The father of the ecclesiastical annals, citing these words of Eusebius, "But now, when in the eighteenth year of the empire of Adrian, the war was more vehemently kindled near the town called Beth-lehem (which was very well fortified with all manner of defence, nor was seated far from the city of Jerusalem)," &c.

The interpreter of Eusebius renders, Beth-thera: not illy, however it be not rendered according to the letter: perhaps crept into the word instead of by the carelessness of the copiers. But by what liberty the other should render it Beth-lehem, let himself see. Eusebius doth certainly treat of the city *Betar* (it is vulgarly written *Bitter*), of the destruction of which the Jews relate very many things with lamentation: which certainly is scarcely to be reckoned the same with Beth-lehem.

The same father of the annals adds, that Beth-lehem, from the times of Adrian to the times of Constantine, was profaned by the temple of Adonis: for the asserting of which he cites these words of Paulinus: "Hadrianus, supposing that he should destroy the Christian faith by offering injury to the place, in the place of the passion dedicated the image of Jupiter, and profaned Beth-lehem with the temple of Adonis": as also like words of Jerome: yet, he confesses, the contrary seems to be in Origen against Celsus: and that more true. For Adrian had no quarrel with the Christians, and Christianity,--but with the Jews, that cursedly rebelled against him.

Chapter 52

Betar

Of this city there is a deep silence in the Holy Scriptures, but a most clamorous noise in the Talmudic writings. It is vulgarly written, *Betar*, and rendered by Christians, *Bitter*, or *Bither*: but I find it written in the Jerusalem Talmud pretty often in the same page, to be

read, as it seems *Beth-Tar*; and casting away the first tau, which is very usual in the word, *Be-Tar*, 'the house of the inquirer.'--"Wherefore (say they) was *Beth-Tar* laid waste? Because it lighted candles after the destruction of the Temple. And why did it light candles? Because *the counsellors* at Jerusalem dwelt in the midst of the city. And when they saw any going up to Jerusalem, they said to him, 'We hear of you, that you are ambitious to be made a captain, or a counsellor': but he answered, 'There is no such thing in my mind.'--'We hear of you, that you are about to sell your wealth.' But he answered, 'Nor did this come into my mind.' Then would one of the company say, 'Whatsoever you ask of this man, write it, and I will seal it.' He therefore wrote, and his fellow sealed it: and they sent this feigned instrument to their friends, saying, 'If N. endeavours to come again to the possession of his wealth, suffer him not to do it, for he hath sold it among us.'"

The principal cause of the destruction of Beth-Tera was Ben-Cozba, and his rebellion against the Romans. The Babylonian writers assign another cause.

"For the foot of a chariot, was Bathara laid waste. It was a custom, that when an infant male was born, they planted a cedar; when an infant female, a pine; and, when the children contracted marriage, out of those trees they made the bride-chamber. On a certain day the daughter of the emperor passed by, and the foot of her chariot broke. They cut down such a cedar, and brought it to her. [The Jews] rose up against them, and beat them. It was told the emperor that the Jews rebelled. Being angry, he marched against them, and destroyed the whole horn of Israel," &c.

"Hadrian besieged Bether three years and a half.--And when they took it, they slew the men, the women, and the children, so that their blood flowed into the great sea. You will say, perhaps, that it was near the sea; but it was a mile distant. The tradition is, that R. Eliezer the Great saith, That there were two rivers in the valley of Jadaim, of which one flowed this way,--the other, that. And the Rabbins computed that the third part of them was blood, and two parts water. It was delivered also, that the heathen gathered the vintages, for the space of seven years, without dunging the land, because the vineyards were made fruitful enough by the blood of the Israelites."

The Jerusalem writers do hyperbolize enough concerning the distance of this city from the sea. "For if you say (say they) that it was near the sea, was it not distant forty miles? They say, that three hundred skulls of young children were found upon one stone: and that there were three chests of torn phylacteries, each chest containing nine bushels: but there are others that say, nine chests, each containing three bushels."

Josephus mentions "Betaris, and Cephartobas, two midland towns of Idumea":--where by *Idumea* he means the southern part of Judea, especially that that was mountainous: as appears by the context. He calls Idumea, properly so called, "Idumea the Great."

Chapter 53

Ephraim

We mean not here the land of Ephraim, but a certain town in the confines of that land: of which you read [2 Chronicles 13:19](#); and of which the Talmudic writers speak: "What is the best flour," to be offered in the Temple? "Michmas and Mezonechah obtain the first place for fine flour; Ephraim in the valley obtains the next place to them." These words are not read the same way by all.

Those of the Mishnaioth, in the eighth chapter, read, as we have writ it: the Tosaphtah also reads *Michmas*: but the Talmud...: the Aruch also hath *Michmas*: but for *Mezonechah*, it hath *Zanoah*...the Talmud *Ephoraim*: the Gloss saith, "*Ephoraim* is a city, of which it is thus written in the books of the Chronicles, 'And Abijah took *Ephraim*.'"

The Gemarists read it after the same manner, *Ephraim*, this story being added; "Jannes and Mambres said to Moses, Do you bring straw into Ephraim?" Which the Aruch reciting, adds these words; "There was a city in the land of Israel, very fruitful in bread-corn, called Ephraim: when Moses therefore came with his miracles,--Jannes and Mambres, who were the chief of Pharaoh's magicians, said unto him, This is our business, and we can do thus with our enchantments; you therefore are like one bringing straw into Ephraim, which is the city of bread-corn, and out of which is provision for many places: therefore, how doth any carry in straw thither?" &c.

Josephus, speaking of Vespasian, hath these words; "After he went into the hill country, he took two Toparchies,--namely, Gophnitica and Acrabatena: and, together with them, Beth-el and Ephraim, two small cities." Into this Ephraim, we suppose it was that Christ retired, in that story, [John 11:54](#).

Let us also add these things from the places alleged above. R. Josi saith, "They brought also of the wheat of *Barchaim*, and of *Caphar Achum*; which were near Jerusalem."

"For oil, Tekoa deserves the first praise. Aba Saul saith, *Ragab*, beyond Jordan, obtains the next to it. R. Eliezer Ben Jacob saith, Gush Chalab, in Galilee, obtains the third place."

Karchiim and *Atolin* "produce the best wine: Beth Rimmah and Beth Laban, in the hilly country,--and Caphar Sigana, in the valley, next to them."

Let us also add these words elsewhere: "He eateth all manner of victuals, and eateth not flesh: the clusters of figs of Keila are brought in. He drinks all manner of drink, but he drinks not wine: honey and milk are brought in." And elsewhere: "He eateth *the clusters of Keila*, and drinks honey and milk, and enters into the Temple."

Chapter 54

Tsok: and Beth Chadudo.

When they sent forth the goat Azazel, on the day of expiation,--before that, they set up ten tents, a mile distant one from another: where some betook themselves before that day, that they might be ready to accompany him, who brought forth the goat. Those of the better rank went out of Jerusalem with him, and accompanied him to the first tent. There others received him, and conducted him to the second; others to the third, and so to the tenth.

From the tenth to the rock *Tsok*, whence the goat was cast down, were two miles. They, therefore, who received him there, went not farther than a mile with him, that they might not exceed a sabbath day's journey: but, standing there, they observed what was done by him. "He snapped the scarlet thread into two parts, of which he bound one to the horns of the goat, and the other to the rock: and thrust the goat down; which, hardly coming to the middle of the precipice, was dashed and broke into pieces." The rock *Tsok* therefore was twelve miles distant from Jerusalem, according to later computation. But there are some, who assign nine-tenths only, and ten miles.--See the Gemarists.

Tsok, among the Talmudists, is any more craggy and lofty rock. Hence is that, "she went up to the top of the rocks and fell." Where the Gloss writes, "*Tsokin* are high and craggy mountains."

The first entrance into the desert was three miles from Jerusalem, and that place was called 'Beth Chadudo.' The Misna of Babylon writes thus of it; "They say to the high priest, The goat is now come into the wilderness." But whence knew they, that he was now come into the wilderness? They set up high stones; and, standing on them, they shook handkerchiefs; and hence they knew that the goat was now got into the wilderness. R. Judah saith, 'Was not this a great sign to them?' From Jerusalem to Beth Chadudo were three miles. They went forward the space of a mile, and went back the space of a mile, and they tarried the space of a mile: and so they knew that the goat was now come to the wilderness.

The Jerusalem Misna thus: "R. Judah saith, Was not this a great sign to them? From Jerusalem to Beth-horon were three miles. They went forward the space of a mile," &c.

From these things compared, it is no improbable conjecture, that the goat was sent out towards Beth-horon, which both was twelve miles distant from Jerusalem, and had rough and very craggy rocks near it: and that the sense of the Gemarists was this,--In the way to Beth-horon, were three miles to the first verge of the wilderness,--and the name of the place was Beth Chadudo.

Chapter 55

Divers matters.

I. Beth-cerem, [Nehemiah 3:14](#). "The stones, as well of the altar, as of the ascent to the altar, were *from the valley of Beth-cerem*, which they digged out beneath the barren land. And thence they are wont to bring whole stones, upon which the working iron came not."

The fathers of the traditions, treating concerning the blood of women's terms, reckon up five colours of it; among which that, "which is like the water of the earth, out of the valley of Beth-cerem."--Where the Gloss writes thus, "Beth-cerem is the name of a place: whence a man fetches turf, and puts it into a pot, and the water swims upon it: that is, he puts water to it, until the water swims above the turf."

The Gemarists, examining this clause, hath these words: "R. Meir saith, He fetched the turf out of the valley of Beth-cerem. R. Akibah saith, Out of the valley of *Jotapata*. R. Jose saith, Out of the valley of *Sicni*. R. Simeon saith, Also out of the valley of Genesara."

II. Let the author of Aruch render it for me: "The mount of Simeon brought forth three hundred bags of broken bread for the poor every sabbath evening." But instead of 'the mount of Simeon brought forth,'--whence it might be taken for the lot of the land of Simeon,--he renders it, "Rabbi Simeon brought forth," &c.

"But why was it laid waste? Some say, For fornication:--others say, Because they played at bowls." The town Simonias is mentioned by Josephus in his life, "in the confines of Galilee."

III. "Two tribes had nine hundred cities." The Gloss is: "There were nine hundred cities in the tribe of Judah, and in the tribe of Simeon: therefore, nine became the priests' and Levites'." See [Joshua 21:16](#), and weigh the proportion.

IV. "Nittai the Tekoite brought a cake out of Bitur but they received it not. The Alexandrians brought their cakes from Alexandria; but they received them not. *The inhabitants of mount Zeboim* brought their first-fruits before Pentecost; but they received them not," &c. The Gloss is, "*Bitar* was without the land." Therefore, this was not that Bitar, whose destruction we have mentioned before.

"Mount Zeboim," wheresoever it was, was certainly within the land: for otherwise the first-fruits were not to be received from thence. Now they refused them, not because they were unlawful in themselves, but because they were brought in an unlawful time: for "they offered not the first-fruits before Pentecost," saith the tradition; where also this same story is repeated.

Mention is made of *Migdal Zabaia* (a word of the same etymology), in that notable story: "Three cities were laid waste; *Chabul* for discord: *Shichin* for magical arts: and *Migdal Zabaia*" (or the town of *dyers*) "for fornication."

V. Socoh, [Joshua 15:35](#). Thence was Antigonus, some time president of the Sanhedrim. "*Antigonus of Soco* received the Cabala of Simeon the Just."

VI. "*Be Teri* and *Kubi*." The Gemarists, speaking of David's battle with Ishbi-benob, [2 Samuel 21](#), make mention of these things: "When they were come to Kubi (say they), they said, 'Let us arise up against him':--when they were come to Be Teri, they said, 'Do they kill the lion between the two she-whelps?'" Where the Gloss writes thus: "David pursued them flying, and he approached near to the land of the Philistines: and when he came to Kubi, which was between the land of Israel and the Philistines, they said, &c. *Be Teri* is also the name of a place."

VII. *Gophna*.--Concerning the situation of this place it is doubted whether it is to be assigned to Judah or to the land of Samaria. These things certainly seem plainly to lay it to Judea. Josephus saith these words concerning Titus marching with his army to Jerusalem: "He passeth swiftly through the country of Samaria unto Gophna:...where tarrying one day,

in the morning he marches forward; and, after some days, pitches his station along the valley of thorns unto a certain town called Gabbath-Saul."

The Jerusalem Talmudists write thus: "Fourscore pair of brethren, priests, married fourscore pair of sisters, priestesses, in Gophna, in one night." You will scarce find so many priests in the country of Samaria.

"The synagogue of the men of Gophna was in Zippor":--whom you will scarcely believe to be Samaritans.

Of the eleven Toparchies, the second after Jerusalem was Toparchia Gophnitica, in Pliny Zophanitica, the Toparchy of Gophna.

The word *Gophna* is derived from the *vineyards*.

VIII. "The valley of Rimmon."--"Seven elders came together to intercalate the year in the valley of Rimmon:--namely, R. Meir, R. Juda, R. Jose, R. Simeon, R. Nehemiah, R. Lazar Ben Jacob, and R. Jochanan Sandelar." And a little after; "There was a marble rock there: into which every one fastened a nail; therefore it is called to this day, 'The Rock of Nails.'"

IX. "They do not bring the sheaf [*of first-fruits*] but from some place near Jerusalem. But if some place near Jerusalem shall not produce those first-fruits, then they fetch it farther off. There was a time when a sheaf was brought out of the gardens of *Zeriphin*, and the two loaves out of the valley of *En-Socar*."

X. "They sometime asked R. Joshua, 'What concerning the sons of the envious woman?' (as [1 Samuel 1:6](#)). He answered, 'Ye put my head between two high mountains,--namely, the school of Shammai and of Hillel, that they may dash out my brains: but I testify concerning the family of *Beth Anubai*, of *Beth Zebuim*; of the family of *Beth-Nekiphi*, of Beth-Koshesh, that they were the sons of the envious woman; and yet their posterity stood great priests, and offered at the altar.'"

Chapter 56

Samaria. Sychem.

"The country of Samaria lies in the middle, between Judea and Galilee. For it begins at a town called Ginea, lying in the Great plain, and ends at the Toparchy of the Acrabateni: the nature of it nothing differing from Judea," &c.

[*Acrobata* was distant from Jerusalem, *the space of a day's journey northwards*.]

Samaria, under the first Temple, was the name of a city,--under the second, of a country. Its metropolis at that time was Sychem; "A place destined to revenges": and which the Jews, as it seems, reproached under the name of Sychar, [John 4:5](#), from the words of the prophet, "Woe to the drunken Ephraimites," [Isaiah 28:1](#). The mountains of Gerizim and Ebal touched on it.

The city Samaria was at last called Sebaste; and Sychem, Neapolis. R. Benjamin thus writes of them: "Sebaste is Samaria; where still the palace of Ahab king of Israel is known. Now that city was in a mountain, and well fortified; and in it were springs, and well-watered

land, and gardens, and paradises, and vineyards, and olive-yards. And two parsae thence (eight miles) is Neapolis, which is also Sychem in mount Ephraim. And it is seated in a valley between the mountains Gerizim and Ebal: and in it are about a hundred Cutheans observing the law of Moses only, and they are called Samaritans: and they have priests of the seed of Aaron." And a little after, "They sacrifice in the Temple in mount Gerizim, on the day of the Passover, and the feast-days, upon the altar, which they built upon mount Gerizim, of those stones which the children of Israel set up when they passed over Jordan," &c. And afterward, "In mount Gerizim are fountains and paradises: but mount Ebal is dry, like the stones and rocks: and between them, in the valley, is the city Sychem."

Josephus speaking of Vespasian; "He turned away to Ammaus, thence through the country of Samaria, and by Neapolis so called, but Mabartha by the inhabitants," &c. *Maabartha*.

"R. Ismael Ben R. Josi, *went to Neapolis*. The Cutheans came to him: to whom he said, 'I see that ye do not worship to that mountain, but to the idols which are under it: for it is written'; 'and Jacob hid the idols under the grove, which was near Shechem.'"

You may not improperly divide the times of Samaria under the second Temple into heathenism,--namely, before the building of the Temple at Gerizim,--and after that into Samaritanism, as it was distinguished from Judaism, and as it was an apostasy from it: although both religions indeed departed not a hair's breadth from deceitful superstition.

The author of Juchasin does not speak amiss here: "Then" (under Simeon the Just) "Israel went into parties. Part followed Simeon the Just, and Antigonus his scholar, and their school; as they had learned from Ezra and the prophets: part, Sanballat, and his son-in-law: and they offered sacrifices without the Temple of God, and instituted rites out of their own heart. In that Temple, Manasseh, the son-in-law of Sanballat, the son of Joshua, the son of Jozedek the high priest, performed the priest's office. And at that time Zadok and Baithus, the scholars of Antigonus, did flourish; and hence was the beginning of the schism;--namely, when, in the days of Antigonus, many went back to mount Gerizim."

That Temple flourished about two hundred years, and it perished by the sword and fire of Hyrcanus: but the Samaritan superstition perished not, but lasted for many ages; as odious to the Jews as heathenism, [John 4:9](#). Yet they confess that "*the land of the Samaritans was clean*, and their fountains clean, and their dwellings clean, and their paths clean." But much dispute is made about their victuals, in the place noted in the margin. "R. Jacob Bar Acha in the name of R. Lazar saith, 'The victuals of the Cutheans are lawful,' which is to be understood of that food with which their wine and vinegar is not mingled. It is a tradition. They sometimes said, Why is the wine of *Ugdor* forbidden? Because of [*its nearness to*] Caphar Pagash. Why the wine of Burgatha? Because of Birath Sorika. Why the wine of En Cushith? Because of Caphar Salama. But they said afterward, If it be open, it is every where forbidden; if it be covered, it is lawful." And a story concerning R. Simeon Ben Lazar follows; who came

into a certain city of the Samaritans, and a certain Samaritan scribe came to me; from whom when he asked something to drink, and it was set before him, "he doubted about it," &c. And other things to that purpose are read not much after: "*No wine was found in all Samaria*, on a certain eve of the sabbath, but, in the end of the sabbath, there was abundance; for the Syrians had brought it, and the Samaritans received it of them," &c.

They took not the half-shekel of the Cutheans, nor the pigeons of women after child-birth, &c. "Rabbi said, 'A Samaritan is as a heathen.' R. Simeon Ben Gamaliel saith, A Cuthean is as an Israelite in all things. R. Lazar, The tradition is concerning the heathen, not concerning the Cutheans, &c. But the tradition contradicts R. Lazar," &c.

But that deserves to be observed, "*The Cuiheans, when they make their unleavened bread with the Israelites, are to be believed concerning the putting away of leaven*: but when they do not make their unleavened bread with the Israelites, are not to be believed concerning the putting away of leaven. R. Josah saith, This is to be understood of them as to their houses; but as to their courts, they may be suspected: for so they interpret, 'Leaven shall not be found in your houses'; not, 'in your courts.'--It is a tradition. Rabban Simeon Ben Gamaliel saith, In whatsoever precept the Cutheans converse, they are more accurate in it than the Israelites. This is to be understood, saith R. Simeon, *concerning the time past*,--namely, *when they were scattered about in their towns*; but now, when they have neither precept nor any remainders of a precept, they are suspected, and they are corrupted"...It is something difficult what that means, "They were scattered in their towns," whether it is spoken of the Cutheans residing within their own towns,--or of the Jews residing with them,--or of them residing with the Jews. Whatsoever that is, it is clear certainly, both hence and elsewhere, that the Samaritans sometime did dwell together with the Jews, being here and there sprinkled among them, and the Jews here and there among the Samaritans. Certainly that is worthy of observing which Josephus related of Herod's rebuilding Sebaste, heretofore called Samaria: "In the land of Samaria (saith he) he compassed a city with a very fair wall twenty furlongs, and brought six thousand inhabitants into it": (do you think all these were Samaritans?) "and on these he bestowed a very fertile land; and, in the middle of this work, he set up a very great temple to Caesar, and made a grove about it of three half furlongs, and called the city Sebaste."

"The Samaritans (saith R. Benjamin) have not the letters he or ain, or cheth. He is in the name of Abraham, *And they have not honour*. Cheth, is in the name of Isaac, *And they have not mercy* Ain is in the name of Jacob, *And they have not gentleness*. But for these letters they use aleph: and hence it is known that they are not of the seed of Israel." Compare these things with the Samaritan interpreter of the Pentateuch, and judge.

Chapter 57

Caesarea. Strato's Tower.

The Arabian interpreter thinks the first name of this city was Hazor, [Joshua 11:1](#). The Jews, Ekron, [Zephaniah 2:4](#). "R. Abhu saith," (he was of Caesarea,) "Ekron shall be rooted out"; this is Caesarea, the daughter of Edom, which is situated among things profane. She was a goad, sticking in Israel, in the days of the Grecians. But when the kingdom of the Asmonean family prevailed, it overcame her, &c. R. Josi Bar Chaninah saith, What is that that is written, 'And Ekron shall be as a Jebusite?' ([Zech 9:7](#)). These are the theatres and judgment-seats which are in Edom, in which the chief men of Judah hereafter shall publicly teach the law. R. Isaac said, Leshem is Panias, and Ekron is Caesarea, the daughter of Edom."

The Jews are scarce in earnest when they say Caesarea is the same with Ekron: but partly, they play with the sound of the words 'Ekron,' and 'shall be rooted out'; partly, they propound to themselves to reproach her, while they compare that city, for the most part heathen, with Ekron, the city of Beelzebub.

When the Asmoneans had snatched away this city out of the hand of the Grecians, the name of it was changed into "The taking of the tower Shur," as the Gemarists tell us in the place alleged: or as the author of Juchasin, "The taking of the tower *Tzur*":--or as the Jerusalem Talmudists (unless my conjecture deceives me), "the tower *Sid*." Whether out of these words you can make out the name of "the tower of Strato," it is your part to study; that certainly was the denomination of this place before it was called Caesarea.

It was distant six hundred furlongs, or thereabout, from Jerusalem (that is, seventy-five miles), as Josephus related in that story of an Essene Jew that prophesied. Who, when he saw Antigonus, the brother of Aristobulus, passing by in the Temple, having been now sent for by his brother (indeed, that he might be slain by treachery), "O strange! (saith he) now it is good for me to die; because that which I foretold proves a lie. For Antigonus lives, who ought this day to die: and Strato's tower is the place appointed for his death: which is distant six hundred furlongs hence: and there remains yet four hours of day. But the very time makes my prediction false." Having said these things, the old man remained perplexed in his thoughts; but by and by news was brought that Antigonus was slain in a certain place underground, "in a certain dark passage," which also was called, "Strato's tower."

Herod built the city to the honour and name of Caesar, and made a very noble haven at vast expenses. "He built all the city with white stone, and adorned it with most splendid houses: in which especially he shewed the natural greatness of his mind. For between Dori and Joppa, in the middle of which this city lay, it happened that all the seacoast was destitute of havens, &c. He made the greater haven of Pireus, &c.: and, at the mouth of it, stood three great statues, &c. There were houses joining to the haven, and they also were of white stone, &c. Over against the haven's mouth was the temple of Caesar, situate upon a rising ground, excellent both for the beauty and greatness of it; and in it a large statue of Caesar, &c. The rest of the works, which he did there, was an amphitheatre, a theatre, and a market, all worthy to be mentioned," &c. See more in Josephus.

Caesarea was inhabited mixedly by Jews, heathens, and Samaritans. Hence some places in it were profane and unclean to the Jews.

"R. Nichomi Bar R. Chaija Bar Abba said, My father passed not under the arch of Caesarea; but R. Immi passed. R. Ezekiah, R. Cohen, and R. Jacob Bar Acha, walked in the palace of Caesarea: when they came to the arch, R. Cohen departed from them; but when they came to a clean place, he again betook himself to them." This story is recited Beracoth, fol. 6. 1; and there it is said that they walked in the palace of Zippor.

"One brought a bill of divorce from the haven of Caesarea. Concerning which when judgment was had before R. Abhu, he said, There is no need to say, It was written, I being present,--and I being present, it was sealed. For the haven of Caesarea is not as Caesarea."

Of the various strifes and uproars between the Caesarean Greeks and Jews, in which the Jews always went by the worst, Josephus hath very much. "Another disturbance (saith he) was raised at Caesarea, of the Jews mingled there, rising up against the Syrians that were in it." The contest was about priority and chiefdom, and it was transacted before Nero, "And the Greeks of Caesarea overcame," &c. Where the reader will observe, that the Syrians and Greeks are convertible terms.

In this city were the first seeds of a direful war, by reason of workshops, built by a certain Greek of Caesarea, near a synagogue of the Jews. Twenty thousand men were slain there afterward on one sabbath-day. You may read of more seditions and bloodshed at that place, before the destruction of the nation, in the author quoted.

Long after the destruction of it, here the schools and doctors of the Jews flourished; so that "the Rabbins of Caesarea" are celebrated every where in the Talmudical books.

I. R. Hoshai Rubba, or the Great.--"R. Jochanan said, We travelled to R. Hoshai Rubba to Caesarea, to learn the law."

II. R. Abhu.--"R. Abhu appointed divers sounds of the trumpet at Caesarea."--"R. Abhu sent his son from Caesarea to Tiberias to the university," &c.--"The Cutheans of Caesarea asked R. Abhu, saying, Your fathers were contented with our things, why are not ye also? He answered, Your fathers corrupted not their works, but you have corrupted them."

III. R. Achavah and R. Zeira.--"R. Mena said, I travelled to Caesarea, and I heard R. Achavah and R. Zeira."

IV. R. Zerikan.--"R. Mena said, I heard R. Zerikan at Caesarea."

V. "R. Prigori of Caesarea."

VI. Ulla of Caesarea. And,

VII. R. Ada of Caesarea, and R. Tachalipha, &c.

Mention is made of "the synagogue Mardatha, (or Maradtha,) of Caesarea": we do not inquire of the reason of the name, for it is written elsewhere "The synagogue Madadta";--in both places with this story joined; "R. Abhu sat teaching in the synagogue Maradta of Caesarea. The time came of lifting up hands, and they asked him not of that matter. The

time of eating came, and of that they asked him. To whom he replied, Ye ask me concerning the time of eating, but not of the lifting up of hands. Which when they heard, every one withdrew himself, and fled."

Chapter 58

Antipatris. Caphar Salama.

We find this town marked out heretofore by a double name, if we believe some. 1. It is called Caphar Salama by some, of which mention is made by Josephus, and the Book of the Maccabees. 2. Capharzaba by Josephus himself: "But Alexander, fearing his" [Antiochus Dionysius] "coming, digs a deep trench, beginning at Capharzaba, which is now called Antipatris, unto the sea of Joppa, a hundred and fifty furlongs." Note, by the way, from Joppa to Antipatris is a hundred and fifty furlongs, that is, eighteen miles.

We will not contend about the name; of the situation of it, as it stands almost in all maps, we doubt. We will give the reason of our scruple by those things that follow; in the mean time we will give some history of the place.

I. Herod built it in memory of his father Antipater. "For he raised (saith Josephus) a monument to his father, and a city, which he built in the best plain of his kingdom, rich in springs and woods, and called it Antipatris."

II. Hither was Paul brought when he was carried to Caesarea, [Acts 23:31](#); where, unless those words be rendered by no unusual interpretation, "they brought him by night towards Antipatris,"--you must place that city much nearer Jerusalem than almost all the maps do.

III. This measuring once and again occurs among the Gemarists, "From Gebath to Antipatris."--"From Gebath to Antipatris (say they) were sixty myriads of cities, the least of which was Beth-Shemesh." We do not assert the truth of the thing; we only take notice of the phrase.

And again; "Hezekiah the king (say they) fixed his sword to the door of Beth-Midras, and said, Whosoever studieth not the law shall be run through with that sword. They make inquiry from Dan even to Beersheba, and found not any one uninstructed: from Gebath to Antipatris, and found not boy or girl, man or woman, who did not well know the traditions of cleanness and uncleanness." Where the Gloss is; "Gebath and Antipatris were places in the utmost borders."--Think of the scene of the story, and how such an encomium could reach as far as Antipatris, almost in the middle of Samaria, as it is placed in the maps. And what authority had Hezekiah to make inquiry among the Samaritans?

The Talmudists also say, that the meeting of Alexander the Great, and of Simeon the Just, was at Antipatris. "The Cutheans (say they) prayed Alexander the Great, that he would destroy the Temple [*of Jerusalem*]. Some came, and discovered the thing to Simeon the Just. Therefore what does he? He puts on the high priest's garments, and veils himself with the high priest's veil: and he and the chief men of Israel went forth, holding torches in their hands. Some went this way and others that, all night, till the morning brake forth. When

the morning grew light, said (Alexander) to his men, Who are those?--The Jews, said they, who have rebelled against you. When they were come to *Antipatris*, the sun arose, and they were met by these: when Alexander saw Simeon the Just lighting down out of his chariot he worshipped him," &c.

Do you think that the high priest, clothed in his priestly garments, and the Jews, went through all Samaria almost in such solemn procession? Josephus, relating this story, only the name of Jaddua changed, saith this meeting was "at a certain place called Sapha. But this name, being changed into the Greek language, signifies, A watch-tower. For the buildings of Jerusalem and the Temple might from thence be seen." Of which place he and we treat elsewhere under the name of *Scopus*, and *Tzophim*.

Chapter 59

Galilee

"There is Galilee the upper, and Galilee the nether, and the valley. From Caphar Hananiah, and upwards,--whatsoever land produceth not sycamines, is Galilee the upper: but from Caphar Hananiah, and below, whatsoever produceth sycamines, is Galilee the nether. There is also the coast of Tiberias, and the valley."

"Phoenice and Syria compass both Galilees, both the upper and the nether, so called. Ptolemais and Carmel bound the country westward."

That which is said before of the sycamines, recalls to mind the city Sycaminon, of which Pliny speaks: "We must go back (saith he) to the coast, and to Phoenice. There was the town Crocodilon: it is a river. The remembrance of cities. Dorum, Sycaminum, the promontory Carmel," &c.

And Josephus: "He set sail, and, being brought to the city called Sycaminum, there he landed his forces."

Shikmonah the name of a place, among the Talmudists, seemed to design that town...

Since the whole land of Samaria lay between Judea and Galilee, it is no wonder if there were some difference both of manners and dialect between the inhabitants of those countries. Concerning which, see the eighty-sixth and the eighty-seventh chapters.

"There are two hundred and four cities and towns in Galilee":--which is to be understood of those that are more eminent and fortified.

In nether Galilee, those, among others, were fortified by Josephus,--Jotopata, Beersabee, Salamis, Parecho, Japha, Sigo, Mount Itaburion, Tarichee, Tiberias.

In upper Galilee, the rock Acharabon, Seph, Jamnith, Mero. More will occur to us as we go on.

Chapter 60

Scythopolis. Beth-shean, the beginning of Galilee.

The bonds of Galilee were, "on the south, Samaris and Scythopolis, unto the flood of Jordan."

Scythopolis is the same with Beth-shean, of which is no seldom mention in the Holy Scriptures, [Joshua 17:11](#); [Judges 1:27](#); [1 Samuel 31:10](#). "Bethsaine (saith Josephus), called by the Greeks Scythopolis." It was distant but a little way from Jordan, seated in the entrance to a great valley: for so the same author writes, "Having passed Jordan, they came to a great plain, where lies before you the city Bethsane," &c.

"Before-time it was called Nysa (Pliny being our author), by Father Bacchus, his nurse being there buried."

It was a part of the land of Israel, when it was first subdued; but scarcely, when it was subdued the second time; as R. Solomon speaks not amiss. Hence it passed into a Greek denomination, and was inhabited by Gentiles. Among whom nevertheless not a few Jews dwelt, who also had sometime their schools there, and their doctors. "*The men of Beth-shean asked R. Immi*, What if a man take away stones from one synagogue, and build another synagogue with them? He answered, It is not lawful." And mention is made "*of something done in Beth-shean* by the doctors about the wine of the heathen."

"Resh Lachish saith, If Paradise be in the land of Israel, *Beth-shean is the gate of it*: if it be in Arabia, Beth-geram is the gate of it: if among the rivers, Damascus." The Gloss is, "The fruits of Beth-shean were the sweetest of all in the land of Israel." "Fine linen garments were made in Beth-shean."

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica

John Lightfoot
(1602-1675)
A Chorographical Century
Chapters 61-70

Chapter 61

Caphar Hananiah. The Middle of Galilee.

It seems also to be called 'Caphar Hanan': hence "R. Jacob of Caphar Hanan."

Mention is made of this place once and again: "If any one have five sheep in Caphar Hananiah, and five more *in Caphar Uthni*, they are not joined together," that is, they are not numbered to be tithed, "until he hath one in Zippor."--The Gloss is, "From Caphar Uthni to Caphar Hananiah, are two-and-thirty miles, and Zippor is in the middle."

"The men of the family of Mamal, and the men of the family of Gorion, in the years of dearth, distributed to the poor figs and raisins in Arumah. And the poor of Caphar Shichin, and the poor of Caphar Hanaiah, came: *and when it now grew dark, they contained themselves within the bounds [of the sabbath]*, and in the morning went forward." The Gloss is, "Arumah is the name of a place. The poor of Caphar Shichin were neighbours to those of Arumah, being distant only four thousand (*cubits*)." Which distance exceeding a sabbath-day's journey, the poor, before the coming-in of the sabbath, contained themselves within the bounds of Arumah; that, the morning following, they might betake themselves to the houses of those that distributed their charity, and not break the sabbath. He that turns over the Talmudical writers will meet with very frequent mention of this city.

You observe before in Pliny, that Sycaminum was seated between Dor and Carmel; and in the Talmudic writers, that the plenty of *sycamines* began at Caphar Hananiah.

Chapter 62

The disposition of the tribes in Galilee.

The country of Samaria contained only two tribes, and those of the brethren, Ephraim and Manasses: Galilee four, Issachar, Zebulun, Nephthalim, and Asher, and a part also of the Danites.

The maps agree indeed about the order in which these tribes were seated, but about the proper place of their situation, Oh how great a disagreement is there among them! The tribe of Issachar held the south country of Galilee: some maps place it on the south of the sea of Gennesaret, not illy: but it is ill done of them to stretch it unto the sea itself: and others, worst of all, who set it on the west of that sea. Of this land Josephus writes thus; "And after these (the Manassites) Issachar maketh mount Carmel and the river her bounds in length, and mount Itaburion in breadth."

The country of Zabulon touched upon that of Issachar on the north. Some maps spread it out unto the sea of Gennesaret; some place it a long way above that sea northwardly; the former not well,--the latter exceedingly ill. Of it thus writes the same Josephus, "The Zabulonites had for their portion the land unto Gennesaret, extending unto Carmel and the sea." Observing that clause, "unto Gennesaret," we (persuaded also by the Talmudical writers, and led by reason) do suppose the land of Zabulon to lie on the south shore and coast of the sea of Gennesaret, and that whole sea to be comprised within the land of Nephthali. With what arguments, we are led we shew afterward, when we treat of that sea. Which assertion, we know, is exposed, and lies open to this objection:--

Object. Josephus saith, in the place but now quoted, that, "the upper parts of Galilee unto mount Libanus, and the springs of Jordan," belonged to the portion of Nephthali. But now if you stretch the portion of Nephthali from the springs of Jordan to the utmost southern coast of the sea of Gennesaret (which our opinion does), alas, how much doth this exceed the proportion of the other tribes! For from Scythopolis, the utmost south border of Galilee, to the south coast of the sea of Gennesaret, was not above fifteen miles: within which space the whole breadth of the two tribes of Issachar and Zabulon is contained. But from the south coast of Gennesaret to the springs of Jordan, were about forty miles; which to assign to the land of Nephthali alone, is neither proportionable nor congruous.

Ans. This objection indeed would have some weight in it, if the land of Nephthali did extend itself eastwardly as much as the land of Issachar and Zabulon. For these run out as far as the Mediterranean sea; but that hath the land of Asher, and the jurisdiction of Tyre and Sidon lying between it and the sea. So that when the breadth of those countries is measured from south to north, the breadth of this is measured from east to west. There is therefore no such great inequality between these, when this is contained in the like straits of breadth with them, and they enjoy the like length with this.

The confines of the land of Nephthali bounded the land of Asher on one side, and those of Tyre and Sidon on the other: and this land, in the same manner as the portion of Nephthali, extends itself in length from south to north; and (which somewhat agrees with our opinion, and answers the objection mentioned before) Josephus allows it a greater length than we do the land of Nephthali, or at least equal to it. For, "The Asherites possess all that hollow valley so called, because it is such that runs from Carmel to Sidon."

Chapter 63

The west coast of Galilee-Carmel.

The people of Issachar had "Carmel and the river for their bounds in length": the people of Zabulon, "Carmel and the sea."

Carmel was not so much one mountain as a mountainous country, containing almost the whole breadth of the land of Issachar, and a great part of that of Zabulon. It was, as it seems, a certain famous peak among many other mountain tops, known by the same name,

lifted up and advanced above the rest. The promontory Carmel, in Pliny, and in the mountain a town of the same name, heretofore called *Ecbatane*; where probably Vespasian sometimes consulted the oracle of the god Carmel.

The sea washes upon the foot of the mountain. "R. Samuel Bar Chaiah Bar Judah said, in the name of R. Chaninah, Any one sitting upon mount Carmel when the orb of the setting sun begins now to disappear, if he goes down and washes himself in the great sea, and goes up and eats his *Truma*, *it is to be presumed that he washed in the day time.*"

"Carmel and the river." What is that river? Kishon, say the maps: for some describe it not far from Carmel, pouring out itself into the sea: and that not without a reason, fetched from [1 Kings 18:40](#). But you must suppose Kishon to flow south of Carmel,--not, as some would have it, on the north.

"The lake Cendevia flows at the foot of Carmel; and out of it the river Pagida or Bel, mingling glassy sands with its small shore"; so Pliny,--who hath moreover these words, "Near is the colony of Claudius Caesar, Ptolemais, heretofore Ace, the town Ecdippa, the white promontory, Tyrus, heretofore an island, &c. Thence are the town Ide [otherwise Enhydra], and Sarepta, and Ornithon; and Sidon, skillful in making glass," &c.

These places you may call not so much the bounds of Galilee as of Phoenicia: for in Ptolemais itself, or Acon, was the separation and parting of the land of Israel from Phoenicia. Hence Josephus, "Phoenice and Syria do compass the two Galilees, the upper and the nether so called: and Ptolemais and Carmel set bounds to the country on the west."--What! do Ptolemais and Carmel stint the whole length of Galilee on the west? He had said elsewhere, which we also have produced elsewhere, that the land of Nephthali was extended as far as mount Libanus (on the north): alas, how far behind Ptolemais! And the land Asher was extended so far also: but "Ptolemais was the sea-borders of Palestine" (to use Pliny's words), for from hence onward were the territories of Tyre and Sidon; and Galilee was not now bounded any longer by the sea, but by those territories.

We saw in the scheme produced by us in the second chapter of this little work, wherein the compass of the land under the second Temple is briefly described, how, "The walls of Aco" are there set for a bound; and that in the sense which we speak of, which afterward also will appear more....

Chapter 64

Acon. Ptolemais.

"Ptolemais" (which is also called Acon) "is a city of Galilee on the sea-coast, situate in a great champaign, but it is compassed with hills; on the east, sixty furlongs off, with the hill-country of Galilee; on the south with Carmel, distant a hundred and twenty furlongs; on the north, with a very high mountain which is called Climax" (or the ladder), "belonging to the Tyrians, and is a hundred furlongs distant. Two miles off of that city the river Beleus flows, a very small one, near which is the sepulchre of Memnon; having about it the space

of a hundred cubits, but well worthy admiration. For it is in the form of a round valley, affording glassy sand, which when many ships coming thither have gathered, the place is again replenished."

"From Acon onwards to the north" (is heathen land), and Acon itself is reckoned for the north (that is, for heathen land).

"In Acon the land of Israel is, and is not." And therefore, "R. Josi Ben Hananiah kissed the arch of Acon, and said, Hitherto is the land of Israel."

"R. Simeon Ben Gamaliel said, I saw Simeon Ben Cahna drinking wine in Acon, &c. But was it within the bounds of the land or not?" See the author of Juchasin disputing largely of this matter, in the place of the margin.

There was *the bath of Venus* in Acon: Where R. Gamaliel washing, was asked by a certain heathen (whose name in the Babylonian 'Proculus, the son of the philosopher'), "What have you to do with the bath of *Venus*,--Then it is written in your law, 'There shall not cleave to thy hand any of the accursed thing?' He answered, I must not answer you in the bath" (because you must not speak of the law when you stand naked). "When he came out therefore he said, I went not into her bounds, but she came into mine." (The Gloss is, 'The bath was before she was.')

"And we say not, Let us make a fair bath for *Venus*,--but, Let us make a fair *Venus* for the bath," &c.

A story, done at Acon before R. Judah, is related, not unworthy to be mentioned. "Rabbi came to a certain place, and saw the men of that place baking their dough in uncleanness. When he inquired of them, Why they did so, they answered, A certain scholar came hither, and taught us, the waters are not of those waters (that bring pollution). He spake of the waters of *eggs*; but they thought that he spake of *the waters of the marshes*." These things we have the more willingly produced, that the reader may see that the letter ain was no sound with these; examples like to which we bring elsewhere. Now hear the Glosser; "Rabbi saw this (saith he) in Acon, in which is Israelitic land and heathen land:--now he saw them standing within the limits of Israelitic land, and baking their dough in uncleanness, and wondered, until they told him, A certain scholar came hither," &c.

Caphar Acon, is very frequently mentioned by the Talmudists.

"A city which produceth fifteen hundred footmen, as *Caphar Acon*, if nine dead persons be carried out thence in three days successively, behold! it is the plague: but if in one day, or in four days, then it is not the plague. And a city which produceth five hundred foot, as *Caphar Amiku*," &c.

Hence are the names of some Acon Rabbins; as,

"R. Tanchum, the son of R. Chaia of *Caphar Acon*."

"R. Simeon Ben Judah, A man of *Caphar Acon*."

"R. Abba of Acon": and others.

Weigh this story: "One brought a bill of divorce to R. Ismael; who said to him, Whence are you? He answered, *From Caphar Samai, which is in the confines of Acon.*--Then it is needful, saith he, that you say, It was written, I being present,--and sealed, I being present. When he went out, R. Illai said unto him, Is not Caphar Samai of the land of Israel, being nearer to Zippor than Acon?" And a little after: "The cities which are in the borders of Zippor near to Acon, and which are in the borders of Acon near to Zippor, what will you do concerning them? As Acon is, so is Zippor."

Chapter 65

Ecdippa. Achzib. Joshua 19:29; Judges 1:31. Climax of the Tyrians.

"Travelling from Acon to Achzib, on the right hand of the way, eastwardly, it is clean, from the notion of heathen land, and is bound to tithes, and to the law of the seventh year, until you are certified that it is free. On the left hand of the way, westward, it is unclean, under the notion of Gentile land; and it is free from tithes, and from the law concerning the seventh year, till you are certified it is bound to those things, even until you come to Achzib." The Gemara hath these words: but the text, on which is this commentary, is this: "The three countries" (namely, Judea, Galilee, and Perea) "are bound to the law of the seventh year: whatsoever they possessed, who came up out of Babylon, from the land of Israel unto *Chezib* (the Jerusalem Misna read *Ghezib*), is not fed nor tilled: but whatsoever they possessed, who came up out of Egypt, from *Chezib* to the river, and to Amanah, is fed, but not tilled: from the river and from Amanah, inwards, is fed and tilled."

Of Amanah we shall speak by and by. "The river (saith R. Solomon upon the place) is the river of Egypt."--"And *Chezib* (saith Rambam) is the name of a place, which divided between the land of Israel, which they possessed that came up out of Babylon, and that land which they possessed that came up out of Egypt. Now that land, which they possessed that came up out of Egypt, as to the Demai" (or doubt of tithing), "is, as it were, without the land." Hence is that in the text, on which he makes this comment, "From *Chezib*, and beyond, is free from the Demai."

The word *Chezib*, and *Achzib*, at last passed into *Ecdippa*, according to the manner of the Syrian dialect; to which it is common to change zain of the Hebrews into daleth.

"Climax (or *the ladder*) of the Tyrians," in the Talmudists is, "The ladder of Tyre." "Before they came to Climax of the Tyrians, they forgot all."--The discourse is, in the place cited, about some Romans sent to Rabban Gamaliel, to inquire of the Jewish law.

Of him also is this story, and of the same place: "When he went sometime out of *Chezib*, one came to him, to ask him of a certain vow of his. He said to him, who went with him, Tell him, that we have drunk an Italian quart of wine. He saith to him, Well. He saith to him that asked, Go with us, until our wine be allayed. When they came to *the ladder of the Tyrians*, Rabban Gamaliel came down, and veils himself, and, sitting, resolved his vow. From

this example we learn these things, that a quart of wine makes one drunk, that the way allays wine," &c.

Let this be marked by the way, that it is said "A quart of wine makes drunk": and let it be compared with what R. Chaia saith, "Four pots (to be drunk by every one in their sacred feasts) contain an Italian quart of wine": and judge how soberly they carried it in those feasts, if they mingled not much water with their wine.

Chapter 66

The northern coasts of Galilee. Amanah. The mountain of snow.

This coast is described by Moses, [Numbers 34:7](#): "From the Great Sea to mount Hor: from mount Hor to the entrance of Hamath," &c.

Mount Hor, in the Jewish writers, is Amanah; mention of which occurs, [Canticles 4:8](#), where R. Solomon thus: "Amanah is a mount in the northern coast of the land of Israel, which in the Talmudical language is called, The mountainous plain of Amanon; the same with mount Hor."

In the Jerusalem Targum, for mount 'Hor' is *the mount Manus*: but the Targum of Jonathan renders it *The mountain Umanis*.

"What (say the Jerusalem writers) is of the land of Israel, and what without the land? Whatsoever comes down from mount Amanah inwards is of the land of Israel; whatsoever is without the mountainous place of Amanah is without the land."

And a little after; "R. Justa Bar Shunem said, When the Israelites that return" (from their dispersion), "shall have arrived at the mountainous places of Amanah, they shall sing a song; which is proved from that which is said ([Canticles 4:8](#)), He renders it, Thou shalt sing from the head of Amanah."

There was also a river of the same name with the mountain, of which the Targum in that place; "They that live by the river Amanah, and they that live on the top of the mountain of snow, shall offer thee a present." And the Aruch, which we have noted before, writes thus; "Kirmion is a river in the way to Damascus, and is the same with Amanah."

"The mountain of snow," among the paraphrasts and Talmudists, is the same with Hermon. The Samaritan interpreter upon [Deuteronomy 4:48](#), "To the mountain of snow which is Hermon." And the Jerusalem writers say, "They built for the daughters of the Midianites little booths of hurdles from Beth-Jeshimon unto the mountain of snow, and placed there women selling cakes."

The Jerusalem Targum upon [Numbers 35](#) writes thus; "The mountain of snow at Caesarea" (Philippi). See also Jonathan there.

Chapter 67

Pamias. Paneas, the spring of Jordan.

The maps assign a double spring of Jordan; but by what right it scarce appears; much less does it appear by what right they should call this *Jor*,--and that *Dan*. There is indeed

mention in Josephus of little Jordan and great Jordan. Hence, as it seems, was the first original of the double spring in the maps, and of a double river at those first springs. For thus Josephus; "There are fountains (in Daphne) which send little Jordan, as it is called, into the great." He treats, in the text cited, of the lake Samochonitis, and saith, "That the fens of it are extended to the country Daphne, which, as it is otherwise pleasant, so it contains springs, from which issue little Jordan," &c.

Riblah (that we may note this by the way) by the Targumists is rendered Daphne. They, upon [Numbers 34:11](#), for that which is in the Hebrew, "And the border shall go down to Riblah," render it, "And the border shall go down to Daphne." See also Aruch in *Daphne*. But this certainly is not that Daphne of which Josephus here speaks; which will sufficiently appear by those things that follow. But as to the things before us:--

I. Both he and the Talmudists assign Panium or Paneas to be the spring of Jordan; nor do they name another.

"Near Panium, as they call it (saith he), is a most delightful cave in a mountain; and under it the land hollowing itself into a huge vale, full of standing waters. Over it a great mountain hangs; and under the cave, rise the springs of the river Jordan."

And again, "By the springs of Jordan: now the place is called Panium."

And elsewhere, "Panium seems to be the fountain of Jordan": and more may be read there.

The Talmudists write thus; "Rab' saith, Jordan riseth out of the cave of Pamias: and so is the tradition."

"R. Isaac saith, *Leshem is Pamias*." The Gloss is, "Leshem is a city which the Danites subdued ([Judg 18:29](#)): Pamias is a place whence Jordan ariseth."

And Pliny, "The river of Jordan ariseth out of the fountain Paneas."

II. That fountain of Jordan was the so-much-famed fountain of 'little Jordan,' as it is called. For so it is plainly collected from Josephus. Concerning the Danites invading Laish, or Leshem, which being subdued they called Dan, he speaks thus; "But they, travelling a day's journey through the great plain of Sidon, not far from mount Libanus, and the springs of lesser Jordan, observe the land to be good and fruitful, and shew it unto their tribe; who, invading it with an army, build the city Dan."

In like manner speaking of Jeroboam, he saith these things; "He built two temples for the golden calves,--one in Beth-el, the other in Dan, which is at the springs of little Jordan."

You may certainly wonder and be amazed that the fountain of Little Jordan should be so famed and known; and in the mean time, the fountain of Great Jordan to lie hid, not to be spoken of, and to be buried in eternal obscurity. What! is the *less* worthy of so much fame; and the *greater*, of none at all? Let us have liberty to speak freely what we think, with the leave of chorographers.

I. It does not appear that any other river of Jordan flows into the lake Samochonitis beside that which ariseth from Paneas. In what author will you find the least sign of such a river? But only that such a conjecture crept into the maps, and into the minds of men, out of the before alleged words of Josephus, misconceived.

II. We think, therefore, that Jordan is called the Greater and the Less, not upon any account of two fountains, or two rivers, different and distant from one another; but upon account of the distinct greatness of the same river. Jordan, rising out of Paneas, was called Little, until it flowed into the lake Samochonitis; but afterward coming out of that lake, when it had obtained a great increase from that lake, it was thenceforth called Jordan the Greater. Samochonitis received Little Jordan, and sent forth the Great. For since both that lake and the country adjacent was very fenny, as appears out of Josephus,--the lake was not so much increased by Jordan flowing into it, as it increased Jordan flowing out of it. "Moors and fenny places possess the parts about the lake Samochonitis." The river, therefore, below Samochonitis seems to be called 'Jordan'; above Samochonitis, 'Little Jordan.'

Caesarea Philippi was built at Paneas, the fountain of Jordan: which let the maps observe that they place it not too remote thence. "Philip built the city Caesarea in Paneas, at the springs of the Jordan." And also, "Having finished Paneas, he named it Caesarea."

Chapter 68

What is to be said of the sea of Apamia.

'The sea of Apamia' is reckoned the seventh among those seas that compass the land of Israel; which word hath a sound so near akin to the word Pamias, by which name the Rabbins point out the fountains of Jordan,--that the mention of that word cannot but excite the memory of this, yea, almost persuade that both design one and the same place: and that the sea Apamia was nothing else but some great collection of waters at the very springs of Jordan.

This also might moreover be added to strengthen that persuasion, that, in both places, in the quotations cited in the Jerusalem Talmud, these words are added; "The sea of Apamia is the same with the sea of Chamats, which *Diocletianus*, by the gathering together of the waters, caused to be made." But now that *Diocletianus*, whosoever he was (we prove elsewhere that he was the emperor), lived sometime at Paneas; as is clear also from the same Talmud.

But the thing is otherwise. Pamias and Apamia were different places, and far distant from each other: one in the land of Israel; the other in the confines indeed of the land of Israel, but in Syria.

Let this tradition be marked:--"Ariston brought his first-fruits from Apamia, and they were received: for they said, He that hath a possession in Syria, is as if he had it in the suburbs of Jerusalem." The Gloss is, "Apamia is the name of a place in Syria."

And these things do appear more clearly in the Targumists, to omit other authors. The Samaritan interpreter renders the word Shepham, [Numbers 34:10](#), by *Apamia* with Ain. (Note Shin changed into Ain; note also, in the word Bozor, [2 Peter 2:15](#), Ain changed into

Shin.) Jonathan reads it *Apamia*, with Aleph: for "From Shepham to Riblah," he renders 'From Apamia to Daphne.'

Chapter 69

The lake Samochonitis [or Semechonitis.]

In the Holy Scriptures it is the 'Water of Merom,' [Joshua 11:5](#). In the Babylonian Talmudists it is 'The Sibbechean sea.' Hence is that, "Jordan ariseth out of the cave of Paneas, and flows into the Sibbechean sea." In the Jerusalem Talmudists, sometimes it is 'The sea of Cobebo,' as we have noted before; and sometimes 'The sea of Samaco'; whence in other languages it is 'Samachonitis.'

"The lake Semechonitis is thirty furlongs in breadth, and sixty in length. The fens of it are stretched out unto the country Daphne; a country, as it is otherwise pleasant, so containing fountains: [Greek passage omitted]. The scruple lies concerning the pointing...The sentence and sense seems indeed to flow more smoothly, if you should render it thus, "The springs which, nourishing Little Jordan, as it is called, send it out into the Great, under the temple of the golden calf": but then a just doubt ariseth of the situation of that temple. That clause, therefore, is rather to be referred to the foregoing, so that the sense may go thus; "The springs, which, nourishing Little Jordan, as it is called, under the temple of the golden calf, send it into the Great": and so you have the temple of the golden calf at the springs of Jordan, and the place adjacent called Daphne, and the marshes of Samochonitis reaching thither.

The Jerusalem Gemarists do thus explain those words of Ezekiel, 47:8: "These waters go forth into the east coast: *that is, into the lake Samochonitis*. And they shall go down into the plain; that is, into the sea of Tiberias. And they shall go out into the sea; that is, into the Dead Sea."

"The city Hazor (saith Josephus) lies on the lake Semechonitis." This city is the metropolis of Canaan, that is, of that northern country, which is known by that name: which is called also 'Galilee of the Gentiles.' Jabin the king of Hazor, and others, fight with Joshua at the waters of Merom, that is, at the lake Samochonitis, [Joshua 11:4](#). And Jonathan in the same place, as it seems, with the army of Demetrius, "in the plain of Asor," as the same Josephus writes. But, in the Book of the Maccabees, it is, "The plain of Nasor," [1 Maccabees 11:67](#).

Chapter 70

The lake of Gennesaret; or, the sea of Galilee and Tiberias.

Jordan is measured at one hundred and twenty furlongs, from the lake of Samochonitis to that of Gennesaret. That lake, in the Old Testament, is 'The sea of Chinnereth,' [Numbers 34:11](#), &c. In the Targumists, 'The sea of *Genesar*'; sometimes, 'of *Genesor*'; sometimes, 'of *Ginosar*': it is the same also in the Talmudists, but most frequently 'The sea of *Tiberiah*.'

Both names are used by the evangelists; 'the lake of Gennesaret,' [Luke 5:1](#); 'the sea of Tiberias,' [John 21:1](#); and 'the sea of Galilee,' [John 6:1](#).

The name 'Chinnereth' passed into 'Genesar,' in regard of the pleasantness of the country, well filled with gardens and paradises: of which we shall speak afterward. [chapter 79]

It is disputed by the Jerusalem Talmudists, why 'Chinneroth' occurs sometimes in the plural number; as [Joshua 11:2](#), 'The south of Chinneroth'; and [Joshua 12:3](#), 'The sea of Chinneroth.' "Thence (say they) are there two Gennesarets?" Or there were "*but two castles*, as Beth-Jerach, and Sinnabris, which are *towers of the people of Chinnereth*; but the fortification is destroyed, and fallen into the hands of the Gentiles" ...*Sinnabri* in the Talmudists is *Sennabris*, in Josephus, being distant from Tiberias thirty furlongs. For he tells us, that Vespasian encamped thirty furlongs from Tiberias, "at a certain station, that might easily be seen by the innovators, called Sennabris." He speaks also of the town, *Ginnabrin*, not far distant certainly from this place. For describing the country about Jordan, he saith, that from both regions of it runs out a very long back of mountains, but distant some miles from the river: on this side, from the region of Scythopolis to the Dead Sea; on that side, from Julias to Somorrha, towards the rock of Arabia: and that there lies a plain between, which is called "the great plain, lying along from the town Gennabrin to the lake Asphaltites."

The same Josephus writes thus of the lake Gennesaret: "The lake Gennesar is so called from the adjacent country, being forty furlongs in breadth, and moreover a hundred in length; it is both sweet and excellent to drink."

Pliny thus;--"Jordan, upon the first fall of the valleys, pours itself into the lake, which many call Genesar, sixteen miles long and six miles broad."

"The sea of Tiberias is like the gliding waters." While the masters produce these words, they discourse what is to be thought of those waters, where the unclean fish swim together with the clean; whether such waters are fit to boil food or no: and it is answered, 'Flowing and gliding waters are fit; those that do not glide are not; and that the lake of Gennesaret is to be numbered among gliding waters.'

The Jews believe, or feign, that this lake is beloved by God above all the lakes of the land of Canaan. "Seven seas (say they) have I created, saith God, and of them all I have chosen none but the sea of Gennesaret." Which words, perhaps, were invented for the praise of the university at Tiberias, that was contiguous to this lake; but they are much more agreeable to truth, being applied to the very frequent resorts of our Saviour thither.

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica

John Lightfoot
(1602-1675)
A Chorographical Century
Chapters 71-80
Chapter 71

Within what tribe the lake of Gennesaret was.

By comparing the maps with the Talmudic writers, this question ariseth: for there is not one among them, as far as I know, which does not altogether define the sea of Gennesaret to be without the tribe of Naphtali; but the Talmudists do most plainly place it within.

"The Rabbins deliver: The sea of Tiberias is in the portion of Naphtali; yea, it takes a full line for the nets on the south side of it: as it is said, 'Possess the sea and the south,' Deuteronomy 33:23." The Gloss is; "(Naphtali) had a full line in the dry land on the south coast, that he might draw out his nets." So also the Jerusalem writers; "They gave to Naphtali a full line on the south coast of the sea, as it is said, 'Possess the sea and the south.'" They are the words of Rabbi Josi of Galilee. So that Talmud that was written at Tiberias: so R. Josi, who was a Galilean.

The words of Josephus, which we cited before, are agreeable to these. "The tribe of Zebulon's portion was to the sea of Gennesaret, stretched out also [*in length*] to Carmel and the sea." On the south, the land of Zebulon was bounded by that of Issachar, extending itself in breadth, "to Genessaret": touching only upon Gennesaret, not comprehending Gennesaret within it. So the same Josephus speaks in the place alleged, that "the men of Naphtali took those parts that ran out eastwardly unto the city of Damascus." It would be ridiculous, if you should so render, "unto the city of Damascus," as to include Damascus within the land of Naphtali. The maps are guilty of the like solecism, while they make Zebulon, which only came, "unto the lake of Gennesaret," to comprise all the lake of Gennesaret within it. Look into Adrichomius, to say nothing of others, and compare these words of Josephus with him.

Hither perhaps is that to be reduced, which hath not a little vexed interpreters in [Joshua 19](#); where Jordan is twice mentioned, in defining the limits of the tribe of Naphtali; verse 33, "the outgoings of the border," hence, "was to Jordan"; and, verse 34, "The going out from thence [that is, from the south border] was to Jordan in Judah towards the sun-rising."

What hath the land of Naphtali to do with Jordan in Judah?

I answer, Judah, that is, Judea, is here opposed to Galilee: Judah is not here spoken of as opposed to the other tribes. Before ever the name of Samaria was risen, the name of Galilee was very well known, [Joshua 20:7](#); and so was the name of Judea: and at that time one might not improperly divide the whole land within Jordan into Galilee and Judea: when as yet

there was no such thing as the name of Samaria. The words alleged, therefore, come to this sense, as if it had been said, 'The north bounds of Naphtali went out eastwardly to Jordan in Galilee: in like manner the south bounds went out eastwardly to Jordan now running into Judea'; that is, the country without Galilee, which as yet was not called Samaria, but rather Judea.

The bounds certainly, of the land of Naphtali seem to touch Jordan on both sides, both on the north and the south; and so to contain the sea of Gennesaret within its bosom, according to that which is said by the Talmudists before alleged, and those also men of Tiberias.

While I am discoursing of Jordan, and this lake, let me add this moreover concerning the 'boat of Jordan':--"R. Jacob Bar Aidai saith, in the name of R. Jochanan, Let no man absent himself from Beth-Midrash, for this question was many a time propounded in Jabneh, *The boat, or barge, of Jordan, why is it unclean?* Nor was there any who could answer any thing to it; until R. Chaninah, the son of Antigonus, came, and expounded it in his city. The boat of Jordan is unclean, because they fill it with fruit, and sail down with it from the sea unto the dry land, and from the dry land into the sea."--The Jews themselves being interpreters, is a *small vessel, a little ship*. Josephus hath these words; "Having gathered together all the boats in the lake, they were found to be two hundred and thirty, and there were no more than four mariners in each."

Chapter 72

Tiberias.

All the Jews declare, almost with one consent, that this was a fortified city from ancient times, even from the days of Joshua, and was the same with Rakkath, of which mention is made, [Joshua 19:35](#).

"Rakkath is Tiberias," say the Jerusalem Gemarists. And those of Babylon say the same, and that more largely: "It is clear to us that Rakkath is Tiberias." And when, after a few lines, this of Rabbi Jochanan was objected, "When I was a boy, I said a certain thing, concerning which I asked the elders, and it was found as I said; namely, that Chammath is Tiberias, and Rakkath Zippor"; it is thus at last concluded, "Rabbi said, Who is it, to whom it was said, that Rakkath is not Tiberias? For, behold! when any dies here (in Babylon), they lament him there (at Tiberias) after this manner, The hearse of a famous man deceased in Sheshach (Babylon): whose name also is of note in Rakkath, is brought hither: thus lament ye him,-- O ye lovers of Israel, O citizens of Rakkath, come forth, and bewail the dead of Babylon! When the soul of R. Zeira was at rest, thus one lamented him, The land of Babylon conceived and brought forth delights, the land of Israel nourished them. Rakkath said, Woe to itself because she lost the vessels of her delights. Therefore saith Rabba, Chammath is the same with the warm baths of Gadar, and Rakkath is Tiberias."

This city touched on the sea, so that the sea served on one side for a wall to it. Hence is that, in the place but now cited; "Rabh Hezekiah read the Book of Esther in Tiberias, on the fourteenth day (of the month Adar), and also on the fifteenth day (see [Esther 9:21](#)), doubting whether it were compassed with walls from the days of Joshua, or not. But who would doubt this of Tiberias? when it is written, 'And the fenced cities were Ziddim, Zer, Chammath, Rakkath, and Chinnereth.' But it is clear to us that Rakkath is Tiberias. The reason, therefore, why he doubted was this, because on one side it was enclosed by the sea instead of a wall. But if it were so, why did he doubt? Because, truly, it was no wall. When the tradition is thus, *A city which hath a wall, but not fortified walls, the contiguous houses are for such walls. But Tiberias is excepted, which hath the sea for a wall*" So also R. Simeon Ben Jochai, in the Jerusalem Gemara just now alleged: 'Among the cities fortified with walls Tiberias is excepted, as having the sea for a wall.'

What fortune this city underwent under the name Rakkath, remains unknown. Herod the tetrarch put the name of Tiberias upon it, and built the city, for the sake and memory of Tiberius Caesar. The etymology of which place while the Gemarists deduce elsewhere, namely, either from *Tob reja*, because it was *fair to behold*, or "because it was *Betiborah, in the navel, or middle,*" &c. they seem rather to sport out of a luxuriant wit, than to be ignorant of the thing itself.

Chapter 73

Of the Situation of Tiberias.

When I read Pliny of the situation of this city, and compare some things which are said by Josephus and the Talmudists with him, I cannot but be at a stand what to resolve upon here. Pliny speaks thus of the situation of it: "The lake [of Genesar] is compassed round with pleasant towns: on the east, Julias and Hippo; on the south, Tarichea, by which name some call the lake also; on the west, Tiberias, healthful for its warm waters."

Consult the maps, and you see Tiberias in them seated, as it were, in the middle shore of the sea of Gennesaret, equally distant almost from the utmost south and north coasts of that sea. Which seems well indeed to agree with Pliny, but illy with Josephus and his countrymen.

I. Josephus asserts that Hippo (in Perea, i.e. the country on the other side Jordan) is distant from Tiberias only thirty furlongs. For speaking to one Justus, a man of Tiberias, thus he saith, "Thy native country, O Justus, lying upon the lake of Gennesaret, and distant from Hippo thirty furlongs," &c. The same author asserts also (which we produced before), that the breadth of the sea of Gennesaret was forty furlongs. Therefore, with what reason do the maps place the whole sea of Gennesaret between Tiberias and Hippo? Read those things in Josephus, look upon the maps, and judge.

II. The same Josephus saith of the same Justus, "Justus burnt the towns of those of Gadara and Hippo. And the towns bordering upon Tiberias, and the land of the Scythopolitans,

were laid waste." Note, how the towns of those of Gadara and Hippo are called "towns bordering upon Tiberias"; which certainly cannot consist together, if the whole sea be between, which is so put by the maps.

III. Those things which we learn from the Talmudists concerning the situation of this place cannot be produced, until we have first observed certain neighbouring places to Tiberias; from the situation of which, it will be more easy to judge of the situation of this.

In the mean time, from these things, and what was said before, we assert thus much: That you must suppose Tiberias seated either at the very flowing-in of Jordan into the lake of Gennesaret,--namely, on the north side of the lake, where the maps place Capernaum [illy]; or at the flowing out of Jordan out of that lake, namely, on the south side of the lake. But you cannot place it where Jordan flows into it, because Josephus saith, Tiberias is not distant from Scythopolis above a hundred and twenty furlongs,--that is, fifteen miles; but now the lake of Gennesaret itself was a hundred furlongs in length, and Scythopolis was the utmost limits of Galilee southward, as we shewed before.

Therefore we are not afraid to conclude that Tiberias was seated where Jordan flows out of the lake of Gennesar, namely, at the south shore of the lake; where Jordan receives itself again within its own channel. This will appear by those things that follow.

We doubt, therefore, of the right pointing of Pliny. Certainly we are not satisfied about it; and others will be less satisfied about our alteration of it. But let me, with their good leave, propose this reading, "On the east Julias, and Hippo on the south. Tarichea, by which name some call the lake, on the west. Tiberias, wholesome for its warm waters." Which reading is not different from Pliny's style, and agrees well with the Jewish writers: but we submit our judgment to the learned.

Chapter 74

Chammath. Ammaus. The warm baths of Tiberias.

Chammath and Rakkath are joined together, [Joshua 19:35](#). For they were very neighbouring cities; Rakkath is Tiberias,--and Chammath, the town Ammaus, in Josephus.

Of their neighbourhood, the Jerusalem Talmudists write thus: "The men of a great city may walk" (on the sabbath) "through a whole small city" (which was within a sabbath-day's journey); "but the inhabitants of a small city walk not through a whole great city." And then follows, "Formerly the men of Tiberias walked through all Chammath; but the men of Chammath passed not beyond the arch: but now those of Chammath and those of Tiberias do make one city."

And the Babylonian Talmudists thus, "from Chammath to Tiberias is a mile."

"Chammath is Tiberias. And why is it called Chammath? By reason of the *Chammi*, warm baths of Tiberias."

It is not seldom called 'Chammath of Gadara'; not only because it was very near the Gadarene country,--for the channel of Jordan only was between;--but because it was built, as it seems, on both the banks of Jordan, the two parts of the town joining by a bridge.

"Rabbah said, Chammath is the same with the warm baths of Gadara, and Rakkath is Tiberias."

"It was lawful for the Gadarenes, R. Judah Nasi permitting them, to go down into Chammath [on the sabbath], and to return into Gadara: but the men of Chammath might not go up into Gadara."

Behold! Tiberias so near to Chammath, that it was almost one city with it: and Chammath so near to the country of Gadara, that thence it took the name of 'Chammath of Gadara.'

"R. Samuel Bar Nathan, in the name of R. Chama Bar Chaninah, said, I and my father went up to Chammath of Gadara, and they set before us small eggs."

"R. Jonathan and R. Judah Nasi went *to Chammath of Gadara*."

"R. Immai and R. Judan Nasi" [he was grandson of R. Judah Nasi] "went to Chammath of Gadara."

Of the warm baths of Tiberias the Talmudists speak much. Let these few things be collected out of them:--

"R. Josua Ben Levi being sick, *washed* sometime *in the warm baths of Tiberias*, leaning on the shoulders of R. Chajia Bar Ba."

"Three warm baths remained from the waters of the deluge." I. *The whirlpool of Gadara*: that pool of Gadara, it may be, is that, which being drank of, as Strabo relates, cattle lose their hair, horns, and hoofs. II. *The great fountain of Biram*. Of Biram, see Bab. Rosh hashanah, fol. 23. 2. the first line. III. *The warm baths of Tiberias*.

"They allowed them the waters of Meara and the warm baths of Tiberias."

So also Josephus: "John (of Giscala) writ to me, praying 'that I would permit him the use of the warm baths which are at Tiberias.'"

And so Pliny before: "Tiberias, healthful for its warm waters."

Chapter 75

Gadara

There was a double Gadara. One at the shore of the Mediterranean sea: that was first called Gezer, [1 Kings 9:15](#). In Josephus, "Simon destroyed the city Gazara, and Joppe, and Jamnia."--And in the Book of the Maccabees, "And he fortified Joppe, which is on the sea, and Gazara, which is on the borders of Azotus."

At length, according to the idiom of the Syrian dialect, Zain passed into Daleth; and instead of Gazara, it was called Gadara. Hence Strabo, after the mention of Jamnia, saith, "and there is Gadaris, then Azotus and Ascalon." And a little after; "Philodemus the Epicurean was a Gadarene, and so was Meleager and Menippus, surnamed the 'ridiculous student,' and Theodorus the rhetorician," &c.

But the other Gadara, which we seek, was in Perea, and was the metropolis of Perea. "Being come into the parts of Gadara, the strong metropolis of Perea." They are the words of Josephus.

It was sixty furlongs distant from Tiberias, by the measure of the same author.

"Gadara, the river Hieramax [*Jarmoc*, of which before] flowing by it, and now called Hippodion." Some reckon it among the cities of the country of Decapolis.

Another city, also 'Gergesa' by name, was so near to it, that that which in Mark is called 'the country of the Gadarenes,' chapter 5:1,--in Matthew is 'the country of the Gergesenes,' chapter 8:28: which whether it took its name from the Girgashites, the posterity of Canaan,--or from the clayish nature of the soil, (*Gargishta*, signifying *clay*),--we leave to the more learned to be decided. The Chaldee certainly renders that *thick dirt*, which is in the Hebrew *the clay ground*, [1 Kings 7:46](#).

The Jerusalem writers say, that the Girgashites, when Joshua came, and proclaimed, "He that will go out hence, let him go,"--betook themselves into Africa.

Chapter 76

Magdala

Not far from Tiberias and Chammath was Magdala. You may learn their neighbourhood hence:--

"If a man have two floors, one in Magdala and another in Tiberias,--he may remove his fruits from that in Magdala, to be eaten in that of Tiberias."

"R. Simeon Ben Jochai, by reason of certain shambles in the streets of Tiberias, was forced to purify that place. And whosoever travelled by Magdala might hear the voice of a scribe, saying, Behold! Bar Jochai purifies Tiberias."

"A certain old shepherd came, and said before Rabbi, I remember the men of Magdala going up to Chammath, and walking through all Chammath" (on the sabbath), "and coming as far as the outmost street, as far as the bridge. Therefore Rabbi permitted the men of Magdala to go into Chammath, and to go through all Chammath, and to proceed as far as the farthest street, as far as the bridge."

Josephus hath these words of Magdala; "King Agrippa sends forces and a captain into Magdala itself to destroy the garrison." We meet with frequent mention of the Rabbins, or scholars, of Magdala:--

"R. Judan of Magdala."

"R. Isaac of Magdala."

"R. Gorion saith, The men of Magdala asked R. Simeon Ben Lachish," &c.

It is sometimes called 'Magdala of Gadara,' because it was beyond Jordan.

Chapter 77

Hippo. Susitha.

You may suppose, upon good grounds, that Hippo is the same with *Susitha* in the Talmudists, from the very signification of the word. Inquire. Of it there is this mention:--

"R. Joshua Ben Levi saith, It is written, And Jephthah fled from the face of his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tobh...which is *Susitha*." If you would render it in Greek, it is *Hippene*.

This city was replenished with Gentiles, but not a few Jews mixed with them. Hence is that, "If two witnesses come out of a city, the major part whereof consists of Gentiles, as *Susitha*," &c. And after a few lines, "R. Immai circumcised from the testimony of women, who said the sun was upon *Susitha*." For it was not lawful to circumcise, but in the day-time.

Hippo was distant from Tiberias thirty furlongs only.

Chapter 78

Some other towns near Tiberias. Beth-Meon. Caphar Chittaia. Paltathah.

Among the towns, neighbouring upon Tiberias, Tarichee is especially commemorated in Josephus, a city thirty furlongs distant from Tiberias: you will find in him the history and mention of it very frequent.

In the Talmudists we meet with other names also.

I. Beth-Meon. "The men of Tiberias, who went up to Beth-Meon to be hired for workmen, were hired according to the custom of Beth-Meon: the men of Beth-Meon, who went down to Tiberias to be hired, were hired according to the custom of Tiberias."

This place is also called, as it seems, *Beth-Mein*. In the place noted in the margin, they are treating of the town Timnath: of which it is said, that "Samson went up to Timnath"; and elsewhere, that "the father-in-law of Samson went down to Timnath": so that there was both a 'going up' and a 'going down' thither. R. Aibu Bar Nigri at last concludes, and saith, "It is like to Beth-Mein, by which you go down from Paltathah; but by which you go up from Tiberias."

In Josephus, "Beth-Maus [Beth-Meon] is distant from Tiberias four furlongs." The maps place it too remote from thence.

II. There is also a place not far from Tiberias, or Magdala, whose name was *Caphar Chittaia*: which we may guess at, from this story:--"R. Simeon Ben Lachish said thus, They whip a prince, that offends, in the sessions of the three men. R. Judah Nasi hearing these words was angry, and sent to apprehend him. But he fled without Magdala: but some say, Without Caphar Chittaia."--Ziddim ([Josh 19:35](#)) is Caphar Chittaia. Zer is neighbour to it.

Chapter 79

The country of Gennesaret.

Josephus thus describes it: "By the lake Gennesar, is a country extended, of the same name, of a wonderful nature and pleasantness. For such is the fruitfulness of it, that it denies no plant," &c. "The temper of the air suits itself with different fruits: so that here grow nuts,

a more winter fruit; there palms, which are nourished with heat; and near them figs and olives, which require a more moderate air," &c.

The Talmudists speak like things of the fertility and pleasure of this place.

"The Rabbins say, Why is it called Gennesar? Because of the gardens of princes. Those are the great men who have gardens in that place. And it was of the lot of Nephthali" (they are the words of the author of Aruch), "as it is said, 'And a thousand princes were of Nephthali.'"

The fruits of Gennesaret are mentioned as being of great fame. "Wherefore (say they) are there not of the fruits of Gennesaret at Jerusalem? The reason is, that they who came to the feasts should not say, We had not come but to eat the fruits of Gennesaret."

And elsewhere, where it is disputed, what is the more noble part of food, something seasoned with salt, or a morsel,--and it is concluded, that that which is seasoned is to be preferred, and that thanks are to be given upon it; the mention of the fruits of Gennesaret is brought in, *which are preferred also before a morsel*.

Hereupon there is mention of the 'Tent of Gennesaret,' that is, as the Gloss speaks, "When Genosar, which is also called Chinnereth, abounded with noble gardens, they made certain shady bowers, or small tents, for that time, wherein they gathered the fruits."

The length of this most fruitful soil, lying along the seashore, was but thirty furlongs, and the breadth twenty.

"And expositors say (they are the words of the Aruch), that there is a place near to Tiberias, in which are gardens and paradises." Let that be noted, 'There is a place near to Tiberias.'

Chapter 80

Capernaum

From the things last spoken, we gather no trifling conjecture concerning the situation of the town of Capernaum.

Josephus relates that the country of Gennesar, which we have described, was watered "with a spring of excellent water; the people thereabouts call it Capernaum." From that either the city hath its name, or rather that hath its name from the city; and the city from the pleasantness of the place. The evangelists, compared together, do make it clear, that this city was seated in the land of Gennesaret. For when it is said by Matthew and Mark, that Christ, sailing over from the desert of Bethsaida, arrived at the country of Gennesaret, [Matthew 14:34](#); [Mark 6:53](#), it is manifest from John that he arrived at Capernaum, [John 6:22,24,25](#). When, therefore, that most pleasant country lay near Tiberias, and that Capernaum was in that country,--we must necessarily suppose that it was not very remote from Tiberias.

It was "upon the sea-coasts, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthali," [Matthew 4:13](#):--not that it was the bounds of each, but because it was within the borders of Zabulon and Nephthali, they being put in opposition to the other parts of Galilee. So, "the borders of Tyre

and Sidon," [Mark 7:24](#), denote not that very centre where the territories of Tyre are parted from those of Sidon; but the "bounds of Tyre and Sidon," as distinguished from the bounds of Galilee. Nevertheless, neither was this city far distant from the very limits, where the bounds of Zabulon and Nephthali did touch upon one another,--namely, near the south coast of the sea of Gennesaret, which we observed before.

We suppose Capernaum seated between Tiberias and Tarichee. Whether, *Cepharnome*, in Josephus, be the same with this, we do inquire.

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica

John Lightfoot
(1602-1675)
A Chorographical Century
Chapters 81-90
Chapter 81

Some history of Tiberias. The Jerusalem Talmud was written there: and when.

Tiberias was built by Herod the tetrarch in honour of Tiberius: and that in a common burying-place, or in a place where many sepulchres had been. Hence it was that the founder was fain to use all manner of persuasion, enticements, and liberality, to invite inhabitants. The very delightful situation of the place seemed to put him on to wrestle with such a difficulty and inconvenience, rather than not to enjoy so pleasant a soil and seat. For on this side, the sea washing upon it,--on that side, within a little way, Jordan gliding by it,--on the other side, the hot baths of Chammath,--and on another, the most fruitful country Gennesaret adjacent,--did every way begird this city, when it was built, with pleasure and delight.

It did every day increase in splendour, and became at last the chief city not only of Galilee but of the whole land of Israel. It obtained this honour, by reason of the university translated thither by Rabbi Judah, and there continued for many ages. It was ennobled by thirteen synagogues: among which "the ancient Serongian synagogue was one." It was famous also for the Sanhedrim sitting there; for the Talmudic Misna, perhaps, collected here by R. Judah; and for the Jerusalem Talmud, written there for certain. That very volume does openly speak the place where it was published: in which the words *here*, and *hither*, do most plainly design Tiberias, almost in infinite places. But there is a greater controversy about the time: it is agreed upon, by very many learned men, that this Talmud was written about the year of Christ 230: which I do indeed wonder at, when the mention of the emperor Diocletian, unless I am very much mistaken, does occur in it. Let us note the places:--

"When the king Docletinus came hither [to Tiberias], they saw R. Chaija Bar Abba climbing a sepulchre to see him." This story is repeated in Nazir, and he is there called *Doclinus*, by an error, as it seems, of the copiers.

"Dicletinus gathered the rivers together, and made the sea of Apamia." And this story is recited in Chetuboth, and there he is called *Docletianus*.

"Docletinus had most fine gold, even to the weight of a Gordian penny."

"When Docletianus came thither, he came with a hundred and twenty myriads."

"The boys of R. Judah, the prince, bruised Diclot, the keeper of hogs, with blows. That king at length escaped, and coming to Paneas, sent for the Rabbins, &c. He said to them, Therefore, because your Creator worketh miracles for you, you contemn my government.

To whom they said, We contemned Diclot the hog-herd; we contemned not Diocletianus the king." Hence arose a suspicion among some learned men, that this was not to be understood of Diocletian the emperor, but of some little king, I know not whom, of a very beggarly original: of which opinion I also was some time, until at last I met with something that put the thing past all doubt.

That you find in Avodah Zarah. There inquiry is made by one, "What of the mart of Tsur?"--There is this inscription there, "I Diocletianus, the king, built this mart of Tsur [or Tyre], to the fortune of my brother Herculus, in eighty days." The very sound persuades to render *Herculus*, and the agreeableness of the Roman history, from which every one knows how near a king there was between Diocletian and Maximian Herculus.

Eusebius mentions the travelling of Diocletian through Palestine; and all the Roman historians speak of his sordid and mean birth; which agree very well with the things that are related by the Talmudists.

These are all the places, unless I am much mistaken, where this name occurs in this Talmud, one only excepted, which I have reserved for this place, that, after we have discovered, by these quotations, that this was Diocletian the emperor, some years after him might be computed. That place is in Sheviith: "Diocletianus afflicted the men of Paneas: they said therefore to him, We will depart hence: but a certain *sophist* said to him, Either they will not depart; or, if they do, they will return again: but if you would have an experiment of it, let two young goats be brought hither, and let them be sent to some place afar off, and they will at last come back to their place. He did so: for the goats were brought, whose horns he gilded, and sent them into Africa: and they, after thirty years, returned to their own place." Consider, that thirty years passed from this action of Diocletian, which if you compute even from his first year, and suppose that this story was writ in the last year of those thirty, you come as far as the ninth or tenth year of Constantine.

Mention also of king Sapor occurs, if I do not fail of the true reading. "A serpent, under Sapor the king, devoured camels." Yea, I have I know not what suspicion, that "Lulianus the king," of whom there is mention in that very same place, does denote Julianus the emperor. "When Lulianus the king (say they) came thither, a hundred and twenty myriads accompanied him." But enough of this...

R. Judah, who first removed the university to Tiberias, sat also in Zippor for many years, and there died: so that in both places were very famous schools. He composed and digested the Mishnaioth into one volume. "For when he saw the captivity was prolonged" (they are the words of Tsemach David, translated by Vorstius), "and the scholars to become faint-hearted, and the strength of wisdom and the cabala to fail, and the oral law to be much diminished,--he gathered and scraped up together all the decrees, statutes, and sayings of the wise men; of which he wrote every one apart, which the house of the Sanhedrim had taught, &c. And he disposed it into six classes; which are Zeraim, Moed, Nezikin, Nashim, Kedoshim,

Tahoroth." And a little after; "All the Israelites ratified the body of Mishnaioth, and obliged themselves to it: and in it, during the life of Rabbi, his two sons, Rabban Gamaliel and R. Simeon, employed themselves, in the school of the land of Israel: and R. Chaija, R. Hoshai, R. Chaninah, and R. John, and their companions. And in the school of Babylon, Rabh and Samuel exercised themselves in it," &c.

Therefore it is worthy of examination, whence those differences should arise between the Jerusalem Misna, and the Babylonian,--differences in words, without number,--in things, in great number; which he that compares them will meet with every where. You have a remarkable example in the very entrance of the Jerusalem Misna, where the story of R. Tarphon's danger among thieves is wanting, which is in that of Babylon.

Whether R. Judah composed that system in Tiberias or in Zippor, we are not solicitous to inquire: he sat in both, and enriched both with famed schools; and Tiberias was the more eminent. For "The university of Tiberias was greater than that of Zippor."

Chapter 82

Tsippor

"Tsippor is the greatest city of Galilee, and built in a very strong place."

"Kitron ([Judg 1:29,30](#)) is Tsippor: and why is it called *Tsippor*? Because it is seated upon a mountain as *Tsippor*, a bird."

"Sixteen miles on all sides from Tsippor was a land flowing with milk and honey."

This city is noted in Josephus for its warlike affairs; but most noted in the Talmudists for the university fixed there, and for the learning, which Rabbi Judah the Holy brought hither, as we have said before. He sat in this place seventeen years, and used most frequently to say this of himself, "Jacob lived in Egypt seventeen years, and Judah lived in Tsippor seventeen years."

He sat also in Beth-Shaarim, as also in Tiberias, but he ended his life in Tsippor. There is this story of his death; "The men of Tsippor said, Whosoever shall tell us that Rabbi is dead, we will kill him. Bar Kaphra, having his head veiled, looked upon them and said, 'Holy men and angels both took hold of the tables of the covenant, and the hand of the angels prevailed, and they snatched away the tables.' They said to him, 'Is Rabbi dead?' He said, 'Ye have said.' They rent their garments after that manner, that the voice of the renting came as far as Paph, that is, the space of three miles. R. Nachman in the name of R. Mena said, 'Miracles were done on that day.' When all cities were gathered together to lament him, and that on the eve of the sabbath, the day did not waste, until every one was gone home, had filled a bottle with water, and had lighted up a sabbath-candle. The Bath Kol pronounced blessedness upon those that lamented him, excepting only one; who knowing himself excepted, threw himself headlong from the roof, and died."

"R. Judah died in Tsippor, but his burial was in Beth-Shaarim: dying, he gave in command to his son, 'When ye carry me to my burial, do not lament me in the small cities through

which ye shall pass, but in the great," &c. What say you to this, R. Benjamin? In you it is, "His sepulchre is in Tsippor in the mountain, as also the sepulchre of R. Chaija, and Jonah the prophet," &c. Do you make up the controversy with your kinsmen now cited.

There were many synagogues in Tsippor. In the story but now alleged, concerning the death and burial of R. Judah, mention is made of eighteen synagogues that bewailed him; but whether all these were synagogues of Tsippor, or of other places, it is questioned, not without cause.

"The synagogue of Gophna was certainly in Tsippor." There was also "The synagogue of Babylon in Tsippor." There are also many names of famous doctors there.

"R. Honna Rabba." "R. Abudina of Tsippor." "R. Bar Kaphra in Tsippor." "R. Chaninah of Tsippor." The mention of whom is most frequent above others.

A controversy, risen at Tsippor, was determined before "R. Simeon Ben Gamaliel, and R. Jose."

Among many stories acted on this stage, which might be produced, we shall offer these only:--

"An inquisition was sometime made after the men of Tsippor: they, therefore, that they might not be known, clapped patches upon their noses; but at last they were discovered," &c.

"One, in the upper street of Tsippor, taking care about the scripts of paper fixed to the door-posts, was punished a thousand zuzees." These words argue some persecution stirred up in that city against the Jews.

"A certain butcher of Tsippor sold the Jews flesh that was forbidden,--namely, dead carcasses, and that which was torn. On one sabbath eve, after he had been drinking wine, going up into the roof, he fell down thence and died. The dogs came and licked his blood. R. Chaninah being asked, Whether they should drive away the dogs? 'By no means,' said he, 'for they eat of their own.'"

"Counsellors and pagans in Tsippor" are mentioned.

And also "The sons of Ketzirah, (or the harvest), of Tsippor."

Tsippor was distant from Tiberias, as R. Benjamin tells us in his Itinerary, "twenty miles."

Zipporin with Zain is once writ in the Jerusalem Talmud; one would suspect it to be this city: "When R. Akibah went to Zippor, they came to him, and asked, Are the jugs of the Gentiles clean?" A story worthy of consideration; if that *Zipporin* denote ours, was R. Akibah in Tsippor? He died almost forty years before the university was translated thither. But schools haply were there before a university.

In the Talmud, the story of "Ben Elam of Tsippor" (once it is written, "*in* Tsippor") is thrice repeated; who, when the high priest, by reason of some uncleanness contracted on the day of expiation, could not perform the office of that day, went in, and officiated.

Chapter 83

Some places bordering upon Tsippor. Jeshanah. Ketsarah. Shihin.

I. In the place, noted in the margin, discourse is had of the legitimate mothers of the priests: among other things it is said, that no further inquiry be made, "If his father be enrolled *in the catalogue of Jeshanah of Tsippor.*" The Gloss is, "There was a neighbour city to Tsippor, whose name was Jeshanah; and it was customary to enroll them who were fit to judge," &c. So that this 'Jeshanah' seems to be so near to Tsippor, that the records of Tsippor were laid up there.

II. "Towns fortified from the days of Joshua: Old Ketsarah, which belongs to Tsippor; and Chakrah, which belongs to Gush; Calab; and Jodapath the old [Jotopata]; and Gamala," &c. The Gloss is, "Ketsarah is the name of a little city without Tsippor." Perhaps that which we cited above relates to this, "The sons of Ketzirah (or the harvest), of Tsippor."

III. "Sometime a fire happened in the court of Josi Ben Simai in Shihin, and the inhabitants of Ketsarah, which belongs to Tsippor, came down to quench it; but he permitted them not, saying, 'Let the exactor exact his debt.' Presently a cloud gathered together above the fire; and rains fell, and put it out. The sabbath being finished, he sent money to every one of them."

Josephus mentions also *Garisimes*, distant twenty furlongs from Tsippor.

In like manner, "Asamon, a mountain in the middle of Galilee, which lies over against Tsippor."

Chapter 84

Usha

"The Sanhedrim went *from Jabneh to Usha, and from Usha to Shepharaam.*" The Gloss is, "To Jabneh in the days of Rabban Jochanan (Ben Zaccai); to Usha in the days of Rabban Gamaliel: but they went back from Usha to Jabneh: but in the days of Rabban Simeon they returned."

We do not apprehend the reason why Rabban Gamaliel went thither; whatsoever it were, either some disturbance raised by the Romans, or indignation that R. Eleazer Ben Azariah should be president with him, or some other reason,--certainly the abode there was but small, either Gamaliel himself returning to Jabneh after some time, or R. Akibah, who succeeded in his chair.

But after the war of Adrian, and the death of R. Akibah in that war, when Judea was now in disturbance by the Romans, Rabban Simeon, the son of Gamaliel, succeeding in the presidentship after Akibah, went with the Sanhedrim from Jafne to Usha, nor was there ever after any return to Jafne.

The Talmudists remember us of very many things transacted at Usha. "When they intercalated the year in Usha, the first day, R. Ismael, the son of R. Jochanan Ben Brucha, stood forth, and said according to the words of R. Jochanan Ben Nuri. Rabban Simeon Ben Gamaliel said, 'We were not wont to do so in Jafne.' On the second day, Ananias, the son of Josi the

Galilean, said according to the words of R. Akibah. R. Simeon Ben Gamaliel said, 'So we were wont to do in Jafne.'" This story is repeated in Rosh hashanah, and Nedarim.

"In Usha it was decreed that a man should nourish his little children; that if a man make over his goods to his children, he and his wife be maintained out of them," &c.

It was determined also in Usha concerning the burning the Truma, in some doubtful cases: of which see the place quoted.

But that we be not more tedious, let this story be for a conclusion: "The wicked kingdom [of Rome] did sometime decree a persecution against Israel: namely, that every one preferring any to be an elder should be killed; and that every one that was preferred should be killed; and that the city in which any is preferred to eldership should be laid waste; and that the borders within which any such promotion is made, should be rooted out. What did Baba Ben Judah do? He went out, and sat between two great mountains, and between two great cities, and between two sabbath bounds, *between Usha and Shapharaam*, and ordained five elders, namely, R. Meir, R. Judah, R. Simeon, R. Josi, and R. Eliezer Ben Simeon. Rabh Oia added also R. Nehemiah. When this came to be known to their enemies, he said to the scholars, 'Fly, O my sons': they said to him, 'Rabbi, what will you do?' He said to them, 'Behold, I am cast before them as a stone which hath no movers.' They say, that they departed not thence, until they had fastened three hundred iron darts into him, and had made him like a sieve."

Chapter 85

Arbel. Shezor. Tarnegola the Upper.

"Arbel a city of Galilee."--There is mention of it in [Hosea 10:14](#). But there are authors which do very differently interpret that place, viz. the Chaldee paraphrast, R. Solomon, Kimchi: consult them.

It was between Zippor and Tiberias.

Hence Nittai the Arbelite, who was president with Josua Ben Perahiah.

The valley of Arbel is mentioned by the Talmudists.

So also "The Arbelite Bushel."

"Near Zephath in Upper Galilee was a town named *Shezor*, whence was R. Simeon Shezori: there he was buried. There is the memory also of R. Ismael Shezorei, who perhaps was his brother."

In that scheme which we exhibited in the beginning of this work, out of the Jerusalem Gemarists, delineating the limits of the land under the second Temple, among other names of places, you observe the mention of a place called "The upper Tarnegola or Cock," &c. I render it "Geber, (or Gabara) the upper, which is above Caesarea." Why I render *Tarnegola* by *Geber*, those that are versed in the Talmudic writings will easily perceive; for in them 'a cock' is indifferently called in the Chaldee language *Tarnegola*, and by the Rabbins *Geber*. Nor is there an example wanting of this our rendering. For the Targum of Jonathan, in

[Numbers 33:35,36](#), renders Ezio-geber *Cerac Tarnegola*, "The city of the Cock." And he mentions this very place which we are now upon, [Numbers 34:8](#); "Tarnegola at Caesarea." And the Targum of Jerusalem there reads "Tornegola of Caesarion." Now that Caesarea which they mean is 'Caesarea Philippi,' which is at the fountain of Jordan: and that Gabara is called "Gabara the upper," for distinction's sake, from other cities of the same name. Josephus calleth "Tiberias, Sippbor, and Gabara," the three greatest cities of Galilee. He mentions also the town Gabaroth, and Gabaraganei, which are reckoned with the Gadarenes and Tyrians by him.

"From Gabara of Caesarea and down-wards is as the land of Israel," in respect of the *Demai*, or tithing.

Chapter 86

The difference of some customs of the Galileans from those of Judea.

It is not impertinently questioned, with what inhabitants Galilee and Perea were first planted after the return out of Babylon, when you scarce find any mention of them in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, but of those only who inhabited Judea and the land of Benjamin. But whosoever they were, whether pure Israelites, or those that were more mixed, or some of the ten tribes, it is certain those that inhabited Galilee differed much from those that dwelt in Judea, in certain rites, and not a little in the dialect of their speech.

The Jewish pandect observe a various difference between them: out of which we produce these few instances instead of more:--

In the place noted in the margin, it is discoursed concerning the form and manner of writing the donation of the marriage dowry. "So and so (say they) the people of Jerusalem writ, and the Galileans writ as those of Jerusalem: but the inhabitants of Judea something varied," &c. Where the Gemarists thus; "The Galileans' care was of reputation, not of money; the inhabitants of Judea, their care was of money, not of reputation," &c.

"The wise men say, In Judea they did service works on the Passover-eves, until noon; in Galilee, not at all."

"The wise men say, That the Trumah taken generally is bound in Judea, in Galilee is loosed. For the Galileans know not the Trumah of the Temple-chamber." The sense of the tradition is this, When any one pronounced a vow in general terms,--for example, saying thus, 'Let this be to me as the Trumah,' not naming what kind of Trumah,--a Galilean, so speaking, was loosed from his vow, because he, by reason of the distance of the place (as the Gloss tells us), knew not the Trumah of the holy treasury: but he that inhabited Judea, and spoke thus, was bound by his vow.

And in the same text is added, "If any vows generally by curses, he is loosed in Judea; he is bound in Galilee, because the Galileans do not know the curses of the priests." Where the Gloss is this; "There were no priests among the Galileans: therefore, when they cursed, they cursed to none but to God." And the Gemara of Jerusalem thus; "Because they were

fastened to the curse of Achan, it is said, that they are bound: but in Judea, because they are not fastened to the curse of Achan, it is said that they are loosed."

"Rabbi Judah saith, In Judea they made inquiry concerning the bridegroom and bride three days before the wedding; but in Galilee they did not so. In Judea they allowed the bridegroom and bride private company one hour before the wedding; but they did not so in Galilee. It was a custom in Judea that the married persons should have two *friends*, one of the family of the bridegroom, and the other of the family of the bride: but it was not so in Galilee. In Judea those friends slept in the same place where the bridegroom and bride slept: but in Galilee it was not so," &c.

Chapter 87

The dialect of the Galileans, differing from the Jewish.

"Surely thou also art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee," [Matthew 26:73](#). Let these passages, which are delivered by the masters, be instead of a comment:--

"To the men of Judea who were exact in their language, their law is established in their hands. To the men of Galilee, who were not exact in their language, their law is not established in their hands."--The Gloss is, "They [the men of Judea] were exact in their language: so that their speech was pure, not corrupt."

"To the men of Judea, who are exact about their language, and appoint to themselves certain signs, their law is established in their hands: to the men of Galilee, who are not exact about their language, nor appoint to themselves signs, their law is not established in their hands." The Gloss is; "They were exact about their language, namely, in rendering the same words which they had heard from their masters. And because they were taught orally, by hearing after hearing, they appointed to themselves from them sign after sign. And because they were exact about their language, they knew how to appoint to themselves fit signs that they might not forget."

"The men of Judea learn from one master, and their law is established in their hands: the Galileans learn not from one master, and their law is not established in their hands." The Gloss writes, "The Galileans heard one master in one language, and another in another; and the diversity of the language, or pronunciation, confounded them so that they forgot." And a little after,

"R. Abba said, If any ask the men of Judea, who are exact about their language, Whether they say *Maabrin* with Ain, or *Maabrin* with Aleph? Whether they say *Acuzo* (with Ain), or *Acuzo* (with Aleph)? They all answer, There are some who pronounce it with Aleph, and there are others who pronounce it with Ain..." And a little after:

"A certain Galilean said...They answered him, O foolish Galilean..." The sense is, When the Galilean asked, "Whose is *Immar*, 'this lamb?'" he pronounced the first letter in the word *Immar*, so confusedly and uncertainly, that the hearers knew not whether he meant *Chamar*,--that is, an 'ass'; or *Chamar*, 'wine'; or *Amar*, 'wool'; or *Immar*, 'a lamb.'

"A Galilean woman when she should have said to their neighbour Come, and I will feed you with milk" [or some fat thing]: "said, My neighbour, a lion shall eat you." The Gloss is, "She distinguished not, but confounded the letters: for when she should say, *Shelubti* with Beth, which signifies a neighbour, she said *Shelucti*, with Caph (a barbarous word). For, 'come, and I will feed you with milk.'--she said words that imply a curse; as much as to say, Let a lion devour thee."

"A certain woman said before the judge"...That which she intended to say was this, "My Lord, I had a picture, which they stole; and it was so great, that if you had been placed in it, your feet would not have touched the ground." But she so spoiled the business with her pronouncing, that, as the Glosser interprets it, her words had this sense, "Sir, slave, I had a beam; and they stole thee away; and it was so great, that if they had hung thee on it, thy feet would not have touched the ground."

Among other things, you see, that in this Galilean dialect the pronunciation of the gutturals is very much confounded; which however the Jews correct in the words alleged, yet it was not unusual among them, so that "the mystical doctors distinguished not between Cheth and He." They are the words of the Jerusalem Talmudists:--and these also are the words of those of Babylon; "The schools of R. Eleazar Ben Jacob pronounced Aleph Ain, and Ain Aleph."

We observed before one example of such confusion of letters, when one teaching thus, "The waters of the marshes are not to be reckoned among those waters" (that make unclean), he meant to have it understood of *the water of eggs*: but he deceived his hearers by an uncertain pronunciation...

If you read the Samaritan version of the Pentateuch, you will find so frequent a changing of the gutturals, that you could not easily get a more ready key of that language than by observing that variation.

Chapter 88

Gilgal, in Deuteronomy 11:30: what the place was.

That which is said by Moses, that "Gerizim and Ebal were *over-against Gilgal*," [Deuteronomy 11:30](#), is so obscure, that it is rendered into contrary significations by interpreters. Some take it in that sense, as if it were *near to Gilgal*: some *far off from Gilgal*: the Targumists read, "before Gilgal": while, as I think, they do not touch the difficulty; which lies not so much in the signification of the word *Mul*, as in the ambiguity of the word *Gilgal*. These do all seem to understand that Gilgal which the people of Israel took the first night after their passage over Jordan, [Joshua 4:19](#); which, as Josephus relates, was distant only fifty furlongs from Jordan; but which the Gemarists guess to be fifty miles and more. For "they say, the journey of that day was more than sixty miles, to wit, from Jordan to Gilgal." And this they say, that they may fix Gilgal near Gerizim and Ebal; where they think the people encamped the first night after their entrance into the land of Canaan, from those words of

Moses, [Deuteronomy 27:2](#), "In the day, wherein thou shalt pass over Jordan, thou shalt set thee up great stones, and shalt plaster them with plaster," &c. Now those stones, say they, are set up in Gerizim and Ebal. Hence is that of the Gemarists, "The Lord said, I said, When ye shall pass Jordan, ye shall set up stones; but you have spread yourselves as far as sixty miles." And, "Gerizim and Ebal were sixty miles distant from Jordan."

But certainly by that Gilgal, of which Moses in those words speaks, "Are not Gerizim and Ebal *over-against Gilgal?*" is to be understood some other than that which Joshua named by that name, [Joshua 5:9](#). For when Moses spoke those words, the name of that Gilgal, near Jericho, was not at all: nor can that which is spoke in the book of Joshua concerning *the nations of Gilgal*, [Joshua 12:23](#), be applied to that Gilgal, when it had obtained that name. Therefore, in both places, by *Gilgal* seems to be understood Galilee; and that as well from the nearness of the words,--for *Gilgal*, and *Galil*, are of the same root and etymology,--as from the very sense of the places. For when, in Joshua, some kings of certain particular cities in Galilee--Kedesh, Jokneam, Dor, &c.--are reckoned up, the king of the nations of Gilgal, or Galilee, is also added, who ruled over many cities and countries in Galilee.

So also the words of Moses may very well be rendered in the like sense, 'Are not those mountains, Gerizim and Ebal, beyond Jordan, over-against Gilgal, or Galilee?'

These things following strengthen our conjecture:--I. The version of the LXX, who render *The nations of Gilgal*, by *Gei of Galilee*. II. The comparing Josephus with the book of the Maccabees, in the story of Demetrius. "He pitched his tent (saith Josephus), 'in Arbel, a city of Galilee'; but, [1 Maccabees 9:2](#), "They went forth the way that leadeth to Galgala, and pitched their tents before Mesaloth, which is in Arbel." In one Arbel is in Galgala or Gilgal, in the other it is in Galilee.

Chapter 89

Divers towns called by the name of Tyre.

Besides Tyre, the noble mart of Phoenicia, we meet with various places of the same name, both in the Talmudists and in Josephus.

In the place noted in the margin, they mention one *Tyre*, in the very borders of the land, which was bound to pay tithes; and another, in like manner in the borders, which was not bound: we shall hereafter produce their words. And in these examples which follow, and in very many others, which might be produced,--they leave it undecided, whether the discourse is of Tyre of Phoenicia, or of some other place of that name.

"Jacob Navoriensis travelled to *Tyre* and there taught some things, for which R. Chaggai would have him beaten."

"R. Mean went to *Tyre*: whom R. Chaija Bar Ba found there; and going forward, he told R. Jochanan those things which he had taught."

"R. Issa went to *Tyre*, and saw them drinking wine," &c.

Josephus thus writes of Hyrcanus, the brother of Simon the high priest:--"He built a strong place between Arabia and Judea beyond Jordan: *and called it Tyre.*"

The same author, of John Ben Levi thus: When he had endeavoured to retain the Giscalites, now attempting to shake off the Roman yoke, it was to no purpose: "for the bordering people, the Gadarenes, the Gabaraganeans, and the Tyrians, having got together considerable forces, invade Giscalia." You can scarcely suppose that these Tyrians came out of Tyre of Phoenicia, but from some other place of the same name.

Upon that reason that very many towns in the land of Israel were called by the name of Rama, namely, because they were seated in some *high* place; by the same reason very many are called by the name of *Tyre*, because they were built in a *rocky* place.

Chapter 90

Cana

We have little to certify as to the situation of this place: only we learn this of Josephus concerning Cana, that it was such a distance from Tiberias, as he could measure with his army in one night. For when word was brought him by letters, that the enemy Justus had endeavoured to draw away the Tiberians from their fidelity towards him, "I was then (saith he) in a town of Galilee, called Cana: taking, therefore, with me two hundred soldiers, I travelled the whole night, having despatched a messenger before, to tell the Tiberians of my coming: and, in the morning, when I approached the city, the people came out to meet me," &c.

He makes mention, also, of Cana, in the same book of his own Life, in these words; "Sylla, king Agrippa's general, encamping five furlongs from Julias, blocked up the ways with guards, *both that which leads to Cana, and that which leads to the castle Gamala.*" But now, when Julias and Gamala, without all doubt, were beyond Jordan, it may be inquired whether that Cana were not also on that side. But those things that follow seem to deny this: for he blocked up the ways, "that by this means he might shut out all supplies that might come from the Galileans." Mark that, *that might come from the Galileans*; that is, from *Cana*, and other places of Galilee about Cana.

That Julias which Sylla received was Julias Betharamphtha (of which afterward), which was seated on the further bank of Jordan, there where it is now ready to flow into the sea of Gennesaret. Therefore, Cana seems, on the contrary, to lie on this side Jordan; how far removed from it we say not, but we guess not far; and it was distant such a space from Tiberias as the whole length of the sea of Gennesaret doth contain.

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica

John Lightfoot
(1602-1675)
A Chorographical Century
Chapters 91-100

Chapter 91

Perea. Beyond Jordan.

"The length of Perea was from Macherus to Pella: the breadth from Philadelphia to Jordan."

"The mountainous part of it was mount Macvar, and Gedor," &c. "The plain of it was Heshbon, with all its cities, which are in the plain, Dibon, and Bamoth-Baal, and Beth-Baal-Meon," &c. "The valley of it is Beth-Haran, and Beth-Nimrah, and Succoth," &c.

The mention of the mountains of Macvar occurs in that hyperbolical tradition of R. Eleazar Ben Dighlai, saying, "The goats *in the mountains of Macvar* sneezed at the smell of the perfume of the incense in the Temple." The word Macherus is derived from *Macvar*.

The whole country, indeed, which was beyond Jordan, was called Perea: but it was so divided, that the southern part of it was particularly called Perea; the other part was called Batanea, Auranitis, Trachonitis. So it is called by Josephus, because, by the donation of Augustus, "Perea and Galilee came into the possession of Herod Antipas: and Batanea, and Trachon, and Auranitis, into that of Philip."

Bashan passed into Batanea, according to the Syriac idiom, that changeth Shin into Thau: *Batanin*, in the Samaritan interpreter; *Matanin*, in the Targumists, by the alternate use of Mem and Beth, which is not unusual with them.

Golan was the chief city of this country, [Joshua 20:8](#). Whence is Gaulonitis, and that "Upper and Nether Gaulonitis."

In the Jews we read, "Trachon, which is bounded at Bozrah." Not Bozrah of Edom, [Isaiah 63:1](#); nor Bezer of the Reubenites, [Joshua 20:8](#); but another, to wit, Bosorra, or Bosor, in the land of Gilead. Concerning which, see Josephus, and the First Book of Maccabees, 5:26.

While we speak of the difference between Bezer and Bozrah, we cannot pass by a simple example of this thing, propounded by the Babylonian Talmudists. "The prince of Rome" [viz. Samael, the angel of death, as the Gloss tells us] "did formerly commit a threefold error; as it is written, 'Who comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?' In this matter he errs, because there is no refuge but in Bezer, and he betook himself to Bozrah," &c.

"Batanea is bounded by Trachonitis."

Auranitis.--Josephus sometimes calls it 'Abranitis.'--"Caesar (saith he) gave to Herod [the Great] Trachon, and Batanea, and Abranitis"; and that, that he should restrain and subdue the robbers, who most miserably vexed those countries, &c.

Chapter 92

Adam and Zaretan, Joshua 3.

I suspect a double error in some maps, while they place these two towns in Perea; much more, while they place them at so little a distance.

We do not deny, indeed, that the city Adam was in Perea; but Zaretan was not so. Of Adam is mention, [Joshua 3:16](#); where discourse is had of the cutting-off, or cutting in two, the waters of Jordan, that they might afford a passage to Israel; *The waters rose up upon a heap afar off in Adam*. For the textual reading "In Adam," the marginal hath "From Adam." You may very fitly apply both readings.

Adam was the centre, where the waters parted: here was the station of the ark of the covenant, now ready to enter Jordan. Hence the Psalmist, *The tabernacle which he had fixed in Adam*, [Psalm 78:60](#). Therefore, the textual reading "inAdam," holds well; because there was the centre of the cutting in two of the waters: but the marginal reading "from Adam," does moreover add light, because the gathering those waters together on a heap was far above it.

"R. Jochanan saith, Adam is a city, and Zaretan is a city, and they are distant from one another twelve miles." From Adam to Zaretan, were the waters dried up; from Zaretan and upwards, they stood on a heap. Adam was in Perea, over-against Jericho; Zaretan was in the land of Manasseh on this side Jordan. It is called Zarthanah, [1 Kings 4:12](#), and is defined to be near Beth-shean, which was the furthest bounds of the land of Manasseh northward. The brazen vessels of the Temple are said to be cast in the plain of Jordan, in the clay ground between Zaretan (on this side Jordan) and Succoth (beyond it), [1 Kings 7:46](#). Therefore, the words cited in Joshua, *far off from Adam, which is beside Zaretan*, are so to be understood, as not so much to denote the nearness of Adam and Zaretan, as to intimate that the heaping up of the waters was by Zaretan. They are to be rendered in this sense, "And the waters that came down from above stood together; they rose up into one heap, in a very long distance from the city Adam," namely, to that distance, which is by Zaretan.

Adam and Zaretan, on this and the other side, were both something removed from Jordan: but they are named in that story, because there the discourse is of the time, when Jordan contained not itself within its own channel, but had overflowed its banks.

Chapter 93

Julias-Bethsaida

There were two Juliases, both in Perea, one built by Herod, called before 'Betharamphtha': of which Josephus; "At Betharamphtha, which before was the city's name, Herod compassed Julias with a wall, calling it by the name of the empress." The other built by Philip, heretofore

called Bethsaida, of which the same author writes thus: "Philip, having raised the town Bethsaida on the lake of Gennesaret to the honour of a city, both in respect of the number of the inhabitants, and other strength, gave it the same name with Julia, the emperor's daughter."

The maps have one Julias only: not amiss, because they substitute the name of Bethsaida for the other:--but they do not well agree about the situation of both. Julias-Betharamphtha was seated at the very influx of Jordan into the lake of Gennesaret. For thus Josephus; "Jordan, having measured a hundred furlongs more from the lake Samochonitis, after the city Julias, cuts the lake of Gennesar in the middle." Do not these words argue that Jordan, being now ready to enter into the lake, did first glide by Julias? To which those things which are said elsewhere by the same author do agree. "Sylla (saith he) encamped five furlongs from Julias, and stopped up the ways;--namely, that which led to Cana, and that which led to the castle Gamala. But I, when I understood this, sent two thousand armed men, under Jermias their captain; and they having encamped a furlong from Julias near the river Jordan," &c. Note that, when they were distant from Julias a furlong only, they are but a little way off of Jordan. The maps place it more remote from the influx of Jordan into the lake of Gennesaret than these words will bear.

Julias-Bethsaida was not seated in Galilee, as it is in the maps, but beyond the sea of Galilee in Perea. This we say upon the credit of Josephus: "Philip (saith he) built Caesarea in Paneas [mark that]: and Julias [which before-time was Bethsaida] in Nether Gaulonitis." But now, there is nobody but knows that Gaulonitis was in Perea. This certainly is that Julias which Pliny placeth eastward of the lake of Gennesaret (for the other Julias was scarcely near the sea at all); and that Julias of which Josephus speaks, when he saith, "that a certain mountainous country beyond Jordan runs out from Julias to Somorrha."

Chapter 94

Gamala. Chorazin.

These things determine the situation of Gamala:--1. It was "in lower Gaulon," in which, as we have seen, Bethsaida was. 2. It was "upon the lake [of Gennesaret]." 3. It was "over-against Tarichee." Compare the maps, whether in their placing of it they agree with these passages. Here was Judas born, commonly called 'Gaulanites,' and as commonly also, the 'Galilean.' So Peter and Andrew and Philip were Gaulanites; of Bethsaida, [John 1:44](#); and yet they were called 'Galileans.'

While we are speaking of Bethsaida, Chorazin comes into our mind, which is joined with it, in the words of Christ, [Matthew 11:21](#), as partaking with it in his miracles, and being guilty of equal ingratitude. If you seek for the situation of this place, where will you find it? Some maps place it on this side Jordan, and other beyond Jordan: but on what authority do both depend? It is mere conjecture, unless I am deceived. Let me also conjecture.

The word *Chorashin*, denotes *woody places*, both in the Holy Bible and in the Rabbinical writings. Hence we suppose the Chorazin that is now before us is called, namely, because it was seated in some *woody place*. For such places the land of Nephthali was famous above the other tribes: to which the words of Jacob have regard, "Nephthali is a hind let loose," [Genesis 49](#); that is, Nephthali shall abound with venison; as Asher (of whom mention is made in the words going before) shall abound in bread, and royal dishes. Those words also of the Talmudists refer to this, "It is lawful for cattle to feed in common, *in the woods, yea, for the tribe of Judah [to feed] in the tribe of Nephthali.*" Hence 'Harosheth of the Gentiles' hath its name, [Judges 4:2](#), which was in that tribe. Led by these reasons, I suppose our Chorazin to have been in Galilee, rather than in Perea, where most maps place it.

But when this place seems to have been so famous for the frequent presence and miracles of Christ, it is a wonder that it hath nowhere else so much as a mention in the gospel-story, but in the bare remembrance of it in those words of Christ, "Woe to thee, Chorazin," &c.; whereas Bethsaida and Capernaum, places that he mentioneth with it, are spoken of elsewhere. What if, under this name, Cana be concluded, and some small country adjacent, which, from its situation in a wood, might be named 'Chorazin,' that is, 'the woody country'? Cana is famous for the frequent presence and miracles of Christ. But away with conjecture, when it grows too bold.

Chapter 95

Some towns upon the very limits of the land. Out of the Jerusalem Talmud, Demai, fol. 22. 4.

In the place cited, discourse is had about the tithing of some herbs and seeds, namely, of rice, nuts, onions, Egyptian beans, &c.; and inquiry is made, what is to be resolved of tithing them, if they grow in places which seem to be without the land; and these words are presently after brought in:--

"These cities are forbid in the borders, Tsur, Sezeth, and Bezeth, Pi Mazobah, upper and lower Canothah, Beth Badia, Rosh Maja, Amon, and Mazi (R. Mena saith, So it was called anciently, but now Susitha): Ainosh, En Teraa, Ras, Berin, Jion, Jadot, Caphar, Charob, Chaspia, and Caphar Tsemach. These cities are permitted in the borders, Nebi, *Tsur*, Tsijar, Gasmi, Zivian, Jagdi, Chatam, Debab, Charbatha, and Cheracchah" (or "*Debab, and its wilderness, and its fortification*").

You see the name *Tsur*, here once and again, of which we have spoken before: let us add these words elsewhere: "I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living: and are there not other lands of the living besides Tsur and her companions,--and Caesarea and her companions?"

Of *Caphar Tsemach*, there is mention also in the place first cited, col. 3, in these words: "Rabbi looseth Bethshan. Rabbi looseth Caesarea. R. looseth Beth-Gubrim. Rabbi looseth Caphra Tsemach" (from the obligation, as it seemeth, of the Demai). "Rabbi permitted to

take herbs, in the end of the seventh year: but all were against him. He said to them, Come, and let us judge of the matter. 'It is written' (concerning Hezekiah) 'And he beat in pieces the brazen serpent.' What! was not any one righteous from Moses unto his times, who did this? But God reserved that crown for him, that he might be crowned with it: and God hath reserved this crown for us, that we may be crowned with it."

Chapter 96

The consistories of more note: out of the Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedr. fol. 32. 2.

"The Rabbins deliver, Follow after righteousness, follow after righteousness. Go to (Beth-Din) the famous consistory, to R. Eleazar to Lydda, to Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai. A tradition; The sound of mills *in Burni*. The sons' week, the sons' week. A candle in *Beror Chel*. A feast is there, a feast is there."

These things are something obscure, and do require light.

Beror Chel, seems to design a place: but what place? Indeed, the Sanhedrim of R. Jochanan was in Jabneh; but his consistory, *his seat of judgment*, seems to be distinguished from the Sanhedrim. So Paul was brought up at the feet of Rabban Gamaliel; not in his Sanhedrim, but *in his consistory or school*. So you may conjecture, that Rabban Jochanan, besides that he sat president of the chief Sanhedrim, had his peculiar consistory in Jabneh itself, or in some neighbour place.

That which follows, "A tradition, the sound of mills," &c. is cleared by the Glossers: "The sound of mills in Burni was a sign that there was a circumcision there; as if it had been publicly proclaimed, The infant's week expires in this place. And the sound of a mill was a sign that spices were ground to be applied to the wound of the circumcision. It was a time of persecution, wherein it was forbidden to circumcise: they feared, therefore, by any public notice to make known that there was to be a circumcision; but they appointed this sign."

'A candle in Beror Chel.'--The Gloss writes, "The light of one candle in the day-time, but many candles burning in the night, gave a sign, as if one had given notice by a public proclamation that a feast of circumcision was there," &c.

Another Gloss is thus: "They were wont to light candles at a circumcision. It was also a custom to spread a tablecloth at the door: hence is that, A custom prevailed at Jerusalem, that as long as the tablecloth was spread at the door, travellers went in."

The Aruch writes thus; "In the time of persecution they could not celebrate public matrimony, nor public circumcision; therefore, they did them secretly: wheresoever, therefore, were lighted candles on the lintel of the door, they knew that there was a wedding-feast there; and wheresoever was the sound of mills, there was a circumcision."

The Jerusalem Talmudists add, "Although the persecution ceased, yet that custom ceased not."

The Babylonian Talmudists go on. "Go to R. Josua *to Pekiin*." In the Jerusalem Talmudists it is *Bekiin*, in this story that follows:

"R. Jochanan Ben Bruchah, and R. Eliezer the blind, travelled from Jabneh to Lydda, and received R. Josua *in Bekiin*."

"Go to Rabban Gamaliel to Jabneh. Go to Rabbi Akiba to Bene Barak. Go to R. Mathia to Roma. Go to R. Chananiah Ben Teradion to Sicni. To R. Jose to Zippor. To R. Judah Ben Betirah to Nisibin. To R. Josua to the captivity (viz. to Pumbeditha). To Rabbi to Beth-Shaaraim. To the Wise men in the chamber Gazith."

Chapter 97

The cities of the Levites.

Concerning them, see Numbers, chapter 35, and Joshua chapter 21.

"The suburbs of the cities of the Levites were three thousand cubits on every side; viz. from the walls of the city, and outwards; as it is said, 'From the walls of the city and outwards a thousand cubits: and thou shalt measure from without the city two thousand cubits' ([Num 35:4,5](#)). The former thousand were the suburbs, and the latter two thousand were for fields and vineyards. They appointed the place of burial to every one of those cities to be without these bounds; for within them it was not lawful to bury a dead corpse." Do you ask the reason? It was not so much for the avoiding pollution, which might be contracted from a sepulchre, as by reason of the scribes' curious interpretation of the law, that saith, The suburban lands of these cities were given to the Levites for their cattle and oxen, "and for all their living" (creatures), [Numbers 35:3](#):--therefore, say they, not for the dead or for burial.

All the cities of the Levites were cities of refuge; but with this distinction from those six which were properly so called; that those six afforded refuge to every one that dwelt in them, whether he betook himself thither for that end or no: but the other Levitical cities were not so. And also, that the unwitting manslayer, flying to those six cities, dwelt there at free cost, without paying any rent for his house; but in the other Levitical cities he lived not at free cost.

Those forty-eight cities of the Levites were so many universities, where the ministerial tribe, distributed in companies, studied the law, became learned; and thence scattered through the whole nation, dispersed learning and the knowledge of the law in all the synagogues.

Two things are, not without good reason, to be observed here, which, perhaps, are not seriously enough observed by all.

I. The settled ministry of the church of Israel was not prophets, but priests and Levites, [Malachi 2:7](#). For it was not seldom when there were no prophets; and the prophets send the people to the priests for instruction, [Haggai 2:11](#), and Malachi, in the place mentioned already.

II. That tithes were granted to the priests and Levites, not only when they ministered at the altar or in the Temple, but when they studied in the universities and preached in the synagogues.

Behold the method of God's own institution. God chooseth Israel to be a peculiar people to himself: to this chosen people he gives a law and a clergy: on the clergy he enjoins the study of the law: to their studies he suits academical societies: on the universities he bestows lands and tithes: on the synagogues he bestows tithes and university-men.

And the schools of the prophets were little universities, and colleges of students. For their governor they had some venerable prophet, inspired with the Holy Spirit, and that partook of divine revelations. The scholars were not inspired indeed with the same prophetic spirit, but received prophecies from the mouth of their master. He revealed to them those things that were revealed to him, of the will of God and the state of the people, of the times and events of Israel, and above all, of the mysteries of the gospel; of the Messias, of his coming, times, death, resurrection, and those things that were to be done by him.

In these small universities, "the prophets, who prophesied of the grace that should come (as the apostle Peter speaks), inquired diligently of salvation; searching what, or what manner of time that was, which was pointed out by the Spirit of Christ that was in them, when he foretold the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." These things, not to be fetched out by the mere and bare study of the law, were here taught; and so the studies of the law and gospel together rendered the minister of the divine word complete.

Chapter 98

Some miscellaneous matters respecting the face of the land.

I. Let us begin with that canon concerning reading the Book of Esther in the feast of Purim. "Towns that were begirt with walls from the days of Joshua read it on the fifteenth day" of the month Adar: "Villages and great cities read it the fourteenth day": "Unless that the villages anticipate it, to the day of the congregation."

You see a threefold distinction of cities and towns:

1. *Fortifications*, or towns girt with walls from the days of Joshua. But whence shall we know them? They are those which are mentioned in the Book of Joshua; "which, however in after-times they were not begirt with walls, are nevertheless reckoned under the catalogue of them, as to the reading of that book."

2. *Great cities*. That was called a great city in which was a synagogue. So it is defined by the Piske Tosaphoth, "That is a great city, in which are ten men at leisure to pray and read the law." See what we say concerning these things on [Matthew 4:23](#), when we speak of synagogues.

3. *Villages*. That is, such where there was not a synagogue. Yea, saith the Piske Harosh, "a fortified town, wherein are not ten men of leisure" (or such as 'ceased from the things of the world'; and these made up a synagogue), "is reputed as a village," &c.

That which is added in the text of the Misna, "Unless the villages do anticipate it to the day of the congregation," is thus explained by the Glossers: "When towns, girt with walls, read the Book of Esther on the fifteenth day, and those that were not walled, on the fourteenth

(see [Esther 9:21](#)): and yet it is said before" (in the same text of the Misna), "that that book is read the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth days; the wise men granted liberty to the villages to preoccupate the reading, namely, on that day wherein they resorted to the synagogue: that is, either the second day of the week, that went before the fourteenth day of the month, or the fifth day of the week: which were days of assembly, in which the villages resorted into the cities to judgment. For the second and fifth days of the week, the judiciary consistories sat in the cities by the appointment of Ezra. Now the villagers were not skillful in reading; therefore it was needful that they should have some reader in the city."

II. Let the canons and cautions of the spaces and places next joining to the city or town be observed:

1. "A dovecote was not built within fifty cubits from the city": and that, lest the pigeons might do injury to the gardens that were sown.

2. "They permitted not a tree within five-and-twenty cubits from the city." "And this (as the Gloss speaks) for the grace of the city."

3. "They allowed not a barn-floor within fifty cubits from the city": that, when they fanned their corn, their chaff might not offend the citizens.

4. "They permitted not dead carcasses, or burying-places, nor a tanner's shop, to be within fifty cubits from the city" (because of the stink). "Nor did they allow a tanner's workshop at all, but on the east side of the city. R. Akiba saith, On any side, except the west, but at the distance of fifty cubits."

III. From the cities let us walk forth into their ploughed grounds and fields.

Here you might see, in some places, certain tokens hung upon some fig-trees, to show of what year the fruit that grew there was. See what we say on [Matthew 21:19](#). In other places, you might see barren trees stigmatized with some mark of infamy. "A tree which shook off its fruits before they were ripe, *they mark with red*, and load it with stones."

You might see the ploughing and mowing of their fields, the dressing of their vines, and their vintage, to be done by the rules of the scribes, as well as by the art of the husbandman, or the vine-dresser. For such was the care and diligence of the Fathers of the Traditions, concerning tithing corn and fruits, concerning leaving a corner for the poor, concerning the avoiding of sowing different seeds, and of not transgressing the law concerning the seventh year; that they might not plough, nor sow, nor reap, but according to the traditional rule. Hence are those infinite disputes in the books Peah, Demai, Kilaim, Sheviith, of the corner of the field to be left, what and how much the portion of it was, and of what things such corners ought to consist? Of those that divide the field so that a double corner of it is due to the poor: Whether a corner is due from beds of corn that grow among olive trees? Whether from a field whose sowing and reaping is various? What are the trees whose fruits are Demai? Of what things is the tithing of the Demai? How long the same plot of ground may be sown with different seeds, so as not to offend against the law? Of sowing different

seeds:--How many vines make a vineyard? Of their rows, of the beds of the vineyard, of sowing within the press, &c. and innumerable decisions of that nature, which did so keep the countryman within bounds, that he could not plough nor mow his land according to his own will, but according to the rule of tradition.

"The inhabitants of Beth-Namer measured out a corner for the poor with a line, and they gave a corner out of every row. Abba Saul saith, They make mention of them to their praise, and to their dispraise: to their dispraise, because they gave one part out of a hundred; to their praise, because, measuring with a line, they collected and gave a corner out of every row": that is, meeting with a measuring line, they yielded the hundredth part of the field to the poor, and that out of every row of sheaves.

Chapter 99

Subterraneous places. Mines. Caves.

Thus having taken some notice of the superficies of the land, let us a little search into its bowels. You may divide the subterraneous country into three parts: the metal mines, the caves, and the places of burial.

This land was eminently noted for metal mines, so that "its stones," in very many places, "were iron, and out of its hills was digged brass," [Deuteronomy 8:9](#). From these gain accrued to the Jews: but to the Christians, not seldom slavery and misery; being frequently condemned hither by tyrants. So Eusebius of Edesius, "He was condemned to the metal mines of Palestine." And again, concerning others, "Then passing to the other confessors of Christ, he condemns them all to the brass mines, which were in Pheno of Palestine."

On the north part of the land, in the country of Asher, were mines of metal. Hence is that in [Deuteronomy 33:25](#), "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass." On the south, in the desert of Sin, the utmost bounds of Judea, were mines also: hence--*and shall pass to Zin*, as our translation reads, [Numbers 34:4](#),--in the Jerusalem Targumist, is *over-against the mountain of iron*: and in Jonathan, *unto the palm-trees of the mountain of iron*: and in the Talmudists, *the palm-trees of the mountain of iron are fit to make a small bundle to carry in the hand in the feast of Tabernacles*. On the east coast of Perea was also "an iron mountain,"--witness Josephus. And without doubt there were other such-like mines, scattered here and there in other parts of that land, though of them we have no mention.

You will not at all wonder at these underminings of the earth, seeing they brought so much profit and gain with them, and were so necessary to the life of man. But what shall we say of those dens and caves in rocks and mountains, whence no gain seemed to be digged, but rather danger arose to the neighbouring places oftentimes? For what were these, but lurking-places for wild beasts and robbers? There is infinite mention of these caves both in the Holy Scriptures and in other writings, especially in Josephus, where *subterraneous passages*, and *dens*, are mentioned a thousand times. And many of these were of a vast largeness,

scarcely to be credited; those especially in the Talmudists, which are called "The dens of Zedekiah," not a few miles in distance.

But were those hollows the work of nature, or of the hands and industry of man? By one example, taken out of Josephus, the thing may be determined. Relating the story of a castle built by Hyrcanus in Perea, among other things he speaks thus: "Out of the rock against the mountain, having cut in two the prominent parts of it, he made dens of many furlongs long." And a little after, "He made the mouths that opened into these dens to be strait, that but one might go in at a time, and no more": "and this he did on purpose for security's sake, and for avoiding danger, in case he should be besieged by his brethren."

These dens, therefore, were cut out of mountains and rocks for the uses of war, that they might serve for refuge and strength. And it is probable the Canaanites, a warlike and gigantic nation, had digged very many of these caves before the entrance of the Israelites into that land; and that the Israelites also increased the number of them. See concerning these caves, [Joshua 10:16](#); [Judges 6:2](#); [1 Samuel 22:1](#), and [24:3](#); [1 Kings 18:13](#); [Isaiah 2:19](#), &c.

Chapter 100

Of the places of Burial.

There were more common and more noble sepulchres. The common were in public burying-places, as it is with us: but they were without the city. "And through that place was no current of waters to be made; through it was to be no public way; cattle were not to feed there, nor was wood to be gathered from thence."

"Nor was it lawful to walk among the sepulchres with phylacteries fastened to their heads, nor with the book of the law hanging at their arm."

Some sepulchres were extraordinary; that is, in reference to the place of their situation. As, 1. *A sepulchre found*; that is, when a sepulchre is in somebody's field without his knowledge; but at last the sepulchre is discovered. 2. *A sepulchre that is publicly noxious*; that is, digged near some place of common walk or travel: from the nearness of which the passengers contract pollution.

The more noble sepulchres were hewn out in some rock, in their own ground, with no little charge and art. You have the form of them described in the place noted in the margin, in these words:

"He that selleth his neighbour a place of burial, and he that takes of his neighbour a place of burial, let him make the inner parts of the cave four cubits, and six cubits; and let him open within it eight sepulchres." They were not wont, say the Glosses, to bury men of the same family here and there, scatteringly, and by themselves, but altogether in one cave: whence, if any one sells his neighbour a place of burial, he sells him room for two caves, or hollows on both sides, and a floor in the middle. *Coffin* is the very place where the dead corpse is laid.

The tradition goes on: "*Three sepulchres are on this side, and three on that, and two near them. And those sepulchres are four cubits long, seven high, and six broad.*"

To those that entered into the sepulchral cave, and carried the bier, there was first a floor, where they stood, and set down the bier, in order to their letting it down into the sepulchre: on this and the other side, there was a cave, or a hollowed place, deeper than the floor by four cubits, into which they let down the corpse, divers coffins being there prepared for divers corpses. "R. Simeon saith, The hollow of the cave consists of six cubits, and eight cubits, and it opens thirteen sepulchres within it, four on this side and four on that, and three before them, and one on the right hand of the door, and another on the left. And the floor within the entrance into the cave consists of a square, according to the dimensions of the bier, and of them that bear it: and from it, it opens two caves, one on this side, and another on that. R. Simeon saith, Four at the four sides of it. Rabban Simeon Ben Gamaliel saith, The whole is made according to the condition of the ground."

These things are handled by the Gemarists and Glossers very curiously and very largely, whom you may consult. From these things now spoken, you may more plainly understand many matters which are related of the sepulchre of our Saviour. Such as these:

Mark 16:5: "The women, entering into the sepulchre, saw a young man sitting on the right hand": in the very floor, immediately after the entrance into the sepulchre.

Luke 24:3: "Going in they found not his body," &c. Verse 5: "While they bowed down their faces to the earth, Peter ran to the sepulchre, and, when he had stooped down, he saw the linen-clothes"; that is, the women, and Peter after them, standing in the floor, bow down their faces, and look downward into the place where the sepulchres themselves were (*the cave of the graves*), which, as we said before, was four cubits deeper than the floor.

John 20:5: "The disciple whom Jesus loved came first to the sepulchre; and when he had stooped down" (standing in the floor, that he might look into the burying-place), "saw the linen clothes lie; yet went he not in. But Peter went in," &c.; that is, from the floor he went down into the cave itself, where the rows of *the graves* were (in which, nevertheless, no corpses had been as yet laid, besides the body of Jesus): thither also after Peter, John goes down. And verse 11: "But Mary, weeping, stood at the sepulchre without: and while she wept, she stooped down to the sepulchre, and saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and another at the feet, where the body of Christ had lain."

"She stood at the sepulchre without"; that is, within the cave, on the floor, but without that deeper cave, where the very graves were, or *the places for the bodies*: bowing herself, to look down thither, she saw two angels at the head and foot of that *coffin* wherein the body of Christ had been laid.

Sacred to God and the King,
 An altar is here to be erected before the porch;
 and thanksgivings to be offered on it,
 for this leisure granted to the studies of learning;
 for the muses preserved,
 for me and mine snatched from imminent ruin,--
 To Jehovah the Deliverer,
 and to Caesar the Preserver:
 To Caesar the things which are Caesar's,
 and to God the things which are God's.

Come hither, stranger, [*viator*], and stand by me, while I am sacrificing; and when you hear me relating my own story, help my prayers with yours; assist me in this holy office, and worship the same deities with me.

I sing the mercy of God, and the clemency of the king, by which I was preserved from suffering shipwreck, when I had been already shipwrecked; and from being driven out of doors, when I had been already driven out.

This rectory of Great Mundon, which I have now enjoyed for almost twenty years, belongs to the royal donation and grant, *pleno jure*, as they use to speak. By which right two rectors were placed here heretofore by two kings: persons they were of eminent name, of no ordinary worth, and the like to whom their times produced not many. One was the very famous George Downham, STD, presented by king James, who was promoted hence, and sent over to the bishopric of Derry in Ireland. And he leaving it, that excellent person Samuel Ward, STD, master of Sidney Sussex College, in the university of Cambridge, and also the most grave and learned professor of the lady Margaret in the same university, was made his successor by king Charles. Upon his decease I succeeded here; far unequal (alas!) to so great men: and as unhappy, that I was not admitted by the same right, but by that power that then, while the wars prevailed, possessed all. The brittleness of this my weak title lay not concealed; but when the king's majesty, in which we now rejoice, by a happy turn of Providence returned to his own rights, it was presently discovered; and this rectory was granted to one who was a suitor for it, by the royal donation.

Thus I and my fortunes are shipwrecked, and my affairs are come to that last extremity, that nothing now remains for me but to leave my house and these quiet retirements wherein for so many years I followed my studies with the highest satisfaction and the sweetest leisure. But another thing there was that stuck more close, namely, that I seemed to see royal majesty offended with me, and that brow that shined on others with a most sweet serenity, sad, clouded, bended on me; and certainly to perish under the displeasure of a king is twice to perish.

Under these straits what should I do? There was no place for hope, when the fatal instrument was now signed against me: but to despair is to subscribe to one's own misfortune, is to derogate from the king's mercy, is to submit to certain ruin under uncertain suspicion. Perhaps the most merciful king is not angry with me at all, for eagles do not use to be angry with flies. Nor, perhaps, is it too late, nor altogether to no purpose, to seek after a remedy for my wound, not yet incurable; for as yet the fatal decree was not gone out without repeal. Perhaps my case is altogether unknown to the best king, or disguised by some unjust complaint; and it is a comfort that my business lies before a *king*, not before a *common* man.

To the altar, therefore, of his mercy I humbly fly in a lowly supplication, begging and entreating him to consider my case, to revoke the destructive decree, and to vouchsafe to continue and establish my station in this place. Take now, O England, a measure of thy king; and, even from this one example, learn what a prince thou hast to boast of. The royal father of his country received my supplication cheerfully, complied with my desires, and granted me his donation,--established it with his great seal, and (which I desire might be written in letters of gold to last for ever) by a particular, and, as it were, paternal care, took order that hereafter none, by any means whatsoever, should proceed to do any thing that tended either to my danger or ruin.

O! how would I commemorate thee, thou best of princes, greatest Charles, how would I commemorate thee! What praises or what expressions shall I use to celebrate or set forth so great clemency, commiseration, and goodness? Those are light obligations that speak, these my obligations stand amazed, are speechless, and swallowed up in admiration. It is for common men to do benefits that may be expressed in words, it is for Charles to oblige beyond all that can be spoken.

I will add another thing also, O stranger, which the same mercy and goodness also added. For when I feared the same fortune in the university as I had felt in the country, and fled again to the same altar, the royal bounty heard me, granted my petition, ratified my desires, and confirmed and strengthened my station there also.

To comprise all in a word, which indeed exceeds all words. Although I were an obscure person and of no note, altogether unworthy and of no merit, wholly unknown to the king's majesty, and lying possibly under some kind of accusations, (for it wanted not an accusation that I was put into these places by that authority that I was,) yet twice within two weeks by the royal favour I obtained his grant, confirmed by his hand, and the great seal of England. And thus rooted out here he replanted me; and ready to be rooted out elsewhere he preserved me, rescued me from danger, freed me of my fear: so that now I, as well as my worthy predecessors, have this to boast of, that I have a king to my patron.

But far be it, far be it, from me, most unworthy man, to boast: all this, most great, most merciful prince, redounds to your praise alone; and let it do so: rather let England glory in such a prince, and let the prince glory in such mercy. Triumph, Caesar, triumph in that

brave spirit of yours, as you well may. You are Charles, and you conquer; you subdue all by pitying, delivering, giving, and forgiving all.

That conquest I shall always acknowledge with all humility and thankfulness: and thou, little book, and you, trifling sheets, wheresoever ye shall fly, tell this abroad in my name everywhere, and to every man, that although there be nothing else in you worthy to be read, yet that this my sincere profession may be read and heard; that, next after the divine mercy, I owe to the mercy of the king, that I enjoy this sweet leisure for learning, that I enjoy these quiet retirements, that I enjoy a house, that I enjoy myself.

So, O father of the country, may the Father of mercies reward you sevenfold, and seventy times sevenfold into your bosom; and may you feel every day the benefit and sweetness of doing good by the recompenses that are made you by Heaven. Thus may your mercy ever triumph, and ever reap as the fruit of it the eternal favour of the Divine mercy. Thus may England be crowned for a long time with her king; and may the king be crowned for ever with the love of God, with his protection, his blessing, his grace, his glory.

Made these vows, Jan. 1, 1661.

To the Right Reverend Father in Christ, Gilbert,
By the Divine Providence, Lord Bishop of London.

The sacrifice by the law was to be delivered into the hands of the priest, and to be offered by him: and since your hands, reverend prelate, vouchsafed to offer my *petitions*, to the king's majesty, I now become an humble petitioner that those hands would please to offer also *these testimonials of my thanks*.

I bring the firstfruits of my replantation which the royal favour indulged me by the intercession of your honour, when I had been rooted up. For since by that favour I am restored to these seats, to peace, and my studies, there is nothing I now desire besides, nothing more than that that most excellent prince may perceive, that he hath not been a benefactor to an ungrateful person, however unworthy, however obscure: and that your honour may see that you have not interceded for a forgetful person, howsoever undeserving.

I shall never forget, great sir, with how much kindness and candour your honour received me in my straits, altogether unknown to you, and whose face you had never before seen: with how great concern you pleaded my cause before the king's majesty, before the most honourable the lord chancellor of England, and before the right reverend my diocesan: how your honour consulted for me, wrote letters, laid stops, that my ruin might not proceed beyond a possibility of restoration. All which while I reflect upon, which I ever do, and while, together with that reflection, I consider what ever do, and while, together with that reflection, I consider what obligation lays upon me on one hand, and my own meanness on the other; on one hand how unworthy I am of so great favour, and how altogether unable to make any recompense on the other; what else is left me but to fly again to the same kindness, humbly imploring it, that as it at first so obligingly received me, a person unknown

and unworthy; so it would now entertain me, known and bound by so great obligation, and approaching with all the thanks I can give. Those thanks so due to your honour I have committed to these papers; unlearned indeed they are, and undressed [*impolitis*]; but such as carry sincerity with them, though not learning, thankfulness, though not eloquence. And I have intrusted this charge with them the rather, because I suppose they may disperse themselves far and near, and perhaps may live to posterity: and that which I desire of them is, that they would declare to all how indebted he is to your honour, and to your great humanity, with how great obligations he is bound to you, and with how grateful a mind and inward affection he professeth all this, and will acknowledge it for ever, who is,

My Lord,
Your Honour's most obliged servant,
John Lightfoot

1. The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God:

[*The beginning of the gospel.*] The preaching and baptism of John were the very gate and entrance into the state and dispensation of the gospel. For,

I. He opened the door of a new church by a new sacrament of admission into the church.

II. Pointing, as it were with the finger, at the Messiah that was coming, he shewed the beginning of *the world to come*.

III. In that manner as the Jews by baptism admitted Gentile proselytes into the Jewish church, he admits both Jews and Gentiles into the gospel church.

IV. For the doctrine of justification by works, with which the schools of the scribes had defiled all religion, he brings in a new (and yet not a new) and truly saving doctrine of faith and repentance.

2. As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

[*As it is written in the prophets.*] Here a doubt is made of the true meaning: namely, whether it be *in the prophets*, or *in Esaias the prophet*. These particulars make for the former:

I. When two places are cited out of two prophets, it is far more congruously said, *as it is written in the prophets*; than, *as it is written in Esaias*: but especially when the place first alleged is not in *Esaias*, but in another *prophet*.

II. It was very customary among the Jews (to whose custom in this matter it is very probable the apostles conformed themselves in their sermons) to hear many testimonies cited out of many prophets under this form of speech, *as it is written in the prophets*. If one only were cited, if two, if more, this was the most common manner of citing them, *as it is written in the prophets*. But it is without all example, when two testimonies are taken out of two prophets, to name only the last, which is done here, if it were to be read, *as it is written in Esaias the prophet*.

III. It is clear enough, from the scope of the evangelist, that he propounded to himself to cite those two places, both out of Malachi and out of Esaias. For he doth two things most evidently: 1. He mentions the preaching of the Baptist; for the illustrating of which he produceth the same text which both Matthew and Luke do out of Esaias. 2. He saith that that preaching was "the beginning of the gospel," to prove which he very aptly cites Malachi, of "sending a messenger," and of "preparing the way of the Lord."

But what shall we answer to antiquity, and to so many and so great men reading, *as it is written in Esaias the prophet*? "I wonder (saith the very learned Grotius), that any doubt is made of the truth of this writing, when, beside the authority of copies, and Irenaeus so citing it, there is a manifest agreement of the ancient interpreters, the Syriac, the Latin, the Arabic." True, indeed; nor can it be denied that very many of the ancients so read: but the ancients read also, *as it is written in the prophets*. One Arabic copy hath, *in Isaiah the prophet*: but another hath, *in the prophets*. Irenaeus once reads *in Isaiah*: but reads twice, *in*

the prophets. And "so we find it written," saith the famous Beza (who yet follows the other reading), "in all our ancient copies except two, and that my very ancient one, in which we read, *in Esaias the prophet*."

The whole knot of the question lies in the cause of changing the reading; why, *as it is written in Esaias the prophet*, should be changed into, *as it is written in the prophets*. The cause is manifest, saith that very learned man, namely, because a double testimony is taken out of two prophets. "But there could be no cause (saith he) of changing of them." For if Mark, in his own manuscript, wrote, *as it is written in the prophets*, by what way could this reading at last creep in, *as it is written in Esaias*, when two prophets are manifestly cited?

Reader, will you give leave to an innocent and modest guess? I am apt to suspect that in the copies of the Jewish Christians it was read, *in Isaiah the prophet*; but in those of the Gentile Christians, *in the prophets*: and that the change among the Jews arose from hence, that St. Mark seems to go contrary to a most received canon and custom of the Jews: "He that reads the prophets in the synagogues *let him not skip from one prophet to another*. But in the lesser prophets he may skip; with this provision only, that he skip not backward: that is, not from the latter to the former."

But you see how Mark *skips* here from a prophet of one rank, namely, from a prophet who was one of the twelve, to a prophet of another rank: and you see also how he *skips* backward from Malachi to Isaiah. This, perhaps, was not so pleasing to the Christian Jews, too much Judaizing yet: nor could they well bear that this allegation should be read in their churches so differently from the common use. Hence, *in Isaiah the prophet*, was inserted for *in the prophets*. And that they did so much the more boldly, because those words which are cited out of Malachi are not exactly agreeable either to the Hebrew original or the Greek version, and those that are cited from Isaiah are cited also by Matthew and Luke; and the sense of them which are cited from Malachi may also be fetched from the place alleged out of Isaiah.

6. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;

[*Clothed with camel's hair.*] In the Talmudists it would be read *camel's wool*: "He hath not a garment besides a woolen one; *to add wool (or hair) of camels, and wool of hares: wool of sheep, and wool of camels, which they mix, &c.*" And a little after, "*If he make a garment of camel's hair, and weave in it but one thread of linen, it is forbidden, as things of different kinds.*"

There is one that thinks that those garments of Adam concerning which it is said ([Gen 3](#)), that God made for them *coats of skins*, were of *camel's hair*: "In the law of R. Meir they found written *garments of light*. R. Isaac saith that they were like those thin linen garments which come from Bethshan. R. Samuel Bar Nachman saith they were of *the wool (or hair) of camels, and the wool of hares.*"

We cannot pass that by without observation, that it is said, "That in the law of R. Meir they found written *garments of light*, for *garments of skins*." The like to which is that, In the law of R. Meir they found it written, instead of *Behold, it was very good, And behold death is a good thing* Where by *the law of R. Meir* seems to be understood some volume of the law, in the margin of which, or in some papers put in, that Rabbin had writ his critical toys and his foolish pieces of wit upon the law, or some such trifling commentary of his own upon it.

[*Eating locusts.*] They who had not nobler provision hunted after *locusts* for food. The Gemarists feign that there are eight hundred kinds of them, namely, of such as are clean. That lexicographer certainly would be very acute who could describe all these kinds particularly by their names.

"The Rabbins deliver: He that hunts locusts, wasps (*a kind of locusts*), hornets, and flies, on the sabbath, is guilty" ...the Gemara, a little after; "He that hunts locusts in the time of the dew (*on the sabbath*) is not guilty." The Gloss there writes thus; "The locusts in the time of the dew are purblind, so that if you hunt them at that time they stop their pace." The Gemara goes on, "Eliezer Ben Mabbai saith, 'If they go in flocks he is not guilty.'" The Gloss writes, "If they flock together in troops, and be, as it were, ready to be taken, he is not guilty who hunts them even in the time of heat."

13. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

[*And was with the wild beasts.*] He was among the wild beasts, but was not touched by them. So Adam first before his fall.

[*And angels ministered unto him.*] Forty days he was tempted by Satan invisibly, and angels ministered to him visibly. Satan, at last, put on the appearance of an angel of light, and pretending to wait on him, as the rest also did, hid his hook of temptation the more artificially.

24. Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

[*Art thou come to destroy us?*] Us? Whom? The devils? or those Galileans in the synagogue? See what the masters say: "In that generation, in which the Son of David shall come, saith Rabban Gamaliel, Galilea shall be laid waste, and the Galileans shall wander from city to city, and shall not obtain mercy." If such a report obtained in the nation, the devil thence got a very fit occasion in this possessed man of affrighting the Galileans from receiving Christ, because they were to expect nothing from his coming but devastation.

38. And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.

[*Towns.*] What this word means may be excellently well discovered by searching into the distinction between *cities*, and *villages*, and *towns* in the evangelists:--

I. I render *cities*: but by what word, you will say, will you render by *towns*:--"A man cannot compel his wife to follow him to dwell *from town to city, nor from city to town.*" The proper English of which take from what follows: "*It is plain why he cannot force her from city to town; because in a city any thing is to be found,*" or to be had; *but in a town any thing is not to be had.* The Gloss writes, "*'Kerac' is greater than 'Ir,'* (that is, a *city* than a *town*); and there is a place of broad streets, where all neighbouring inhabitants meet at a market, and there any thing is to be had." So the same Gloss elsewhere; "*Kerac* is a place of broad streets, where men meet together from many places," &c.

The Gemarists go on: "R. Josi Bar Chaninah saith, Whence is it that dwelling in *kerachin* (*cities*) is more inconvenient? For it is said, 'And they blessed all the people who offered themselves willingly to dwell at Jerusalem'" (Neh 11). Note, by the way, that Jerusalem was *Kerac*. The Gloss there is, "Dwelling in '*Kerachin*' is worse, because all dwell there, and the houses are straitened, and join one to another, so that there is not free air: but *in a town* are gardens, and paradises by the houses, and the air is more wholesome."

Kerachim therefore were, 1. Cities girt with walls. Hence is that distinction, *that there were some 'Kerachin' which were girt with walls from the days of Joshua*, and some walled afterward. 2. Trading mart cities, and those that were greater and nobler than the rest.

II. *Villages* or *country towns*, [had] no synagogue. Hence is that in Megill. cap. 1: *A Kerac (a city), in which are not ten men to make a synagogue, is to be reckoned for a village.* And Megill. cap. 1, where some of a village are bound to read the Book of Esther in the feast of Purim: *It is indulged to them to do it on a synagogue-day*: that is, when they had not a synagogue among them, but must resort to some neighbour town where a synagogue was, it was permitted them to go thither on some weekday, appointed for meeting together in the synagogue, and that they might not take the trouble of a journey on another day, however that day was appointed by law for that lection.

III. *Urbs*, or *civitas*, a *city*; denoted generally fortified cities, and towns also not fortified, where synagogues were, and villages, where they were not. Hence is that distinction, "That was a *great city* where there was a synagogue": "*a small city* where there was not."

By *towns* therefore here are to be understood towns where there were synagogues, which nevertheless were not either fortified or towns of trade; among us English called *church-towns*.

Chapter 2

4. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

[*They uncovered the roof, &c.*] Here I recollect that phrase *the way of the roof*: "When Rabh Houna was dead, his bier could not be carried out through the door," the door being too strait; "therefore *they thought good to draw it out and let it down through the roof, or through the way of the roof*. But Rabh Chasda said to them, 'Behold, we have learned from him that it redounds to the honour of a wise man to be carried out by the door.'"

"It is written, 'And they shall eat within thy gates' ([Deut 26:12](#)); that is, when the entrance into the house is by the gate, *to except the way through the roof*." "Does he enter into the house, *using the way through the gate, or using the way through the roof?*" The place treats of a house, in the lower part of which the owner dwells; but *the upper part*, is let out to another. It is asked, what way he must enter who dwells in an upper room, whether by the door and the lower parts, where the owner dwells; or whether he must climb up to the roof *by the way to the roof*: that is, as the Gloss hath it, "That he ascend without the house by a ladder set against it for entrance into *the upper room*, and so go into the upper room."

By ladders set up, or perhaps fastened there before, they first draw up the paralytic *upon the roof*, [Luke 5:19](#). Then seeing there was a door in every roof through which they went up from the lower parts of the house into the roof, and this being too narrow to let down the bed and the sick man in it, they widen that space by pulling off the tiles that lay about it.

Well, having made a hole through the roof, the paralytic is let down *into the upper chamber*. There Christ sits, and the Pharisees and the doctors of the law with him, and not in the lower parts of the house. For it was customary for them, when they discoursed of the law or religion, to go up into the upper chamber.

"These are the traditions which they taught *in the upper chamber* of Hananiah, Ben Hezekiah, Ben Garon." "The elders went up *into an upper chamber* in Jericho. They went up also into an upper chamber in Jabneh." "Rabh Jochanan and his disciples went up *to an upper chamber*, and read and expounded." Compare [Mark 14:15](#); [Acts 1:13, 20:8](#).

7. Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?

[*Who can forgive sins?*] "A certain heretic said to Rabh Idith, It is written, 'And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the Lord,' [Exodus 24:1](#). It should rather have been said, 'Come up to me.' He answereth, This is *Mitatron*, whose name is like the name of his Lord, as it is written, 'My name is in him,' [Exodus 23:21](#). If it be so, then said the other, he is to be worshipped. To whom Idith replied, It is written properly, *Do not embitter or provoke him*; but they illy and perversely read, *Do not change for him, do not exchange me for him*. If that be

the sense, said the other, what is the meaning of that, 'He will not forgive your sins?' He answered, True indeed, *for we received him not so much as for a messenger.*" The Gloss is, "He will not forgive your sins'; that is, He cannot pardon your sins; and then, what advantage is there from him? For he had not the power of pardoning our sins; we therefore rejected him," &c. Ye rejected him, indeed, in whom was the name of Jehovah; but alas! how much to your own mischief!

9. Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?*

[*Whether is it easier to say, &c.*] He that observes the use of the word *it is easy* and *it is hard*, in the Jewish schools (and the schoolmen were now with Christ), cannot think it improper that *it is easier* should be of the same import with *it is easy*, which word denotes the thing or the sense plain, smooth, and without scruple; *it is hard*, denotes the contrary. As if our Saviour had said, "Were not the sense plainer, and more suited to the present business to have said, 'Arise and take up thy bed,' than to say, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee?' But I say thus, that ye may know that the Son of man hath power," &c. He does not speak of the easiness of the pronunciation of the words, but of the easiness of the sense. And I should thus render the words, "It is easier to say to the paralytic, Thy sins are forgiven thee, than to say," &c. 'Whether to say,' as it is vulgarly rendered, hath a sense not to be disapproved of; but, 'than to say,' hath a sense more emphatical. Is not the sense easier as to the present business to say, 'Thy sins are forgiven,' than to say, 'Rise up and walk?'

12. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

[*He went out before them all.*] It is very well rendered, "*before* them all": and it might truly be rendered "*against* them all," according to another signification of the word. That is, when the multitude was so crowded that there was no way of going out through it, he, being not only made whole, but strong and lusty, pressed through the press of the multitude, and stoutly made his way with his bed upon his shoulders.

16. And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

[Please see the excellent treatise by John Bunyan, entitled A Discourse Upon the Pharisee and the Publican, (341k)]

[*And sinners.*] Who were they? "Dicers, usurers, plunderers, publicans, shepherds of lesser cattle, those that sell the fruit of the seventh year," &c.

26. How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the showbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?

[*In the days of Abiathar the high priest.*] It is well enough known what is here said in defence of the purity of the text; namely, that Ahimelech the father was called *Abiathar*, and *Abiathar* the son was called also Ahimelech. But I suppose that something more was propounded by our Saviour in these words. For it was common to the Jews under *Abiathar* to understand the Urim and Thummim. Nor without good reason, when it appears, that under the father and the son, both of that name, the mention of inquiring by Urim and Thummim is more frequent than it is ever anywhere else; and, after *Abiathar* the son, there is scarcely mention of it at all. Christ therefore very properly adds, *in the days of Abiathar the high priest*, therein speaking according to a very received opinion in the nation: as though he had said, "David ate the shewbread given him by the high priest, who had the oracle by Urim and thummim present with him, and who acted by the divine direction."

"Ahitophel, that is, a counsellor, Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, that is, the Sanhedrim; *Abiathar*, that is, *Urim and Thummim*."

Chapter 3

4. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

[*But they held their peace.*] This reminds me of the like carriage of the Sanhedrim in judging a servant of king Jannaeus, a murderer, when Jannaeus himself was present in the Sanhedrim. It was found sufficiently that he was guilty; but, for fear, they dared not to utter their opinion; when Simeon Ben Sheta, president of the Sanhedrim, required it: "*He looked on his right hand, and they fixed their eyes upon the earth; on his left hand, and they fixed their eyes upon the earth,*" &c.

17. And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder:

[*Boanerges.*] I. See what Beza saith here. To which our very learned Hugh Broughton, a man very well exercised in these studies, replies: "The Jews to this very day pronounce *Scheva* by *oa*, as *Noabhyim* for *Nebhyim*. So *Boanerges*. When Theodore Beza will have it written *Benerges*, the very Jews themselves will defend our gospel."

Certainly, it is somewhat hard and bold to accuse the Scripture of St. Mark as corrupt for this manner of pronunciation, when, among the Jews, the pronouncing of some letters, vowels, and words was so different and indifferent, that they pronounced one way in Galilee, another way in Samaria, and another way in Judea. "And I remember (saith the famous Ludovicus de Dieu), that I heard the excellent Erpenius say, that he had it from the mouth

of a very learned Maronite, that it could not be taught by any grammatical rules, and hardly by word of mouth, what sound *Scheva* hath among the Syrians."

That castle of noted fame which is called *Masada* in Josephus, Pliny, Solinus, and others in Strabo is *Moasada*, very agreeable to this our sound: *They shew some scorched rocks about 'Moasada.'* Where, without all controversy, he speaks of *Masada*.

II. There is a controversy also about the word *erges*: it is obscure, in what manner it is applied to *thunder*. But give me your judgment, courteous reader, what *Rigsha* is in this story: "The father of Samuel sat in the synagogue of Shaph, and Jathib, in Nehardea: *the divine glory came; he heard the voice of 'Rigsha,' and went not out*: the angels came, and he was affrighted."

Of the word *Rigsha*, the Glossers say nothing. And we do not confidently render it *thunder*; nor yet do we well know how to render it better: if so be it doth not denote *the sound as of a mighty rushing wind*, [Acts 2:2](#): but let the reader judge.

III. As obscure is the reason of the name imposed upon these two disciples, as the derivation of the word. We have only this certain in this business, that we never find them called by this name elsewhere. Christ called Simon *Peter*, and likewise others called him *Peter*, and he calls himself so. But you never find James called *Boanerges*, or John so called, either by themselves or by others. We must trust conjecture for the rest.

IV. It is well enough known what the phrase *Bath Kol*, *the daughter of thunder*, means among the Jews. Our Saviour, using another word, seems to respect another etymology of the name. But it is demanded, what that is. He calls Simon *Peter* with respect had to the work he was to play in building the church of the Gentiles upon a *rock*. For he first opened the door to let in the gospel among the Gentiles. Whether were James and John called *sons of thunder* with respect had to their stout discoursing against the Jews, we neither dare to say, nor can we deny it. James did this, as it seems, to the loss of his life, [Acts 12](#).

But what if allusion be here made to the two registrars, or scribes of the Sanhedrim? whereof one sat on the right hand, and the other on the left; one wrote the votes of those that acquitted, the other the votes of those that condemned. Or to the president himself, and the vice-president? whose definitive sentence, summing up the votes of the whole Sanhedrim, was like thunder and lightning to the condemned persons, and seemed to all like the oracles given from Sinai out of lightning and thunder.

V. But whatsoever that was in the mind of our Saviour, that moved him to imprint this name upon them, when these two brethren, above all the other disciples, would have fire fall from heaven upon that town of the Samaritans which refused to give Christ entertainment, [Luke 9:54](#), they seem to act according to the sense of this surname. And when the mother of these desired a place for one of them on Christ's right hand, and for the other on his left, she took the confidence of such a request probably from this, that Christ had set so honourable a name upon them above the other disciples. And when John himself calls

himself *the elder*, and he was sufficiently known to those to whom he writ under that bare title, *the elder*; I cannot but suspect this distinguishing character arose hence. All the apostles, indeed, were *elders*, which Peter saith of himself, [1 Peter 5:1](#): but I ask, whether any of the twelve, besides this our apostle (his brother James being now dead), could be known to those that were absent under this title, *the elder*, by a proper, not additional name, as he is in his two latter Epistles.

21. And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.

[*He is beside himself.*] In the Talmudists it is *his judgment is gone*, and *his understanding is ceased*. "If any becomes mute, *and yet is of a sound mind*, and they say to him, Shall we write a bill of divorce for thy wife? and he nods with his head, they try him thrice, &c. And it is necessary that they make trial of him more exactly, *lest, perhaps, he might be deprived of his senses.*" This is to be understood of a dumb person, made so by some paralytical or apoplethical stroke, which sometimes wounds the understanding.

"The Rabbins deliver: If any one is sick, and in the mean time any of his friends die, they do not make it known to him that such a one is dead, *lest his understanding be disturbed.*" "One thus lamented R. Simeon Ben Lachish; 'Where art thou, O Bar Lachish? Where art thou, O Bar Lachish?' *And so cried out until his understanding perished.*" For so the Gloss renders it.

How fitly this word *beside himself* expresseth these phrases is readily observed by him who understandeth both languages. And a Jew, reading these words in Mark, would presently have recourse to the sense of those phrases in his nation; which do not always signify *madness*, or being bereft of one's wits, in the proper sense, but sometimes, and very frequently, some discomposure of the understanding for the present, from some too vehement passion. So say Christ's friends, "*His knowledge is snatched away*; he hath forgotten himself, and his own health; he is so vehement and hot in discharging his office, and in preaching, that he is transported beyond himself, and his understanding is disturbed, that he neither takes care of his necessary food nor of his sleep." Those his friends, indeed, have need of an apology, that they had no sounder, nor holier, nor wiser conceit of him; but it is scarcely credible that they thought him to be fallen into plain and absolute madness, and pure distraction. For he had conversed among the multitudes before, at all times in all places; and yet his friends to not say this of him. But now he was retired to his own house at Capernaum, where he might justly expect rest and repose; yet the multitudes rush upon him there, so that he could not enjoy his table and his bed at his own home. Therefore his friends and kinsfolk of Nazareth (among whom was his mother, verse 31), hearing this, unanimously run to him to get him away from the multitude; for they said among themselves, *He is too much transported* beyond himself, and is forgetful of himself.

Chapter 4

1. And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

[*He began to teach.*] That is, *he taught*; by a phrase very usual to these holy writers, because very usual to the nation: *Rabh Canah began to be tedious in his prayer*; that is, *he was tedious. That scholar began to weep*; that is *he wept*. "The ox began to low"; that is, *he lowed*. "When the tyrant's letter was brought to the Rabbins, *they began to weep*"; that is, *they wept*.

This our evangelist useth also another word, and that numberless times almost: the others also use it, but not so frequently; namely, the word *presently*; which answereth to the word *out of hand*, most common among the Talmudists. We meet with it in this our evangelist seven or eight times in the first chapter, and elsewhere very frequently: and that not seldom according to the custom of the idiom, more than out of the necessity of the thing signified.

4. And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

[*And some fell.*] *According to what falls*. The Gloss there, "According to the measure which one sows." And there the Gemarists speak of *seed falling out of the hand*: that is, that is cast out of the hand of the sower: and of *seed falling from the oxen*: that is, "that which is scattered and sown" by the sowing oxen. "For (as the Gloss speaks) sometimes they sow with the hand, and sometimes they put the seed into a cart full of holes, and drive the oxen upon the ploughed earth, and the seed falls through the holes."

5. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

[*Because it had no depth of earth.*] For it was rocky, whose turf nevertheless was thick enough, and very fruitful; but this ground which the parable supposeth wanted that thickness. "You have not a more fruitful land among all lands than the land of Egypt; nor a more fruitful country in Egypt than Zoan. And yet Hebron, which was rocky, exceeded it sevenfold." Note that 'it was *rocky*, and yet so *fruitful*.'

7. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

[*Among thorns.*] The parable supposeth, *a field not freed from thorns*.

11. And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all *these things* are done in parables:

[*Unto them that are without.*] *Those without*, in Jewish speech, were *the Gentiles*; a phrase taken hence, that they called all lands and countries besides their own *without the land*. Would you have an exact instance of this distinction? "A tree, half of which grows within the land of Israel, and half without the land, the fruits of it which are to be tithed, and the common fruits are confounded: they are the words of Rabba. But Rabban Simeon Ben Gamaliel saith, "That part which grows within the place, that is bound to tithing" [that is, within the land of Israel], "is to be tithed: that which grows in the place free from tithing" (that is, without the land) "is free." The Gloss is, "For if the roots of the tree are without the land, it is free, although the tree itself extends itself sixteen cubits within the land."

Hence *books that are without*, are heathen books: *extraneous books of Greek wisdom*.

This is the common signification of the phrase. And, certainly it foretells dreadful things, when our blessed Saviour stigmatizeth the Jewish nation with that very name that they were wont to call the heathens by.

The word *those without*, occurs also in the Talmudists, when it signifies the Jews themselves; that is, some of the Jewish nation. Here *the Karaites*, who rejected traditions, there *those without*, are opposed to *the wise men*: "He that puts his phylacteries on his forehead, or in the palm of his hand, *behold! he follows the custom of the Karaites*. And he that overlays one of them with gold, and puts it upon his garment which is at his hand, *behold! he follows the custom of those that are without*." Where the Gloss, "*those without* are men who follow their own will, and not the judgment of the wise men." They are supposed to wear phylacteries, and to be Jews; but when they do according to their pleasure, and despise the rules of the wise men, they are esteemed as *those that are without*, or *heathens*. So was the whole Jewish nation according to Christ's censure, which despised the evangelical wisdom.

[*All things are done in parables.*] I. How much is the Jewish nation deceived concerning the times of the Messiah! They think his forerunner Elias will explain all difficulties, resolve scruples, and will render all things plain; so that when the Messiah shall come after him, there shall be nothing obscure or dark in the law and in religion. Hence these expressions, and the like to them: "One found a bill of contracts in his keeping, and knew not what it meant, *Let it be laid up till Elias shall come*." And more in the same tract, concerning things found, when it is not known to whom they are to be restored, "Let them be laid up till Elias come." "*That passage, (Eze 14:18,19 where a burnt offering is called a sacrifice for sin) Elias will unfold*." Infinite examples of that sort occur.

II. How those words have wracked interpreters, "Is a candle put under a bushel," &c.; and, "There is nothing hidden," &c.: you may see also without a candle. A very easy sense of them is gathered from the context. When Christ speaks in parables, "A light is put under

a bushel": but "the light (saith he) is not come for this end," that it should be so hidden; nor, indeed, were it fit so to hide it, but that the divine justice would have it so, that they who will not see the light should not enjoy the light. But "there is nothing hid" which shall not be made manifest by the brightness of the doctrine of the gospel, so there be eyes that do not refuse the light, nor voluntarily become purblind. Therefore, take you heed how you hear, lest ye be like them, and divine justice mete to you by the same measure as is measured to them; namely, that they shall never hear, because they will not hear.

1. And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

[*Into the country of the Gadarenes.*] So also Luke: But Matthew, *into the country of the Gergesenes*. And, which ought not to be passed over without observation, Mark and Luke, who call it *the country of the Gadarenes*, make mention only of *one* possessed person; but Matthew, who calls it *the country of the Gergesenes*, speaks of *two*. We know what is here said by commentators to reconcile the evangelists. We fetch their reconciliation from the very distinction of the words which the evangelists use, and that from those conclusions:

I. We say the region of the *Gergesenes* was of broader extent and signification than the region of the *Gadarenes* was, and that the region of the *Gadarenes* was included within it. For whether it were called so from the old *Gergashite* family of the Canaanites, or from the muddy and *clayey* nature of the soil, which was called *Gergishta* by the Jews, which we rather believe; it was of wider extension than the country of the *Gadarenes*; which denoted only one city, and the smaller country about it, and that belonged to *Gadara*. But this country comprehended within it the country of *Gadara*, of Hippo, and of Magdala, if not others also.

II. We say *Gadara* was a city of heathens, (hence it is less marvel if there were swine among them) which we prove also elsewhere, when we treat of the region of Decapolis.

III. We say there were two possessed persons according to Matthew, one a *Gadarene*, another coming from some other place than the country of *Gadara*, namely, from some place in the country of the *Gergesenes*.

IV. We believe that that *Gadarene* was a heathen; and that Mark and Luke mentioned only him on set purpose, that so they might make the story the more famous. Any one skilled in the chorography of the land of Israel might understand that *the country of the Gadarenes* was of heathen possession: they therefore mark him with that name, that it might presently be perceived that Christ now had to do with a heathen possessed person; which was somewhat rare, and except the daughter of the Syrophenician woman, without any example. Matthew would describe the greatness of the miracle; he therefore mentions *two* most miserably possessed persons: but Mark and Luke choose out only *one*, and him more remarkable for this very thing, that he was a *Gadarene*, and by consequence a heathen. These things, well weighed, do not only confirm the concord between the evangelists, but render the story far clearer. For,

First, It is to be marked that the devil adjures Christ not to "torment" him, verse 7, which is not elsewhere done by him: as though he were without Christ's jurisdiction among the heathens. And,

Secondly, Christ does not elsewhere ask any about their name, besides this alone, as being of more singular example and story.

Thirdly, The heathen name *legion*, argues him a heathen concerning whom the story is.

Fourthly, The devils besought him much that he would not send them out of the country; for being among heathens, they thought they were among their own.

Our Saviour, therefore, healed those two in Matthew together, the one, a *Gadarene* and heathen, and the other from some other place, a *Gergesene* and a Jew; and that not without a mystery; namely, that there should be comfort in Christ both to Jews and Gentiles, against the power and tyranny of Satan. Of those two, Mark and Luke mention the more remarkable.

9. And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many.

[*My name is Legion.*] I. This name speaks a numerous company, the devil himself being the interpreter; "*Legion* (saith he) *is my name*, for we are many."

And among the Jews, when a man would express a great number of any thing, it was not unusual to name a *legion*: "R. Eliezer Ben Simeon saith, *It is easier for a man to nourish a legion of olives in Galilee*, than to bring up one child in the land of Israel."

II. Among the Talmudists, a *legion* bespeaks an unclean company; at least, they reckoned all the legions for unclean: "The Rabbins deliver: *a legion that passeth* from place to place, if it enter into any house, the house is thereby become unclean. *For there is no legion which hath not some carcaphalia*. And wonder not at this, when the *carcaphalion* of R. Ismael was fastened to the heads of kings." "*Carcaphal*" (saith the Gloss) is the skin of a head pulled off from a dead person, which they make use of in enchantments."

III. What the Romans thought of their *legions*, take from the words of Caesar to the Spaniards: "Did ye not consider, if I were overthrown, that the people of Rome have ten *legions*, which could not only resist you, but pull down even heaven itself?" What then is the power of "more than twelve *legions* of angels"!

14. And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

[*Told it in the country.*] *Told it in the fields*. But to whom? To them that laboured, or that travelled in the fields? So chapter 6:36: *That they may go away into the 'fields' round about, and buy themselves bread*. From whom, I pray, should they buy in the *fields*? And verse 56: *And wheresoever they entered into towns or 'fields,' they laid the sick in the streets, or markets*. What *streets* or *markets* are there in the *fields*?

"Rabba saith, That food made of meal, of those that dwell in the fields, in which they mingle much meal, over it they give thanks." *Dwellers in the field*, saith the Gloss, are *inhabitants of the villages*. And the Aruch saith, "private men who dwell in the fields": that is, in houses scattered here and there, and not built together in one place, as it is in towns and cities.

15. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

[*In his right mind.*] *Firm, or sound of understanding, in Talmudic speech.*

23. And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.

[*My little daughter.*] "A daughter from her birthday, until she is *twelve years old* complete, is called 'little,' or 'a little maid.' But when she is full twelve years old and one day over, she is called 'a young woman.'"

26. And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,

[*And had suffered many things of many physicians.*] And it is no wonder: for see what various and manifold kinds of medicines are prescribed to a woman labouring under a flux: "R. Jochanan saith, *Bring (or take) of gum of Alexandria the weight of a zuzee: and of alum, the weight of a zuzee: and of crocus hortensis the weight of a zuzee: let these be bruised together, and be given in wine to the woman that hath an issue of blood, &c.*

"But if this does not benefit, *take of Persian onions thrice three logs, boil them in wine, and then give it her to drink, and say Arise from thy flux*

"But if this does not prevail, *set her in a place where two ways meet, and let her hold a cup of wine in her hand; and let somebody come behind her and affright her, and say, Arise from thy flux.*

"But if that do no good, *take a handful of cummin, and a handful of crocus, and a handful of foenum groecum.* Let these be boiled in wine, and give them her to drink, and say, *Arise from thy flux.*"

But if these do not benefit, other doses and others still are prescribed, in number ten or more, which see, if you please, in the place cited [Bab. Schabb. fol. 110.]. Among them I cannot omit this:

"*Let them dig seven ditches: in which let them burn some cuttings of such vines as are not circumcised, [that is, that are not yet four years old]. And let her take in her hand a cup of wine. And let them lead her away from this ditch, and make her sit down over that. And let them remove her from that, and make her sit down over another. And in every removal you must say to her, Arise from thy flux," &c.*

41. And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.

[*Talitha kumi.*] "Rabbi Jochanan saith, We remember when *boys and girls* of sixteen and seventeen years old *played* in the streets, and nobody was offended with them." Where the Gloss is, *Tali and Talitha is a boy and a girl.*

[*Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.*] *Talitha kumi* signifies only *Maid, arise*. How comes that clause then, *I say unto thee*, to be inserted?

I. You may recollect here, and perhaps not without profit, that which was alleged before; namely, that it was customary among the Jews, that, when they applied physic to the profluous woman, they said, "Arise from thy flux"; which very probably they used in other diseases also.

II. Christ said nothing else than what sounded all one with, *Maid, arise*: but in the pronouncing and uttering those words that authority and commanding power shined forth, that they sounded no less than if he had said, "Maid, I say to thee, or I command thee, arise." They said, "Arise from thy disease"; that is, "I wish thou wouldst arise": but Christ saith, *Maid, arise*; that is, "I command thee, arise."

43. And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

[*He commanded that something should be given her to eat.*] Not as she was alive only, and now in good health, but as she was in a most perfect state of health, and hungry: "The son of Rabban Gamaliel was sick. He sent, therefore, two scholars of the wise men to R. Chaninah Ben Dusa into his city. He saith to them, 'Wait for me, until I go up into the upper chamber.' He went up into the upper chamber, and came down again, and said, 'I am sure that the son of Rabban Gamaliel is freed from his disease.' The same hour he asked for food."

Chapter 6

3. Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

[*Is not this the carpenter?*] Among other things to be performed by the father for his son this was one, to bring him up in some art or trade. "It is incumbent on the father to circumcise his son, to redeem him, to teach him the law, and to teach him some occupation. R. Judah saith, 'Whosoever teacheth not his son to do some work, is as if he taught him robbery.'" "R. Meir saith, 'Let a man always endeavour to teach his son *an honest art*,'" &c. Joseph instructs and brings up Christ in his carpenter's trade.

8. And commanded them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in *their* purse.

[*No scrip.*] Concerning the *scrip* we said somewhat at [Matthew 10:10](#): let us add this story: "The Rabbins deliver: There is a story of a certain man, whose sons behaved not themselves well. He stood forth and assigned over his wealth to Jonathan Ben Uzziel. What did Jonathan Ben Uzziel do? He sold a third part; a third part he dedicated to holy uses; and a third part he gave back to the sons of the deceased. Shammai came to him *with his staff and with his scrip.*" The Gloss saith, "He came to contend with Jonathan, because he had violated the will of the dead." Behold the vice-president of the Sanhedrim carrying a *scrip*, in which he laid up victuals for his journey.

13. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed *them*.

[*Anointed with oil many that were sick.*] "*The oil*, therefore, was (saith the famous Beza) a symbol of that miraculous power, not a medicament whereby they cured diseases." But the Jews say, and that truly, such an *anointing* was physical, although it did not always obtain its end. But this *anointing* of the apostles ever obtained its end: "R. Simeon Ben Eliezer saith, 'R. Meir permitted the mingling of wine and oil, and to *anoint* the sick on the sabbath. But when he once was sick, and we would do the same to him, he permitted it not.'" This story is recited elsewhere; where for 'R. Simeon Ben Eliezer,' is 'R. Samuel Ben Eliezer.' Perhaps in the manuscript copy it was written with an abbreviation and thence came the ambiguity of the name.

Let it be granted such anointing was medicinal, which cannot possibly be denied; and then there is nothing obscure in the words of [James 5:14](#); "Let the elders of the church be called, and let the sick man be anointed by them, or by others present, that their prayers may be joined with the ordinary means."

27. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison,

[*An executioner.*] So the Targum of Jonathan upon [Genesis 39:1](#); *Rab Speculatoraia*. See the Aruch, in the word *Speculator*.

37. He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

[*Two hundred pence.*] I. *Denarius* and *zuz* are of the same value among the Rabbins. "The fourth part of a shekel of silver in the Targum is *one zuz of silver*. For a shekel of the law was *sela*. And so in the Targum, a *shekel*, is *sela*, and is worth four *denarii*," or *pence*.

But now a *penny* and *zuz* are the same: "They call *pence*, in the language of the Gemara, *zuzim*."

II. But now two hundred *zuzees*, or *pence*, was a sum very famous, and of very frequent mention. "If one of elder years lay with a woman of less years, or if one of less years lay with a woman of elder years, or one that is wounded, their portion is *two hundred zuzees*." "If one gives another a blow upon the cheek, *let him give him two hundred zuzees*." "A woman that is now become a widow, or dismissed by a divorce, who was married a virgin, let her have for her portion *two hundred zuzees*."

Hence, perhaps, is the same number of *two hundred pence* in the mouth of the disciples, because it was a most celebrated sum, and of very frequent mention in the mouths of all.

40. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

[*By ranks.*] *Rank by rank*, in Talmudic language. The university of Jabneh is very frequently celebrated under the name of *the vineyard in Jabneh*. And R. Solomon gives the reason; *Because the scholars sat there ranks by ranks, like a vineyard which is planted rank by rank.*

Chapter 7

3. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their hands oft*, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

[*Except they wash their hands oft.*] *The fist*. When they washed their hands, they washed the fist *unto the joining of the arm*. *The hands are polluted, and made clean unto the joining of the arm*. "The Rabbins deliver: The washing of hands *as to common things* (or *common food*) *was unto the joining of the arm*. And the cleansing of hands and feet in the Temple was to the joint." *The joining*, saith the Aruch, *is where the arm is distinguished from the hand*. So, also, where the foot is distinguished from the leg.

"The second waters cleanse whatsoever parts of the hands the first waters had washed. But if the first waters had gone above the juncture of the arm, the second waters do not cleanse, *because they do not cleanse beyond the juncture*. If, therefore, the waters which went above the juncture return upon the hands again, they are unclean."

4. And *when they come from the market*, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables.*

[*And when they come from the market, except they wash.*] The Jews used *the washing of the hands*, and *the plunging of the hands*. And the word *wash*, in our evangelist seems to answer to the former, and *baptize* to the latter.

I. That the *plunging* of the whole body is not understood here, may be sufficiently proved hence; that such *plunging* is not used but when pollution is contracted from the more principal causes of uncleanness. "A man and vessels contract not uncleanness, *but from the father of uncleanness*: such as uncleanness from a creeping thing, from the seed in the unclean act, from him that is polluted by the dead, from a leper, from the water of purification, from him that lies with a menstruous woman, from the flux of him that hath the gonorrhoea, from his spittle, from his urine, from the blood of a menstruous woman, from a profluvius man," &c. By these a man was so polluted, that it was *a day's washing*; and he must *plunge* his whole body. But for smaller uncleannesses it was enough to cleanse the hands.

II. Much less is it to be understood of the things bought; as if they, when they were bought for the market, were to be *washed* (in which sense some interpreters render the words, "And what they buy out of the market, unless they *wash* it, they eat it not"), when there were some things which would not endure water, some things which, when bought, were not presently eaten; and the traditional canons distinguish between those things which were lawful as soon as they came from the market, and those which were not.

III. The phrase, therefore, seems to be meant of the *immersion*, or *plunging of the hands only*; and the word *fist*, is here to be understood also in common. Those that remain at home eat not *unless they wash the fist*. But those that come from the market eat not, *unless they plunge their fist into the water*, being ignorant and uncertain what uncleanness they came near unto in the market.

"The *washing* of the hands, and the *plunging* of the hands, were from the scribes. The hands which had need of *plunging*, they dipped not but in a fit place; that is, where there was a confluence of forty *seahs* of water. For in the place where any dipped vessels, it was lawful to dip the hands. But the hands which have need of *washing* only, if they dip them in the confluence of waters, they are clean; whether they dip them in waters that are drawn, or in vessels, or in the pavement. They do not cleanse the hands [*as to washing*], until waters are poured upon the hands out of a vessel: for they do not *wash* the hands but out of a vessel."

[*Pots.*] It is doubtful whether this word be derived from a *sextary* (a certain measure), or from *vessels planed* or *engraven*. To take it as speaking of *sextaries* is, indeed, very agreeable to the word, and not much different from the matter. And so also it is, if you derive it from vessels *planed* or *turned*, that is, of wood. And perhaps those vessels which are called by the Rabbins *flat*, and are opposed to *such as may contain something within them*, are expressed by this word. Of that sort were knives, tables, seats, &c. Concerning which, as capable of pollution, see Maimonides, and the Talmudic Tract *Kelim*: where are reckoned up, 1. The very *table* at which they ate. 2. *The little table*, or the wooden side-table, where wine and fruits were set, that were presently to be brought to table. 3. *A seat*. 4. *The footstool* for the feet under the seat.

[*Of beds.*] *Beds* contracted uncleanness...One can hardly put these into good English without a paraphrase. [One] was a *bed*, on which a profluvius man or woman, or a menstruous woman, or a woman in childbirth, or a leper, had either sat or stood, or lain, or leaned, or hung. [The other] was a *bed*, which any thing had touched, that had been touched before by any of these.

The word, therefore, *washings*, applied to all these, properly and strictly is not to be taken of *dipping* or *plunging*, but, in respect of some things, of *washing* only, and, in respect of others, of sprinkling only.

11. But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is Corban*, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free.*

[*Corban (that is, 'a gift').*] The word a *gift*, was known and common among the Talmudists: *Rabba saith, A burnt sacrifice is 'a gift.'* Where the Gloss writes thus; "A burnt sacrifice is not offered to expiate for any deed: but after repentance hath expiated the deed, the burnt sacrifice comes *that the man may be received with favour.* As when any hath sinned against the king, *and hath appeased him by a paraclete [an advocate]*, and comes to implore his favour, he brings a *gift.*

Egypt shall bring 'a gift,' to the Messiah.

19. Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

[*The draught.*] *The house of the secret seat.*

Chapter 8

12. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign: verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.

[*Why doth this generation seek after a sign?]* Instead of a comment, take a story: "On that day, R. Eliezer answered to all the questions in the whole world, but they hearkened not to him. He said therefore to them, 'If the tradition be according to what I say, let this siliqua [*a kind of tree*] bear witness.' The siliqua was rooted up, and removed a hundred cubits from its place: there are some who say four hundred. They say to him, 'A proof is not to be fetched from a siliqua.' He saith to them again, 'If the tradition be with me, let the rivers of waters testify': the rivers of waters are turned backward. They say to him, 'A proof is not to be fetched from the rivers of waters.' He said to them again, 'If the tradition be with me, let the walls of the school testify': the walls bowed, as if they were falling. R. Josua chid them, saying, 'If there be a controversy between the disciples of the wise men about tradition, what is that to you?' Therefore the walls fell not in honour of R. Josua. Yet they stood not upright again in honour of R. Eliezer. He said to them, moreover, 'If the tradition be with me, let the heavens bear witness.' The Bath Kol went forth and said, 'Why do ye contend

with R. Eliezer, with whom the tradition always is?' R. Jonah rose up upon his feet, and said, 'It is not in heaven' ([Deut 30:12](#)). What do these words, 'It is not in heaven,' mean? R. Jeremiah saith, When the law is given from mount Sinai, we do not care for the Bath Kol."

Shall we laugh at the fable, or shall we suspect some truth in the story? For my part, when I recollect with myself, how addicted to and skillful that nation was in art-magic; which is abundantly asserted not only by the Talmudists, but by the Holy Scriptures; I am ready to give some credit to this story, and many others of the same nature: namely, that the thing was really acted by the art and help of the devil by those ensign-bearers and captains of errors, the more to establish their honour and tradition.

Therefore, from the story, be it true or false, we observe these two things:--

I. How tenacious the Jews were of their traditions, and how unmovable in them even beyond the evidence of miracles. That Eliezer was of great fame among them, but he was a follower of Shammai. Hence he is called once and again *the Shammean*. When, therefore, he taught something against the school of Hillel, although he did miracles (as they themselves relate), they gave not credit to him, nay, they derided him. The same was their practice, the same was their mind, against the miracles of Christ. And to this may these words of our Saviour tend, "Why does this generation seek a sign?" a generation, which is not only altogether unworthy of miracles, but also which is sworn to retain their traditions and doctrines, although infinite miracles be done to the contrary.

II. You see how the last testimony of the miracles of this conjuror is fetched from heaven: "For the Bath Kol went forth," &c. Which the followers of Hillel nevertheless received not: and therein not justly indeed; when they feign such a voice to have come to themselves from heaven, as a definitive oracle for the authority of the school of Hillel, not to be gainsaid: concerning which the Talmudists speak very frequently, and very boastingly.

After the same manner they require a sign from heaven of our Saviour; not content with those infinite miracles that he had done, the healing of disease, the casting out devils, the multiplying of loaves, &c. They would also have somewhat from heaven, either after the example of Moses fetching manna from thence; or of Elias fetching down fire; or of Joshua staying the sun; or of Isaiah bringing it backwards.

1. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

[*The kingdom of God coming in power.*] In Matthew, it is *the Son of man coming in his kingdom*. The coming of Christ in his vengeance and power to destroy the unbelieving and most wicked nation of the Jews is expressed under these forms of speech. Hence the day of judgment and vengeance:

- I. It is called "the great and terrible day of the Lord," [Acts 2:20](#); [2 Thess 2:2,3](#).
- II. It is described as "the end of the world," [Jeremiah 4:27](#); [Matthew 24:29](#), &c.
- III. In that phrase, "in the last times," [Isaiah 2:2](#); [Acts 2:17](#); [1 Tim 4:1](#); [2 Peter 3:3](#); that is, in the last times of that city and dispensation.
- IV. Thence, the beginning of the "new world," [Isaiah 65:17](#); [2 Peter 3:13](#).
- V. The vengeance of Christ upon that nation is described as his "coming," [John 21:22](#); [Hebrews 10:37](#): his "coming in the clouds," [Revelation 1:7](#): "in glory with the angels," [Matthew 24:30](#), &c.
- VI. It is described as the 'enthroning of Christ, and his twelve apostles judging the twelve tribes of Israel,' [Matthew 19:28](#); [Luke 22:30](#).

Hence this is the sense of the present place: Our Saviour had said in the last verse of the former chapter, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels," to take punishment of that adulterous and sinful generation. And he suggests, with good reason, that that his coming in glory should be in the lifetime of some that stood there.

2. And after six days Jesus taketh *with him* Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.

[*Into a high mountain.*] Now your pardon, reader; I know it will be laughed at if I should doubt whether Christ were transfigured upon mount Tabor; for who ever doubted of this thing? But let me, before I give faith to the thing, reveal my doubts concerning it: and the reader, laying before his eyes some geographical map of Galilee, perhaps, when he shall have heard me, will judge more favorably of my doubting.

I. Let him consider that Christ, in the story next going before, was in the coast of Caesarea Philippi, [Matthew 16:13](#); [Mark 8:27](#); [Luke 9:18](#); and, for any thing that can be gathered out of the evangelists, changed not his place before this story. Who will deny that those words, "There are some that stand here who shall not taste of death," &c., were uttered in those coasts of Caesarea Philippi? And presently the story of the transfiguration followed.

II. Six days indeed came between: in which, you will say, Christ might travel from Caesarea Philippi to Tabor. He might, indeed: but, 1. The evangelists intimate no change

from place to place, saying only this, That he led up into the mountain three of his disciples. 2. It seems, indeed, a wonder that our Saviour would tire himself with so long a journey, to choose Tabor whereon to be transfigured, when, as far as we read, he had never before been in that mountain; and there were mountains elsewhere where he conversed frequently. 3. Follow the footsteps of the history, and of Christ in his travel, from his transfiguration onwards. When he came down from the mountain, he healed a child possessed with a devil: and when he betook himself into the house they said, "Why could not we cast out the devil? &c. And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee, and came to Capernaum," [Mark 9:28,30,33](#).

III. And now, reader, look upon the chorographical map, and how incongruous will this travelling seem! 1. From Caesarea Philippi to mount Tabor through the whole length almost of Galilee. 2. Then from mount Tabor by a course back again to Capernaum, a great part of Galilee (especially as the maps place Capernaum) being again passed over. Whereas Capernaum was in the way from Caesarea Philippi to Tabor, and there was a mountain there well known to Christ, and very much frequented by him.

IV. So that it seems far more consonant to the history of the gospel, that Christ was transfigured in some mountain near Caesarea Philippi; perhaps that which, Josephus being witness, was the highest, and hung over the very fountains of Jordan, and at the foot whereof Caesarea was placed.

In that place, formerly called *Dan*, was the first idolatry set up, and now in the same place the eternal Son of God is shewn, both in the confession of Peter, and in the unspeakably clear and illustrious demonstration of the Messias.

38. And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us.

[*We saw one casting out devils in thy name.*] I. Without doubt he truly did this work, whosoever he were. He cast out devils truly and really, and that by the divine power; otherwise Christ had not said those things which he did, "Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me," &c.

II. Whence then could any one that followed not Christ cast out devils? Or whence could any one that cast out devils not follow Christ?

I answer: We suppose,

I. That this man cast not out devils in the name of Jesus, but in the name of Christ, or Messias: and that it was not out of contempt that he followed not Jesus, but out of ignorance; namely, because he knew not yet that Jesus was the Messias.

II. We therefore conjecture that he had been heretofore some disciple of John, who had received his baptism in the name of the Messias now speedily to come, (which all the disciples of John had) but he knew not as yet that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messias: which John himself knew not until it was revealed to him from heaven.

III. It is probable, therefore, that God granted the gifts of miracles to some lately baptized by John, to do them in the name of the Messiah; and that, to lay a plainer way for the receiving of the Messiah, when he should manifest himself under the name of 'Jesus of Nazareth.'

See verse 41: *In my name, because ye belong to Christ*; and chapter 13:6, "Many shall come in my name"; not in the name of Jesus, but in the name of the Messiah: for those false prophets assumed to themselves the name of the Messiah, to bring to nought the name of Jesus. That, [John 16:24](#), "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name," differs not much from this sense: "The apostles poured out their prayers, and all the holy men theirs, in the name of the Messiah; but ye have as yet asked nothing in my name *Jesus*," &c.

43. And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

[*Cut it off.*] "Rabh Mona, in the name of R. Judah, saith, A drop of cold water in the morning [*applied to the eye*], and the washing of the hands and feet in the evening, *is good beyond all the collyrium [eyesalve] in the whole world.* For he said, *The hand applied to the eye [in the morning, before washing], let it be cut off.* The hand applied to the nostril, let it be cut off: the hand put to the ear, let it be cut off," &c.

49. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

[*For every one shall be salted with fire.*] The great Scaliger is well chastised, and not without cause, by John Cloppenberg, because he changed the reading here into *every sacrifice shall be salted*. See what he saith.

All, is not to be understood of every man, but of every one of them "whose worm dieth not," &c.

The sense of the place is to be fetched from those words, and the sense of those words from [Isaiah 66:24](#): "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." Upon which place thus the Jews write; "'They shall go forth and look,' &c. Is not the finger of a man, if it be put into the fire, immediately burnt? But God gives power (*or being*) to wicked men to receive torments." Kimchi upon the place thus: "They shall see the carcasses of them full of worms, and fire burning in them": and yet the worms die not.

The words therefore of our Saviour respect this: "Their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched; for every one of them shall be seasoned with fire itself, so as to become un-consumable, and shall endure for ever to be tormented, as salt preserves from corruption."

That very learned man mentioned before called the common reading very improper. For what is it, saith he, *to season with fire*? Let me retort, And what is it *to fire with salt*? And

yet that sense occurs very frequently in the Talmudists. For in them is *to burn*, (which it signifies properly indeed) and very frequently it is, *to corrupt any thing with too much salting*, so that it cannot be eaten: *to be fired with salt*. So in this place, *to be salted with fire*, that it cannot be corrupted or consumed.

[*And every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.*] Here the discourse is of salting, which was done at the altar, see [Leviticus 2:13](#): "In the ascent of the altar, they salted the parts of the sacrifice: and on the top of the altar they salt the handful of meal, of frankincense, of incense, and the mincha of the priests, and the mincha of the anointed priest, and the mincha of the drink-offerings, and the sacrifice of birds." Yea, *the very wood is a corban of the mincha, and is to be salted.*

But in the former clause, the allusion was not to the fire of the altar, but to the fire in the valley of Hinnom, where dead carcasses, bones, and other filthy things were consumed. Carcasses crawl with worms; and instead of salt which secures against worms, they shall be cast into the fire, and shall be seasoned with flames, and yet the worms shall not die. But he that is a true sacrifice to God shall be seasoned with the salt of grace to the incorruption of glory.

Our Saviour speaks in this place with [Isaiah 66:20](#): *They shall bring your brethren out of all the nations for a gift to the Lord,--as the children of Israel offer their sacrifices to me with psalms in the house of the Lord.* And verse 24: *And they shall go forth, and look upon the limbs of men that transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched, &c.*

Every sacrifice, saith our Saviour, concerning holy men seasoned with grace: so the prophet, "They shall bring your brethren for a gift to the Lord, as the children of Israel do the sacrifices."

Shall be seasoned with fire, saith our Saviour of wicked men: in the same sense Isaiah, "They shall be in unquenchable fire, and yet their worm shall not die."

Their fire and their worm: whose? Concerning the former, it is somewhat obscure in our Saviour's words, and so, indeed, that it is without all obscurity that he refers his words only to the words of Isaiah: but who they are in Isaiah is plain enough.

Chapter 10

1. And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

[*Cometh into the coasts of Judea by the further side of Jordan.*] Here is need of a discerning eye to distinguish of the true time and method of this story, and of Christ's journey. If you make use of such an eye, you will find half a year, or thereabouts, to come between the ut-

tering of the words immediately before-going, and this travel of our Saviour; however it seems to be intimated by our evangelist, and likewise by Matthew, that when he had finished those words, forthwith he entered upon his journey: when, in truth, he went before to Jerusalem, through the midst of Samaria, to the feast of Tabernacles, [Luke 9:51](#), &c. [John 7](#). And again, from Galilee, after he had returned thither, through the cities and towns to Jerusalem, [Luke 13:22](#); to the feast of Dedication, [John 10:22](#): and again, "beyond Jordan" indeed, [John 10:40](#); but first taking his way into Galilee, and thence beyond Jordan, according to that story which is before us. The studious reader, and that in good earnest employeth his labour upon this business, has not need of further proof; his own eyes will witness this sufficiently. Thus, the wisdom and Spirit of God directed the pens of these holy writers, that some omitted some things to be supplied by others; and others supplied those things which they had omitted: and so a full and complete history was not composed but of all joined and compared together.

I wish the reverend Beza had sufficiently considered this, who rendereth not *beyond*, but *by* Jordan, and corrects the Vulgar interpreter and Erasmus, who render it '*beyond* Jordan,' properly and most truly: "As if, by Perea (saith he), or the country beyond Jordan, Christ, passing over Jordan or the lake of Tiberias, came into Judea out of Galilee; which is not true." But take heed you do not mistake, reverend old man. For he went over Jordan from Capernaum, as it is very probable, by the bridge built over Jordan between Chammath, near to Tiberias, at the Gadarene country: he betook himself to Bethabara, and stayed some time there, [John 10:40](#): thence he went along Perea to the bank over against Jericho. While he tarrieth there, a messenger, sent from Mary, comes to him concerning the death of Lazarus, [John 11](#); and thence, after two days, he passeth Jordan in Judea.

17. And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

[*Kneeled to him.*] So chapter 1:40, *Beseeching him, and kneeling to him.* This is variously rendered, *He fell at his feet, bowing the knee, beseeching upon his knee, falling down at his knees.* Which renderings are not improper, but I suspect something more is included. For, 1. It was customary for those that so adored to take hold of the knees or the legs, [2 Kings 4:27](#); [Matthew 28:9](#). 2. To kiss the knees or the feet. See what we have said at [Matthew 28:9](#).

When R. Akiba had been twelve years absent from his wife, and at last came back, his wife went out to meet him: "and when she came to him, falling upon her face, *she kissed his knees.*" And a little after, when he was entered into the city, his father-in-law not knowing who he was, but suspecting him to be some great Rabbin, went to him, and falling upon his face *kissed his knees.* Speaking of Job, "*Satan came, and he kissed his knees:* but in all this Job sinned not with his lips," &c. When a certain Rabbin had discoursed of divers things, *Bar Chama rose up and kissed his knees.*

21. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

[*Loved him.*] That is, he manifested by some outward gesture that this man pleased him, both in his question and in his answer: when he both seriously inquired concerning attaining eternal life; and seriously professed that he had addicted himself to God's commandments with all care and circumspection.

Let us compare the customs of the Masters among the Jews: Eliezer Ben Erech obtained leave from Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai to discourse of some things before him. He discoursed of Ezekiel's *chariot* (chapter 1), or, *of mystical divinity*. "When he had made an end, Rabban Jochanan arose up, *and kissed his head.*" "R. Abba Bar Cahna heard R. Levi disputing profoundly. When he had made an end, R. Abba rose up and kissed his head." There is a story of a certain Nazarite young man that exceedingly pleased Simeon the Just with a certain answer that he gave. Whereupon, said Simeon, "I bowed towards him with my head, and said, O son, let such as you be multiplied in Israel." The story is found elsewhere, where for *I bowed towards him with my head*, it is *I embraced him and kissed his head*. "Miriam, before the birth of Moses, had prophesied, My mother shall bring forth a son who shall deliver Israel. When he was born the whole house was filled with light. His father stood forth, *and kissed her upon the head*, and said, Thy prophecy is fulfilled. And when they cast him into the river, *he struck her upon the head.*"

What if our Saviour used this very gesture towards this young man? And that the more conveniently, when he was now upon his knees before him. Some gesture, at least, he used, whereby it appeared, both to the young man and to the standers-by, that the young man did not a little please him, both by his question and by his answer. So *I have loved*, [Psalm 116:1](#), in the LXX, *I have loved*, one may render well, *it pleaseth me well*. So Josephus of David's soldiers, ([1 Sam 30:22](#)): "Those four hundred who went to the battle would not impart the spoils to the two hundred who were faint and weary; *and said, That they should 'love'* [that is, *be well pleased*] *that they had received their wives safe again.*"

In some parity of sense, John is called the disciple, *whom Jesus loved*; not that Jesus loved him more than the rest with his eternal, infinite, saving love, but he favoured him more with some outward kindness and more intimate friendship and familiarity. And why? Because John had promised that he would take care of Christ's mother after his death. For those words of our Saviour upon the cross to John, 'Behold thy mother!' and to his mother, 'Behold thy son!' and that from thence John took her home, do carry a fair probability with them, that that was not the first time that John heard of such a matter, but that long before he had so promised.

I have loved thee, [Isaiah 60:10](#), is the rendering of *I have had pity upon thee*: which may here also agree very well, "Jesus *had pity* upon him."

46. And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging.

[*Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus.*] Some suspect the evangelist here guilty of a solecism, by making a tautology: for it was neither necessary, as they think, so to render the Syriac word in Greek; nor is it done so elsewhere in proper names of that nature. For it is not said by any evangelist, Bartholomeus, *the son of Tholomeus*: Bar Abbas, *the son of Abbas*: Bar Jesus, *the son of Jesus*: nor in the like names. True, indeed; but,

I. When the denomination is made from a common name, and not a proper, then it is not so ill sounding to interpret the word: which is done once and again; [Mark 3:17](#), *Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder*: [Acts 4:36](#), *Barnabas, which is, A son of consolation*.

II. *Bar Timai* may be rendered otherwise than *the son of Timaeus*: namely, either *a son of admiration*; or, which is more proper, *a son of profit*. The Targum in [Esther 3:8](#); *To the king ariseth no profit ('Timai') from them*. The evangelist therefore, deservedly, that he might shew that this *Bartimaeus* was not named from this, or that, or some other etymology, but from his father's name, so interprets his name, *Bartimeus, the son of Timeus*.

III. Perhaps there was a *Timeus* of some more noted name in that age, either for some good report or some bad: so that it might not be absurd to the Jews that then conversed there to say, This blind *Bartimaeus* is the son of the so much famed *Timaeus*. So it is unknown to us who Alexander and Rufus were, chapter 15:21: but they were without doubt of most eminent fame, either among the disciples, or among the Jews.

IV. What if *Thima* be the same with *Simai, blind*, from the use of Thau for Samech among the Chaldeans? so that *Bartimaeus the son of Timaeus* might sound no more than *the blind son of a blind father*.

Chapter 11

11. And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

[*And when he had looked round about upon all things.*] Compare Mark with the other evangelists concerning the time of casting out the merchants of the Temple, and it will appear that the word *he looked about*, denotes not a bare beholding or looking upon, but a beholding with reproof and correction; *admonition*, among the Jews.

13. And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet.

[*For the time of figs was not yet.*] See what we have said at [Matthew 21:19](#). The sum is this:

- I. *The time of figs* was so far off, that the time of leaves was scarcely yet present.
- II. The other fig trees in the mount were of the common kind of fig trees: and on them were not leaves as yet to be seen. But that which Christ saw with leaves on it, and therefore went to it, was a fig tree of an extraordinary kind.
- III. For there was a certain fig tree called *Benoth Shuach*, which never wanted leaves, and never wanted figs. For every year it bare fruit, but that fruit came not to full ripeness before the third year: and such, we suppose, was this fig tree.

16. And would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the temple.

[*And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the Temple.*] "What is the reverence of the Temple? That none go into the Mountain of the Temple" [or the Court of the Gentiles] "with his staff, and his shoes, with is purse, and dust upon his feet: and that none make it his common thoroughfare, nor make it a place of spitting."

The same thing is ordered concerning a synagogue; yea, concerning a synagogue that is now laid waste, much more of one that flourisheth: "A synagogue now laid waste, *let not men make it a common passage.*" And "his disciples asked R. Eleazar Ben Shammua, Whence hast thou lived so long? He answered, I never made a synagogue a common thoroughfare."

It is therefore forbid by the masters, that the court of the Temple be not made a passage for a shorter way. And was not this bridle sufficient wherewith all might be kept back from carrying vessels through the Temple? But the 'castle of Antonia' joined to the court; and there were shops in the Court of the Gentiles where many things were sold; and that profane vessels were brought hither is scarcely to be denied. And these vessels might be said to be carried *through the Temple*; although those that carried them went not through the whole Temple.

Chapter 12

1. And he began to speak unto them by parables. A *certain* man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

[*A certain man planted a vineyard.*] The priests and Pharisees knew, saith Matthew, that "these things were spoken of them," [Matthew 21:45](#). Nor is it any wonder; for the Jews boasted that they were the Lord's vineyard: and they readily observed a wrong done to that

vineyard by any; but how far were they from taking notice, how unfruitful they were, and unthankful to the Lord of the vineyard!

"The matter may be compared to a king that had a vineyard; and there were three who were enemies to it. What were they? One cut down the branches. The second cut off the bunches. And the third rooted up the vines. That king is the King of kings, the Blessed Lord. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel. The three enemies are Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, and Haman," &c.

[*A vineyard.*] "If a man plants one row of five vines, the school of Shammai saith, That it is a vineyard. But the school of Hillel saith, It is not a vineyard, until there be two rows of vines there."

[*Set a hedge about it.*] "What is a *hedge*? Let it be ten handbreadths high": less than so is not a hedge.

[*Digged a place for the winefat.*] *Let the fat be ten handbreadths deep, and four broad.*

[*Built a tower.*] *Let the watchhouse, which is in the vineyard, be ten high, and four broad.* Cubits are to be understood. For Rambam saith, *watchhouse is a high place where the vine-dresser stands to overlook the vineyard.*

[*Let it out to husbandmen.*] "He that lets out his vineyard to a keeper, either as a husbandman, or as one to keep it gratis, and he enters into covenant with him, to dig it, prune it, dress it, at his own cost; but he neglects it, and doth not so; he is guilty, as if he should with his own hand lay the vineyard waste."

2. And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.

[*And at the season he sent to the husbandmen.*] That is, in the fourth year after the first planting it: when it now was a *vineyard of four years old*; at least before that year there was no profit of the fruits. "They paint [or note] a *vineyard of four years old* by some *turf* [or *clod*] of earth, coloured; and that *uncircumcised with clay*; and sepulchres with chalk."

The Gloss is this: "On a vineyard of four years old they paint some marks out of the turf of the earth, that men may know that it is a vineyard of four years old, and eat not of it, because it is holy, as the Lord saith, [Leviticus 19:24](#); and the owners ought to eat the fruit of it at Jerusalem, as the second tithe. And an *uncircumcised vineyard*," [that is, which was not yet four years old; see [Leviticus 19:23](#)] "they mark with *clay, that is, digested in fire*. For the prohibition of (*a vineyard*) *uncircumcised*, is greater than the prohibition concerning that of four years old: for that of four years old is fit for eating; but that *uncircumcised* is not admitted to any use. Therefore, they marked not that by the turf, lest the mark might perhaps be defaced, and perish; and men not seeing it might eat of it," &c.

4. And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded *him* in the head, and sent *him* away shamefully handled.

[*At him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head.*] I...They cast stones at the servant, and deriding him, made up the sum with him: saying, perhaps this, or some such thing to him, "Do you come for fruit and rent? Behold this fruit" (casting a stone at him) "behold another fruit," (casting another stone) and so many times together: and so they sent him away *derided, and loaded with disgrace.*

II. But be it that the word is to be translated as it is commonly rendered, "they wounded him in the head": then this way of stoning is thus distinguished from that whereby they were slain who were stoned by the Sanhedrim. That was called *stone-casting*: for it was the cast of a stone, indeed, but of one only, and that a very great one; and that upon the heart of the condemned person, when now he lay along upon his back. But this stoning was of many stones, thrown out of the hand through the air, striking him here and there and everywhere. The head of him that was stoned by the Sanhedrim was unhurt, and without any wound; but here, *They cast stones at him, and wounded him in the head.*

10. And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:

[*The stone which the builders rejected.*] The Targum upon [Psalm 118](#), thus *the builders rejected the child*. And verse 27, "*Bind the child to the sacrifice of the solemnity with chains, until ye shall have sacrificed him, and poured out his blood upon the horns of the altar: said Samuel the prophet.*"

16. And they brought *it*. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Caesar's.

[*Whose is this image? Caesar's.*] I. This was a *Caesar's penny, denarius Caesareanus*. For *zuz*, among the Jews, was also a *penny*, as we shewed elsewhere; but we scarce believe it was of the same form and inscription: "*A certain heathen sent to R. Judah the prince a Caesarean penny, and that on a certain festival day of the heathens. Resh Lachish sat before him. R. Judah said, What shall I do? If I receive it, I shall consent (to their festival): if I receive it not, enmity will rise against me. Resh Lachish answered, Take the penny, and while he looks upon you cast it into the well,*" &c.

II. It was a silver penny, not a gold one. *Pence, absolutely put, are to be understood silver pence*. Where the Gloss is, "*Pence, absolutely put, are silver, until it is explained that they are gold.*"

But now a gold penny was worth five-and-twenty silver pence. "When turtle-doves and young pigeons were sold at Jerusalem sometime for a gold penny, Rabban Simeon Ben Gamaliel said, By this Temple, I will not rest this night, unless they are sold for a silver penny." Where the Gloss, "*A gold penny is worth five-and-twenty silver pence.*"

III. It was a *Roman penny*, not a *Jerusalem*: for this distinction they sometimes use. The Gloss being witness, are *Jerusalem zuzees*. But more frequently *money of Tzur*, and *money of Jerusalem*. *Money of Tzur* one may well render *Tyrian money*. But hear the Aruch, where he had been treating of *money of Tzur*; at length he brings in this passage: "R. Eliezer saith, Wheresoever in the Scripture *Tzur* is written full, the Scripture speaks of the city *Tyre*: but where it is written defectively [without *Vau*] it speaks of *Rome*." Be it *Tyrian* or *Roman* money, this held among the masters: "Wheresoever any thing is said of the silver money of *Jerusalem*, it is the eighth part of the *Tyrian* money."

Hence I should resolve that riddle at which the Glosser himself sticks, if I may have leave to conjecture in a Jewish affair, after a doubting Jew. In the tract now cited there is a discourse concerning *Jerusalem Cozbian moneys*. A riddle truly. Ben Cozbi, indeed, coined moneys when he made an insurrection against the Romans. But whence is this called *Jerusalem money*, when, in the days of Ben Cozbi, Jerusalem lay buried in its own rubbish? If I may be the resolver, it was so called, because it was of the same weight and value with the *Jerusalem money*, and not with that of *Tyre*.

"The *Jerusalem money* (say they) is the eighth part of the *Tyrian*." Here again some words of the masters entangle me in a riddle. The Aruch saith, "A penny and zuz are the same." And elsewhere, "They call pence, in the Gemaristic language, *Zuzim*"; which we observed at chapter 6:37. '*Zuz*' was *Jerusalem money*: how, then, was it the same with a penny, which was *Tyrian money*, when it was the eighth part only? And these words spoken by Rambam do add a scruple over and above; *a penny contains six zuzim*. If he had said *eight zuzim*, it had been without scruple. But what shall we say now?

The former knot you may thus untie: that *zuz*, among the Jews, is called also *a penny*; a Jewish penny, indeed, but different from the Roman: as the Scots have their *shilling*, but much different from our English. But the second knot let him try to untie that is at leisure.

IV. This money was signed with the image of Caesar; but of the *Jerusalem money*, thus the Jews write, whom you may believe when you please: "What is the *Jerusalem money*? *David and Solomon were stamped on one side*; and on the reverse, *Jerusalem the holy city*." But the Glosser inquires whether it were lawful to stamp the image of David and Solomon upon money, which he scarcely thinks. He concludes therefore that their names were only inscribed, not their effigies.

"Upon Abraham's money were stamped, on one side, an old man and an old woman; on the other, a young man and a young maid. On Joshua's money, on one side, an ox; on the other, a monoceros. On David's money, on one side, a staff and a scrip; on the other, a tower. On Mardochai's money, on one side, sackcloth and ashes; on the other, a crown." Let the truth of this be upon the credit of the authors.

28. And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

[Which is the first commandment of all?] It is not seldom that this distinction occurs in the Rabbins, between *the law*, and *the precept*: by the latter they understand some special or greater rite (themselves being judges); such as circumcision, the repeating of the phylacteries, keeping the sabbath, &c. This question, propounded by the scribe, seems to respect the same: namely, whether those great precepts (as they were esteemed) and other ceremonial precepts of that nature, such as sacrifices, purifications, keeping festivals, were the greatest precepts of the law, or no: and if it were so, which among them was the first?

By his answer he seems to incline to the negative, and to prefer the moral law. Whence Christ saith, "That he was not far from the kingdom of heaven": and while he suits an answer to him from that very passage, which was the first in the reciting of the phylacteries, *Hear, O Israel*,--he directs the eyes and the minds of those that repeated them to the sense and the marrow of the thing repeated,--and that they rest not in the bare work of repeating them.

41. And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

[The people cast money.] *They were casting in small money there.* According to his pleasure, any one might cast into the chests how little soever he would; namely, in the chest which was for gold, as little gold as a grain of barley would weigh; and in the chest for frankincense, as much frankincense as weighed a grain of barley. But if he should say, *Behold, I vow wood*; he shall not offer less than two pieces of a cubit long, and breadth proportionable. *Behold, I vow frankincense*; he shall not offer less than a pugil of frankincense: that is, not less money than that which will buy so much.

42. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

[Two mites, which make a farthing.] *Two prutahs are a farthing.* "A *prutah* is the eighth part of an Italian *assarius*. An *assarius* is the twenty-fourth part of a silver penny." We rendered before, "The people cast money, *brass*," by *they were casting in small money*: one would think it should rather be rendered, *They were casting in brass*. But consider well this passage: "He that changeth the '*selaa*' of the second tenth, the school of Shammai saith, *Let him change the whole 'selaa' into brass*." You would perhaps render it, *into moneys*, or *into meahs*, but it is properly to be rendered *into brass*, as appears by what follows: "The school of Hillel saith, *into a shekel of silver, and a shekel of brass*." So also the Glossers; and the Aruch moreover, "He that changeth a *selaa*, and receives for it *brass money, that is, prutahs*."

None might, by the canon even now mentioned, enter into the Temple, no, nor indeed into the Court of the Gentiles, with his purse, therefore much less into the Court of the

Women; and yet scarce any entered who carried no money with him to be offered to the Corban, whether in his hand, or in his bosom, or elsewhere, we do not define: so did this very poor woman, who for two mites purchased herself an eternal fame, our Saviour himself setting a value upon the thing above all the gifts of them that offered.

3. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately,

[*Upon the mount of Olives, over against the Temple.*] "The east gate of the Court of the Gentiles had the metropolis Sushan painted on it. And through this gate the high priest went out to burn the red cow." And, "All the walls of that court were high, except the east wall; because of the priest, when he burnt the red cow, stood upon the top of mount *Olivet*, and took his aim, and looked upon the gate of the Temple, in that time when he sprinkled the blood." And, "The priest stood with his face turned westward, kills the cow with his right hand, and receives the blood with the left, but sprinkleth it with his right, and that seven times, directly towards the Holy of Holies."

It is true, indeed, the Temple might be well seen from any tract of *Olivet*: but the word *over against*, if it doth not direct to this very place, yet to some place certainly in the same line: and it cannot but recall to our mind that action of the high priest.

7. And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet.

[*Be not troubled.*] Think here, how the traditions of the scribes affrighted the nation with the report of Gog and Magog, immediately to go before the coming of the Messiah:--

"R. Eliezer Ben Abina saith, When you see the kingdoms disturbing one another, *then expect the footsteps of the Messiah*. And know that this is true from hence, that so it was in the days of Abraham; for kingdoms disturbed one another, and then came redemption to Abraham." And elsewhere; "So they came against Abraham, and so they shall come with Gog and Magog." And again, "The Rabbins deliver. In the first year of that week [*of years*] that the Son of David is to come, shall that be fulfilled, 'I will rain upon one city, but I will not rain upon another,' [Amos 4:7](#). The second year, the arrows of famine shall be sent forth. The third, the famine shall be grievous, and men and women and children, holy men, and men of good works, shall die. And there shall be a forgetfulness of the law among those that learn it. The fourth year, fulness, and not fulness. The fifth year, great fulness; for they shall eat and drink and rejoice, and the law shall return to its scholars. The sixth year, voices. (The Gloss is, 'A fame shall be spread, that the Son of David comes,' or, 'they shall sound with a trumpet.') The seventh year, wars; and in the going out of that seventh year the Son of David shall come."

8. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows.

[*These are the beginnings of sorrows.*] [Isaiah 66:7,8](#): *Before she travailed she brought forth; before the labour of pains came she was delivered, and brought forth a male. Who hath heard*

such a thing? Does the earth bring forth in one day, or is a nation also brought forth at once? For Sion was in travail and brought forth her sons.

The prophet here says two things:--

I. That Christ should be born before the destruction of Jerusalem. The Jews themselves collect and acknowledge this out of this prophecy: "It is in the *Great Genesis* [*Bereshith Rabba*] a very ancient book: thus R. Samuel Bar Nachaman said, Whence prove you, that in the day when the destruction of the Temple was, Messiah was born? He answered, From this that is said in the last chapter of Isaiah, 'Before she travailed she brought forth; before her bringing forth shall come, she brought forth a male child.' In the same hour that the destruction of the Temple was, Israel cried out as though she were bringing forth. And Jonathan in the Chaldee translation said, Before her trouble came she was saved; and before the pains of childbirth came upon her, Messiah was revealed." In the Chaldee it is, *A king shall manifest himself.*

"In like manner in the same book: R. Samuel Bar Nachaman said, It happened that Elias went by the way in the day wherein the destruction of the Temple was, and he heard a certain voice crying out and saying, 'The holy Temple is destroyed.' Which when he heard, he imagined how he could destroy the world: but travelling forward he saw men ploughing and sowing, to whom he said, 'God is angry with the world and will destroy his house, and lead his children captives to the Gentiles; and do you labour for temporal victuals?' And another voice was heard, saying, 'Let them work, for the Saviour of Israel is born.' And Elias said, 'Where is he?' And the voice said, 'In Bethlehem of Judah,'" &c. These words this author speaks, and these words they speak.

II. As it is not without good reason gathered, that Christ shall be born before the destruction of the city, from that clause, "Before she travailed she brought forth, before her bringing forth came [*the pangs of travail*], she brought forth a male child"; so also, from that clause, *Is a nation brought forth at once? for Sion travailed and brought forth her children*, is gathered as well, that the Gentiles were to be gathered and called to the faith before that destruction; which our Saviour most plainly teacheth, verse 10, "But the gospel must first be preached among all nations." For how the Gentiles, which should believe, are called 'the children of Sion,' and 'the children of the church of Israel,' every where in the prophets, there is no need to show, for every one knows it.

In this sense is the word *pangs* or *sorrows*, in this place to be understood; and it agrees not only with the sense of the prophet alleged, but with a most common phrase and opinion in the nation concerning *the sorrows of the Messiah*, that is, concerning the calamities which they expected would happen at the coming of the Messiah.

"*Ulla saith, The Messiah shall come, but I shall not see him.* So also saith Rabba, Messiah shall come, but I shall not see him; that is, he shall not be to be seen. Abai saith to Rabba, Why? *Because of the sorrows of the Messiah.* It is a tradition. His disciples asked R. Eliezer,

What may a man do to be delivered from the sorrows of Messiah? Let him be conversant in the law and in the works of mercy." The Gloss is, "the terrors and the sorrows which shall be in his days." "He that feasts thrice on the sabbath day shall be delivered from three miseries, *from the sorrows of Messiah*, from the judgment of hell, and from the war of Gog and Magog." Where the Gloss is this, "'From the sorrows of Messias': for in that age, wherein the Son of David shall come, there will be *an accusation* of the scholars of the wise men. *The word sorrows denotes such pains as women in childbirth endure.*"

32. But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

[*But of that day and hour knoweth no man.*] Of what *day* and *hour*? That the discourse is of the day of the destruction of Jerusalem is so evident, both by the disciples' question, and by the whole thread of Christ's discourse, that it is a wonder any should understand these words of the *day and hour* of the last judgment.

Two things are demanded of our Saviour, verse 4: the one is, "When shall these things be, that one stone shall not be left upon another?" And the second is, "What shall be the sign of this consummation?" To the latter he answereth throughout the whole chapter hitherto: to the former in the present words. He had said, indeed, in the verse before, "Heaven and earth shall pass away," &c.; not for resolution to the question propounded (for there was no inquiry at all concerning the dissolution of heaven and earth), but for confirmation of the truth of the thing which he had related. As though he had said, "Ye ask *when* such an overthrow of the Temple shall happen; when it shall be, and what shall be the signs of it. I answer, These and those, and the other signs shall go before it; and these my words of the thing itself to come to pass, and of the signs going before, are firmer than heaven and earth itself. But whereas ye inquire of the precise time, that is not to be inquired after; for *of that day and hour knoweth no man.*"

We cannot but remember here, that even among the beholders of the destruction of the Temple there is a difference concerning the day of the destruction; that that day and hour was so little known before the event, that even after the event, they who saw the flames disagreed among themselves concerning the *day*. Josephus, an eyewitness, saw the burning of the Temple, and he ascribed it to the tenth day of the month Ab or Lous. For thus he; "The Temple perished the tenth day of the month Lous (or *August*), a day fatal to the Temple, as having been on that day consumed in flames by the king of Babylon." Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai saw the same conflagration; and he, together with the whole Jewish nation, ascribes it to the ninth day of that month, not the tenth; yet so that he saith, "If I had not lived in that age I had not judged it but to have happened on the tenth day." For as the Gloss upon Maimonides writes, "It was the evening when they set fire to it, and the Temple burnt until sunset the tenth day. In the Jerusalem Talmud, therefore, Rabbi and R. Joshua Ben Levi fasted the ninth and tenth days." See also the tract *Bab. Taanith*.

[*Neither the angels.*] "For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come," [Isaiah 63:4](#). What means 'the day of vengeance is in mine heart?' R. Jochanan saith, I have revealed it to my heart, to my members I have not revealed it. R. Simeon Ben Lachish saith, I have revealed it to my heart, *but to the ministering angels I have not revealed it.*" And *Jalkut* on that place thus: *My heart reveals it not to my mouth; to whom should my mouth reveal it?*

[*Nor the Son.*] *Neither the angels, nor the Messiah.* For in that sense the word *Son*, is to be taken in this place and elsewhere very often: as in that passage, [John 5:19](#), "The Son," that is, the Messiah, "can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do": verse 20, "The Father loveth the Messiah," &c: verse 26, "He hath given to the Messiah to have life in himself," &c. And that the word *Son* is to be rendered in this sense, appears from verse 27; "He hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." Observe that, "because he is the Son of man."

I. It is one thing to understand "the Son of God" barely and abstractly for the second person in the Holy Trinity; another to understand him for the Messiah, or that second person incarnate. To say that the second person in the Trinity knows not something is blasphemous; to say so of the Messiah, is not so, who, nevertheless, was the same with the second person in the Trinity: for although the second person, abstractly considered according to his mere Deity, was co-equal with the Father, co-omnipotent, co-omniscient, co-eternal with him, &c.; yet Messiah, who was God-man, considered as Messiah, was a servant and a messenger of the Father, and received commands and authority from the Father. And those expressions, "The Son can do nothing of himself," &c. will not in the least serve the Arian's turn; if you take them in this sense, which you must necessarily do; "Messiah can do nothing of himself, because he is a servant and a deputy."

II. We must distinguish between the excellences and perfections of Christ, which flowed from the hypostatical union of the natures, and those which flowed from the donation and anointing of the Holy Spirit. From the hypostatical union of the natures flowed the infinite dignity of his person, his impeccability, his infinite self-sufficiency to perform the law, and to satisfy the divine justice. From the anointing of the Spirit flowed his power of miracles, his foreknowledge of things to come, and all kind of knowledge of evangelic mysteries. *Those* rendered him a fit and perfect Redeemer; *these* a fit and perfect Minister of the gospel.

Now, therefore, the foreknowledge of things to come, of which the discourse here is, is to be numbered among those things which flowed from the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and from immediate revelation; not from the hypostatic union of the natures. So that those things which were revealed by Christ to his church, he had them from the revelation of the Spirit, not from that union. Nor is it any derogation or detraction from the dignity of his person, that he saith, 'He knew not that day and hour of the destruction of Jerusalem'; yea, it excellently agrees with his office and deputation, who, being the Father's servant, messenger,

and minister, followed the orders of the Father, and obeyed him in all things. "The Son knoweth not," that is, it is not revealed to him from the Father to reveal to the church. [Revelation 1:1](#), "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him."

We omit inquiring concerning the knowledge of Christ, being now raised from death: whether, and how far, it exceeded his knowledge, while yet he conversed on earth. It is without doubt, that, being now raised from the dead, he merited all kind of revelation (see [Rev 5:9](#), "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain," &c.); and that he, conversing on earth before his death, acted with the vigour of the Holy Spirit and of that unspeakable holiness which flowed from the union of the human nature with the divine, the divine nature, in the meantime, suspending its infinite activity of omnipotence. So that Christ might work miracles, and know things to come, in the same manner as the prophets also did, namely, by the Holy Ghost, but in a larger measure; and might overcome the devil not so much by the omnipotence of the divine nature, as by the infinite holiness of his person, and of his obedience. So that if you either look upon him as the minister and servant of God; or if you look upon the constitution, as I may so call it, and condition of his person, these words of his, "Of that day and hour knoweth not the Son also," carry nothing of incongruity along with them; yea, do excellently speak out his substitution as a servant, and the constitution of his person as *God-man*.

The reason why the divine wisdom would have the time of the destruction of Jerusalem so concealed, is well known to itself; but by men, since the time of it was unsearchable, the reason certainly is not easy to be searched. We may conjecture that the time was hid, partly, lest the godly might be terrified with the sound of it, as [2 Thessalonians 2:2](#); partly, that the ungodly, and those that would be secure, might be taken in the snares of their own security, as [Matthew 24:38](#). But let secret things belong to God.

Chapter 14

3. And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.

[*Of spikenard.*] What if I should render it, *nardin of Balanus*? "Nardin consists of omphacium, balaninum, bulrush, nard, amomum, myrrh, balsam," &c. And again, "Myrobalanum is common to the Troglodytes, and to Thebais, and to that part of Arabia which divides Judea from Egypt; a growing ointment, as appears by the very name, whereby also is shown that it is the mast [*glans*] of a tree."

Balanus, as all know among the Greeks, is *glans*, *mast*, or an *acorn*: so also is *pistaca*, among the Talmudists. There are prescribed by the Talmudists various remedies for various diseases: among others, this; *For a pleurisy* (or, as others will have it, a certain disease of the

head), *take to the quantity of the mast of ammoniac*. The Gloss is, *the mast of ammoniac is the mast of cedar*. The Aruch saith, "*the mast of ammoniac is the grain of a fruit, which is called glans*."

The word *nard*, is Hebrew from the word *nerad*; and the word *spikenard* is Syriac, from the word *pistaca*. So that the ointment might be called *Balanine ointment*, in the composition of which, *nard* and *mast*, or *myrobalane*, were the chief ingredients.

[*Poured it on his head.*] In Talmudic language, "What are the testimonies, that the woman married is a virgin? If she goes forth to be married *with a veil* let down over her eyes, yet with her head not veiled. The scattering of nuts is also a testimony. These are in Judea; but what are in Babylon? Rabh saith, *If ointment be upon the head of the Rabbins*." (The Gloss is, "The women poured ointment upon the heads of the scholars, and anointed them.") "Rabh Papa said to Abai, *Does that doctor speak of the aromatic ointment used in bridechambers?*" (The Gloss is, "Are the Rabbins such, to be anointed with such ointments?") "He answered, *O thou unacquainted with the customs, did not thy mother pour out ointment for you* (at thy wedding) *upon the heads of the Rabbins?* Thus, a certain Rabbin got a wife for his son in the house of Rabbah Bar Ulla; and they said to him, Rabbah Bar Ulla also got a wife in the house of a certain Rabbin for his son, *and he poured out ointment upon the head of the Rabbins*."

From the tradition produced it may be asked, whether it were customary in Judea to wet the heads of the Rabbins with ointments, in the marriages of virgins, as it was in Babylon? Or, whether it were so customary otherwise to anoint their heads; as that such an anointing at weddings were not so memorable a matter as it was in Babylon? Certainly, in both places, however they anointed men's heads for health's sake, it was accounted unfitting for Rabbins to smell of aromatical ointments: "It is indecent (say the Jerusalem Talmudists) for a scholar of the wise men to smell of spices." And you have the judgment of the Babylonians in this very place, when it is inquired among them, and that, as it were, with a certain kind of dissatisfaction, Whether Rabbins be such as that they should be anointed with aromatical ointments, as the more nice sort are wont to be anointed? From this opinion, everywhere received among them, you may more aptly understand, why the other disciples as well as Judas, did bear the lavish of the ointment with some indignation: *he*, out of wicked covetousness; but they, partly, as not wiling that so precious a thing should be lost, and partly as not liking so nice a custom should be used towards their master, from which the masters of the Jews themselves were so averse. And our Saviour, taking off the envy of what was done, applies this anointing to his burial, both in his intention and in the intention of the woman; that it might not seem to be done out of some delicate niceness.

5. For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

[*More than three hundred pence.*] The prices of such precious ointments (as it seems in Pliny) were commonly known. For thus he, "The price of *costus* is sixteen pounds. The price

of *spike(nard)* is ninety pounds. The leaves have made a difference in the value. From the broadness of them it is called Hadrosphaerum; with greater leaves it is worth X. xxx," that is, *thirty pence*. "That with a lesser leaf is called Mesosphaerum, it is sold at X. lx," *sixty pence*. "The most esteemed is that called Microsphaerum, having the least leaf, and the price of it is X. lxxv," *seventy-five pence*. And elsewhere: "To these the merchants have added that which they call Daphnois, surnamed Isocinnamon, and they make the price of it to be X. ccc" *three hundred pence*.

II. It is not easy to reduce this sum of three hundred pence to its proper sense; partly because a penny was two-fold, a silver penny, and a gold one: partly because there was a double value and estimation of money, namely, that of Jerusalem and that of Tyre, as we observed before. Let these be silver (which we believe), which are of much less value than gold: and let them be Jerusalem pence (which we also believe), which are cheaper than the Tyrian; yet they plainly speak the great wealth of Magdalene, who poured out an ointment of such a value, when before she had spent some such other.

Which brings to my mind those things which are spoken by the Masters concerning *the box of spices*, which the husband was bound to give the wife according to the proportion of her dowry: "But this is not spoken, saith Rabh Ishai, but of Jerusalem people. There is an example of a daughter of *Nicodemus* Ben Gorion, to whom the wise men appointed four hundred crowns of gold for a chest of spices for one day. She said to them, 'I wish you may so appoint for their daughters'; and they answered after her, 'Amen.'" The Gloss is, "The husband was to give to his wife ten *zuzees* for every *manah*, which she brought with her to buy spices, with which she used to wash herself," &c. Behold! a most wealthy woman of Jerusalem, daughter of Nicodemus, in the contract and instrument of whose marriage was written, "A thousand thousand gold pence out of the house of her father, besides those she had out of the house of her father-in-law": whom yet you have in the same story reduced to that extreme poverty, that she picked up barley-corns for her food out of the cattle's dung.

7. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

[*For ye have the poor with you always.*] "Samuel saith, 'There is no difference between this world and the days of the Messiah,' *unless in regard of the affliction of the heathen kingdoms*; as it is said, 'A poor man shall not be wanting out of the midst of the earth,'" [Deuteronomy 15:11](#). Observe a Jew confessing, that there shall be poor men even in the days of the Messiah: which how it agrees with their received opinion of the pompous kingdom of the Messiah, let him look to it. "R. Solomon and Aben Ezra write, 'If thou shalt obey the words of the Lord, there shall not be a poor man in thee: but thou wilt not obey; therefore a poor man shall never be wanting.'" Upon this received reason of the thing, confess also, O Samuel, that there shall be disobedient persons in the days of the Messiah; which, indeed, when the true Messiah came, proved too, too true, in thy nation.

12. And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?

[*And the first day of unleavened bread.*] So [Matthew 26:17](#); [Luke 22:7](#). And now let them tell me, who think that Christ indeed kept his Passover the fourteenth day, but the Jews not before the fifteenth, because this year their Passover was transferred unto the fifteenth day by reason of the following sabbath: let them tell me, I say, whether the evangelists speak according to the day prescribed by Moses, or according to the day prescribed by the masters of the traditions, and used by the nation. If according to Moses, then the fifteenth day was *the first of unleavened bread*, [Exodus 12:15,18](#): but if according to the manner of the nation, then it was the fourteenth. And whether the evangelists speak according to this custom, let us inquire briefly.

Sometime, indeed, the whole seven days' feast was transferred to another month; and that not only from that law, [Numbers 9](#), but from other causes also: concerning which see the places quoted in the margin [Hieros. in Maasar Sheni, fol. 56.3. Maimon. in Kiddush. Hodesh. cap. 4.]. But when the time appointed for the feast occurred, the lamb was always slain on the fourteenth day.

I. Let us begin with a story where an occasion occurs not very unlike that for which they of whom we speak think the Passover this year was transferred; namely, because of the following sabbath. The story is this: "After the death of Shemaiah and Abtalion, the sons of Betira obtained the chief place. Hillel went up from Babylon to inquire concerning three doubts. When he was now at Jerusalem, and the fourteenth day of the first month fell out on the sabbath [*observe that*], it appeared not to the sons of Betira, whether the Passover drove off the sabbath or no. Which when Hillel had determined in many words, and had added, moreover, that he had learned this from Shemaiah and Abtalion, they laid down their authority, and made Hillel president. When they had chosen him president, he derided them, saying, 'What need have you of this Babylonian? Did you not serve the two chief men of the world, Shemaiah and Abtalion, who sat among you?'" These things which are already said make enough to our purpose, but, with the reader's leave, let us add the whole story: "While he thus scoffed at them, he forgot a tradition. For they said, 'What is to be done with the people if they bring not their knives?' He answered, 'I have heard this tradition, but I have forgot. But let them alone; for although they are not prophets, they are prophets' sons.' Presently every one whose passover was a lamb stuck his knife into the fleece of it; and whose passover was a kid, hung his knife upon the horns of it."

And now let the impartial reader judge between the reason which is given for the transferring the Passover this year unto the fifteenth day, namely, because of the sabbath following, that they might not be forced to abstain from servile work for two days together; and the reason for which it might with good reason be transferred that year concerning

which the story is. The fourteenth day fell on a sabbath; a scruple ariseth, whether the sabbath gives way to the Passover, or the Passover to the sabbath. The very chief men of the Sanhedrim, and the oracles of traditions, are not able to resolve the business. A great article of religion is transacting; and what is here to be done! O ye sons of Betira, transfer but the Passover unto the next day, and the knot is untied. Certainly if this had been either usual or lawful, they had provided that the affairs of religion, and their authority and fame, should not have stuck in this strait. But that was not to be suffered.

II. Let us add a tradition which you may justly wonder at: "Five things, if they come in uncleanness, are not eaten in uncleanness: the sheaf of firstfruits, the two loaves, the shewbread, the peace offerings of the congregation, and the goats of the new moons. But *the Passover which comes in uncleanness is eaten in uncleanness*: because it comes not originally unless to be eaten."

Upon which tradition thus Maimonides: "The Lord saith, 'And there were some that were unclean by the carcase of a man,' [Numbers 9:6](#), and he determines of them, that they be put off from the Passover of the first month to the Passover of the second. And the tradition is, that it was thus determined, because they were few. But if the whole congregation should have been unclean, or if the greatest part of it should have been unclean, yet they offer the Passover, though they are unclean. Therefore they say, 'Particular men are put off to the second Passover, but the whole congregation is not put off to the second Passover.' In like manner all the oblations of the congregation, they offer them in uncleanness if the most are unclean; which we learn also from the Passover. For the Lord saith of the Passover, [[Num 9:2](#)] that it is to be offered *in its set time* [note that]; and saith also of the oblations of the congregation, Ye shall do this to the Lord in your set times, and to them all he prescribes a set time. Every thing, therefore, to which a time is set, is also offered in uncleanness, if so be very many of the congregation, or very many of the priests, be unclean."

"We find that the congregation makes their Passover in uncleanness, in that time when most of them are unclean. And if known uncleanness be thus dispensed with, much more doubted uncleanness." But what need is there of such dispensation? Could ye not put off the Passover, O ye fathers of the Sanhedrim, for one or two days, that the people might be purified? By no means: for the Passover is to be offered *in its set time*, the fourteenth day, without any dispensation. For,

III. Thus the canons of that church concerning that day: *in the light of the fourteenth day, they seek for leaven by candlelight*. The Gloss is; "In the night, to which the day following is the fourteenth day." And go to all the commentators, and they will teach, that this was done upon the going out of the thirteenth day. And Maimonides; "From the words of the scribes, they look for and rid away leaven in the beginning of the night of the fourteenth day, and that by the light of the candle. For in the night time all are within their houses, and a candle is most proper for such a search. Therefore, they do not appoint employments in

the end of the thirteenth day, nor doth a wise man begin to recite his phylacteries in that time, lest thereby, by reason of their length, he be hindered from seeking for leaven in its season." And the same author elsewhere; "It is forbidden to eat leaven on the fourteenth day from noon and onwards, viz. from the beginning of the seventh hour. Our wise men also forbade eating it from the beginning of the sixth hour. Nay, the fifth hour they eat not leaven, lest perhaps the day be cloudy, and so a mistake arise about the time. Behold, you learn that it is lawful to eat leaven on the fourteenth day, to the end of the fourth hour; but in the fifth hour it is not to be used." The same author elsewhere writes thus; "The passover was not to be killed but in the court, where the other sacrifices were killed. And it was to be killed on the fourteenth day afternoon, after the daily sacrifice."

[For more on the Passover and daily sacrifices, please see *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services* by Alfred Edersheim.

Also see *Chronology of the Crucifixion Week* for info regarding Christ as our Passover Lamb.]

And now, reader, tell me what day the evangelists call *the first day of unleavened bread*: and whether it be any thing probable that the Passover was ever transferred unto the fifteenth day? Much less is it probable that Christ this year kept his Passover one day before the Passover of the Jews.

For the Passover was not to be slain but in the court, where the other sacrifices were slain, as we heard just now from Maimonides: and see the rubric of bringing in the lambs into the court, and of slaying them. And then tell me seriously whether it be credible, that the priests in the Temple, against the set decree of the Sanhedrim that year (as the opinion we contradict imports), would kill Christ's one, only, single lamb; when by that decree it ought not to be killed before tomorrow? When Christ said to his disciples, "Ye know, that after two days is the Passover"; and when he commanded them, "Go ye, and prepare for us the Passover," it is a wonder they did not reply, "True, indeed, Sir, it ought to be after two days; but it is put off this year to a day later, so that now it is after three days; it is impossible therefore that we should obey you now, for the priests will not allow of killing before tomorrow."

We have said enough, I suppose, in this matter. But while I am speaking of the day of the Passover, let me add a few words, although not to the business concerning which we have been treating; and they perhaps not unworthy of our consideration:

"He that mourns washes himself, and eats his Passover in the even. A proselyte, which is made a proselyte on the eve of the Passover, the school of Shammai saith, Let him be baptized, and eat his Passover in the even: the school of Hillel saith, He that separates himself from uncircumcision [*that is, from heathens and heathenism*] is as if he separated himself from a sepulchre." The Gloss, "And hath need of seven days' purification." "*There were soldiers*

at Jerusalem, who baptized themselves, and ate their Passovers in the even." A thing certainly to be noted, proselytes the same day made proselytes, and eating the Passover; and that as it seems without circumcision, but admitted only by baptism.

The care of the school of Hillel in this case did not so much repulse a proselyte from eating the Passover, who was made a proselyte and baptized on the day of the Passover; as provided for the future, that such a one in following years should not obtrude himself to eat the Passover in uncleanness. For while he was in heathenism, he contracted not uncleanness from the touch of a sepulchre; but being made a proselyte, he contracted uncleanness by it. These are the words of the Gloss.

[*That we prepare that thou mayest eat the Passover.*] For the Passovers were prepared by the servants for their masters. "If any say to his servant, 'Go and kill me the passover,' and he kills a kid, let him eat of it: if he kill a lamb, let him eat of it: if a kid and a lamb, let him eat of the former," &c.

26. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

[*And when they had sung an hymn.*] I. "What difference is there between the first Passover and the second?" [that is, the Passover of the first month and of the second, [Numbers 9](#)]. "In the first, every one is bound under that law, 'Leaven shall not be seen nor found among you.' In the second, 'Leaven and unleavened bread may be with a man in his house.' In the first, he is bound to a *hymn* when he eats the Passover. In the second, he is not bound to a *hymn* when he eats it. In both, he is bound to a *hymn* while he makes or kills. Both are to be eaten roast, and with unleavened bread, and bitter herbs, and both drive away the sabbath." The Gemarists ask, "Whence this is, that they are bound to a *hymn*, while they eat the Passover? R. Jochanan in the name of R. Simeon Ben Josedek saith, The Scripture saith, 'You shall have a song, as in the night when a feast is kept,' [Isaiah 30:29](#). The night which is set apart for a feast is bound to a *hymn*: the night which is not set apart for a feast is not bound to a *hymn*." The Gloss writes thus; "As ye are wont to sing in the night when a feast is kept: but there is no night wherein they are obliged to a song, besides the night when the Passover is eaten."

II. That hymn is called by the Rabbins the *Hallel*; and was from the beginning of [Psalm 113](#), to the end of [Psalm 118](#), which they cut in two parts; and a part of it they repeated in the very middle of the banquet, and they reserved a part to the end.

How far the former portion extended, is disputed between the schools of Shammai and Hillel. That of Shammai saith, Unto the end of [Psalm 113](#). That of Hillel saith, Unto the end of [Psalm 114](#). But these things must not stop us. The hymn which Christ now sang with his disciples after meat was the latter part. In which, as the Masters of the Traditions observe, these five things are mentioned: "The going out of Egypt. The cutting in two of the Red Sea. The delivery of the law. The resurrection of the dead: and the sorrows of the Messias. The going out of Egypt, as it is written, 'When Israel went out of Egypt.' The cutting in two of

the Red Sea, as it is written, 'The sea saw it, and fled.' The delivery of the law, as it is written, 'The mountains leaped like rams.' The resurrection of the dead, as it is written, 'I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.' And the sorrows of the Messias, as it is written, 'Not unto us, Lord, not unto us.'"

[*They went out into the mount of Olives.*] They were bound by traditional canons to lodge within Jerusalem. "On the first Passover, every one *is bound to lodge* also on the second Passover he is bound to lodge." The Gloss thus: "He that keeps the Passover is bound to lodge in Jerusalem the first night." But it is disputed, whether it be the same night wherein the lamb is eaten; or the night first following the feast day. See the place: and let not the lion of the tribe of Judah be restrained in those cobwebs [Pesach. fol. 95 .2.]

36. And he said, Abba, Father, all things *are* possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.

[*Abba, Father.*] As it is necessary to distinguish between the Hebrew and Chaldee idiom in the words *Abi*, and *Abba*, so you *may*, I had almost said, you *must*, distinguish of their sense. For the word *Abi*, signifies indeed a natural father, but withal a civil father also, an elder, a master, a doctor, a magistrate: but the word *Abba*, denotes only a natural father, with which we comprehend also an adopting father: yea, it denotes, *My father*.

Let no man say to his neighbour, 'My father' is nobler than thy father. "R. Chaija asked Rabh the son of his brother, when he came into the land of Israel, *Doth my father live?* And he answereth, *And doth your mother live?*" As if he should have said, You know your mother is dead, so you may know your father is dead. "Solomon said, Observe ye *what my father saith?*" So in the Targum infinite times.

And we may observe in the Holy Scriptures, wheresoever mention is made of a natural father, the Targumists use the word *Abba*: but when of a civil father, they use another word:--

I. Of a natural father.

[Genesis 22:7](#), "*And he said, 'Abi,' my father.*" The Targum reads, "*And said, 'Abba,' my father.*" [Genesis 27:34](#): "*Bless me, even me also 'Abi,' O my father.*" The Targum reads, *Bless me also, 'Abba,' my father.* [Genesis 48:18](#): *Not so, 'Abi,' my father.* Targum, *Not so, 'Abba,' my father.* [Judges 11:36](#): *'Abi,' my father, if thou hast opened thy mouth.* Targum, *'Abba,' my father, if thou hast opened thy mouth.* [Isaiah 8:4](#): The Targum reads, *before the child shall know to cry 'Abba,' my father, and my mother.* See also the Targum upon [Joshua 2:13](#), and [Judges 14:16](#), and elsewhere very frequently.

II. Of a civil father.

[Genesis 4:20,21](#): *He was 'Abi,' the father of such as dwell in tents.* "He was *'Abi,'* the father of such as handle the harp," &c. The Targum reads, *He was 'Rabba,' the prince or the master of them.* [1 Samuel 10:12](#): *But who is 'Abihem,' their father?* Targum, *Who is their 'Rab,' master or prince?* [2 Kings 2:12](#): *'Abi, Abi,' my father, my father.* The Targum, *Rabbi,*

Rabbi. **2 Kings 5:13:** *And they said, 'Abi,' my father.* The Targum, *And they said, 'Mari,' my Lord.* **2 Kings 6:21:** *'Abi,' my father, shall I smite them?* Targum, *'Rabbi,' shall I kill, &c.*

Hence appears the reason of those words of the apostle, **Romans 8:15:** *Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.* And **Galatians 4:6:** "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying *Abba, Father.*" It was one thing to call God *Abi, Father*, that is, *Lord, King, Teacher, Governor, &c.*; and another to call him *Abba, My Father*. The doctrine of adoption, in the proper sense, was altogether unknown to the Jewish schools (though they boasted that the people of Israel alone were adopted by God above all other nations); and yet they called God *Father*, and *our Father*, that is, our God, Lord, and King, &c. But "since ye are sons (saith the apostle), ye cry, *Abba, O my Father,*" in the proper and truly paternal sense.

Thus Christ in this place, however under an unspeakable agony, and compassed about on all sides with anguishments, and with a very cloudy and darksome providence; yet he acknowledges, invokes, and finds God *his Father*, in a most sweet sense.

We cry, 'Abba,' Father. Did the saints, invoking God, and calling him *Abba*, add also *Father*? Did Christ also use the same addition of the Greek word *Father*, and did he repeat the word *Abba* or *Abi*? *Father* seems rather here to be added by Mark, and there also by St. Paul, for explication of the word '*Abba*': and this is so much the more probable also, because it is expressed *Father*, and not *O Father*, in the vocative.

51. And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him:

[*Having a linen cloth cast about his naked body.*] It is well rendered by the Vulgar *clothed in sindon* or *fine linen*: for to that the words have respect: not that he had some linen loosely and by chance cast about him, but that the garment wherewith he always went clothed, was of *sindon*, that is, of *linen*. Let us hearken a little to the Talmudists.

"The Rabbins deliver: *Sindon [linen] with fringes*, what of them? The school of Shammai absolves, the school of Hillel binds, and the wise men determine according to the school of Hillel. R. Eliezer Ben R. Zadok saith, Whosoever wears hyacinth [*purple*] in Jerusalem, is among those who make men admire." By *hyacinthinum [purple]* they understand those fringes that were to put them in mind of the law, **Numbers 15**. And by *sindon, linen*, is understood *a cloak*, or that garment, which, as it serves for clothing the body, so it is doubly serviceable to religion. For, 1. To this garment were *the fringes* fastened, concerning which mention is made, **Numbers 15:38**. 2. With this garment they commonly covered their heads when they prayed. Hence that in the Gemarists in the place quoted: "*talith, or the cloak whereby the boy covereth his head, and a great part of himself*; if any one of elder years goes forth clothed with it in a more immodest manner, he is bound to wear fringes." And elsewhere, "The priests who veil themselves when they go up into the pulpit, *with a cloak which is not their own,*" &c.

But now it was customary to wear this cloak, in the summer especially, and in Jerusalem for the most part, made of *sindon* or of *linen*. And the question between the schools of Shammai and Hillel arose hence, that when the fringes were woolen, and the cloak linen, how would the suspicion of wearing things of different sorts be avoided? *R. Zeira loosed his sindon*. The Gloss is: "He loosed his fringes from his sindon [that is, from his *talith*, which was of '*sindon*, '*linen*], because it was of *linen*," &c. "The angel found Rabh Ketina *clothed in sindon*; and said to him, O Ketina, Ketina, *sindon in the summer, and a short cloak in the winter*."

You see that word which is spoke by the evangelist, *about his naked body*, carries an emphasis: for it was most usual to be clothed with sindon for an outer garment. What therefore must we say of this young man? I suppose in the first place, that he was not a disciple of Jesus; but that he now followed, as some curious looker on, to see what this multitude would at last produce. And to such a suspicion they certainly do consent, who think him to have been roused from his bed, and hastily followed the rout with nothing but his shirt on, without any other clothes. I suppose, secondly, St. Mark in the phrase *having a sindon cast about him*, spake according to the known and vulgar dialect of the nation, *clothed with a sindon*. For none shall ever persuade me that he would use an idiom, any thing uncouth or strange to the nation; and that when he used the very same phrase in Greek with that Jewish one, he intended not to propound the very same sense. But now you clearly see, they themselves being our teachers, what is the meaning of *being clothed with a sindon*, with them, namely, to have a *talith* or *cloak made of linen*; that garment to which the fringes hung. I suppose, in the last place, that this young man, out of religion, or superstition rather, more than ordinary, had put on his *sindon*, and nothing but that *upon his naked body*, neglecting his inner garment (commonly called *chaluk*), and indeed neglecting his body. For there were some amongst the Jews that did so macerate their bodies, and afflict them with hunger and cold, even above the severe rule of other sects.

Josephus in his own Life writes thus: "I was sixteen years old, and I resolved to make trial of the institution of the three sects among us, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes; for I judged I should be able very well to choose the best of them, if I thoroughly learned them all. Afflicting, therefore, and much tormenting myself, I tried them all. *But judging with myself that it was not enough to have tried these sects*, and hearing of one Banus, that lived in the wilderness, that he used a garment made of *leaves, or the bark of trees*, and no food but what grew of its own accord, and often by day and by night washing himself in cold water, I became a follower of him, and for three years abode with him."

And in that place in the Talmudists, which we but now produced, at that very story of Rabh Ketina, wearing a *sindon* in the winter for his *talith*, we have these words; "The religious in elder times, when they had wove three wings [*of the talith*], they joined *the purple*," whereof the fringes were made: "but otherwise, *they are religious who impose upon themselves*

things heavier than ordinary." And immediately follows the story of the angel and Ketina, who did so. There were some who heaped up upon themselves burdens and yokes of religion above the common rule, and that this is to be understood by *such as laid upon themselves heavier things than ordinary*, both the practice of some Jews persuade, and the word itself speaks it, being used by the Gemarists in the same sense elsewhere.

Such, we suppose, was this *young man* (as Josephus was, when a young man, of whom before), who, when others armed themselves against the cold with a double garment, namely, an *inner garment*, and a *talith* or *cloak*, clothed himself with a single garment, and that of *sindon* or *linen*, and under the show of some more austere religion, neglecting the ordinary custom and care of himself.

The thing, taken in the sense which we propound, speaks the furious madness of this most wicked rout so much the more, inasmuch as they spared not a man, and him *a young man*, bearing most evident marks of a more severe religion.

56. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

[*Their witness agreed not together.*] The traditional canons, in these things, divide testimonies into three parts:--

I. There was *a vain testimony*: which being heard, there is no more inquiry made from that witness, there is no more use made of him, but he is set aside, as speaking nothing to the business.

II. There was *a standing testimony*, for let me so turn it here, which, although it proved not the matter without doubt, yet it was not rejected by the judges, but admitted to examination by *citation*, that is, others being admitted to try to disprove it if they could.

III. There was the testimony *of the words of them that agreed or fitted together* (this also was *a standing evidence*), when the words of two witnesses agreed, and were to the same purpose: *an even evidence*. Of these, see the tract *Sanhedrin*; where also discourse is had concerning exact search and examination of the witnesses by *inquisition*, and *scrutiny*, and *citation*: by which curious disquisition if they had examined the witnesses that babbled and barked against Christ, Oh! the unspeakable and infinite innocence of the most blessed Jesus, which envy and madness itself, never so much sworn together against his life, could not have fastened any crime upon!

It is said, verse 55, *they sought for witness against Jesus*. This is neither equal, O fathers of the Sanhedrim! nor agreeable to your rule: *In judgments about the life of any man, they begin first to transact about quitting the party who is tried; and they begin not with those things which make for his condemnation*. Whether the Sanhedrim now followed that canon in their scrutiny about Christ's case, let them look to it: by their whole process it sufficiently appears, whither their disquisition tended. And let it be granted, that they pretended some colour of justice and mercy, and permitted that any one who would, might come forth, *and testify something in his behalf*, where was any such now to be found? when all his disciples

turned their backs upon him, and the Fathers of the Traditions had provided, that whosoever should confess him to be Christ should be struck with the thunder of their excommunication, [John 9:22](#).

1. And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried *him* away, and delivered *him* to Pilate.

[*In the morning they held a consultation...and the whole council.*] "At what time do the judges sit in judgment? The lesser Sanhedrim and the bench of three sit, after morning prayers are ended, until the end of the sixth hour. But the great Sanhedrim sits after the morning daily sacrifice to the afternoon daily sacrifice. And on sabbaths and feast days" [as this day was that is here spoken of], "it sat in *Beth-midrash*" (or *the chapel*), "in the Court of the Gentiles."

"The Sanhedrim of one-and-seventy elders, it is not necessary that they all sit in their place, which is in the Temple. But when it is necessary that all meet together, let all meet together (*the whole council*)."

"But in other times, he that hath business of his own, let him attend his own business, and then return. With this proviso, that nothing be wanting of the number of three-and-twenty upon the bench continually during the whole time of the session (*the consultation*). If any must go out, let him look round, whether his colleagues be three-and-twenty: if they be, let him go out: but if not, let him wait till another enter in."

6. Now at *that* feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

[*At that feast he released, &c.*] The Syriac reads,...; and so the Arab, *every feast*: Beza, *at each of the feasts*, which pleases me not at all. For it is plainly said by Pilate himself, "that I should release unto you one at the Passover," [John 18:39](#): and the releasing of a prisoner suits not so well to the other feasts as to the Passover; because the Passover carries with it the memory of the release of the people out of Egypt: but other feasts had other respects...*according to the nature and quality of the feast*, which was a monument of release...

7. And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which lay* bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

[*Barabbas.*] Let us mention also with him a very famous rogue in the Talmudists, *Ben Dinai*, whose name also was Eleazar. Of whom they have this passage worthy of chronological observation; "From the time that murderers were multiplied, the beheading the red cow ceased; namely, from the time that Eleazar Ben Dinai came; who was also called *Techinnah Ben Perishah*: but again they called him, *The son of a murderer*." Of him mention is made elsewhere, where it is written *Ben Donai*. See also *Ben Nezer*, the king of the robbers.

21. And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

[*Coming out of the country, or field.*] "*They bring wood out of the field [on a feast-day], either bound together, or from some place fenced round or scattered.*" The Gloss there is;

"They bring wood on a feast day out of the field, which is within the limits of the sabbath, if it be bound together on the eve of the feast-day, &c. *A place watched and fenced in every way.*" And Rambam writes, "Rabbi Jose saith, If there be a door in *such a fenced place*, although it be distant from the city almost two thousand cubits, which are the limits of the sabbath, one may bring wood thence."

It may be conceived, that Simon the Cyrenean came out of the field thus loaded with wood; and you may conceive that he had given occasion to the soldiers or executioners, why they would lay the cross upon him, namely, because they saw that he was a strong bearer; and instead of one burden, they laid this other upon him to bear.

25. And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

[*And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.*] But John saith, 19:14, *And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour*; namely, when Pilate delivered him to be crucified. From the former clause, *it was the preparation of the Passover*, hath sprung that opinion, of which we have said something before concerning the transferring of the eating of the lamb this year to the fifteenth day. For they think by *the preparation of the Passover* is to be understood the preparation of the lamb, or for the eating of the lamb. For which interpretation they think that makes, which is said by the same John, 18:28, "They would not go into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover." And hence it is confidently concluded by them, that however Christ ate his lamb the day before, yet the Jews were to eat theirs this very day.

We will discourse first of the *day*, as it here occurs under the name of *the preparation of the Passover*; and then of the *hour*--

I. Every Israelite was bound, within that seven day's solemnity, after the lamb was eaten, to these two things: 1. To appear before the Lord in the court, and that with a sacrifice. 2. To solemn joy and mirth, and that also with sacrifices. The former was called by the Jews *Appearance*. The latter *Chagigah, the festival*.

"*All are bound to appear*, except deaf-and-dumb, fools, young children," &c. And a little after; "The school of Shammai saith, *Let the Appearance be with two silver pieces of money, and the Chagigah be with a 'meah' of silver.* The school of Hillel saith, *Let the Appearance be with a meah of silver, and the Chagigah with two pieces of silver.*" The Gloss writes thus; "All are bound to make their appearance from that precept, 'All thy males shall appear,' &c. [Exodus 23:17](#): and it is necessary that they appear in the court in the feast. He that appears when he placeth himself in the court, let him bring a burnt offering, which is by no means to be of less price than two pieces of silver, that is, of two *meahs* of silver. They are bound also to the peace offerings of the *Chagigah* by that law, *Ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD,*" [Exodus 12:14](#). Rambam upon the place thus; "The Lord saith, 'Let them not appear before me empty,' [Deuteronomy 16:16](#). That is, Let him bring *an oblation of a burnt sacrifice* in his hand when he goes up to the feast. And those burnt sacrifices are called *burnt-sacrifices of*

appearance, and also *appearance*, without the addition of the word *burnt sacrifice*. And the *Chagigah*: From thence, because the Lord saith, 'Ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord,' it means this, *That a man bring peace offerings*, and these peace offerings are called *Chagigah*."

II. Of these two, namely, the *appearance* and the *Chagigah*, the *Chagigah* was the greater and more famous. For

First, certain persons were obliged to the *Chagigah*, who were not obliged to the *appearance*: "He that indeed is not deaf, but yet is dumb, is not obliged to *appearance*; but yet he is obliged to *rejoice*." It is true some of the Gemarists distinguish between *Chagigah* and *rejoicing*. But one Glosser upon the place alleged *that which he saith of 'rejoicing,' obtains also of the 'Chagigah.'* And another saith, "He is bound to *rejoicing*, namely, to rejoice in the feast; as it is written, 'And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast.' And they say elsewhere, that that rejoicing is over the peace-offerings, namely, in eating flesh."

Secondly, *appearance* was not tied so strictly to the first day, but the *Chagigah* was tied to it. "*Burnt sacrifices by vow, and free will offerings are offered on the common days of the feast, they are not offered on a feast day: but the burnt sacrifices of appearance may be offered also on a feast day:* and when they are offered, let them not be offered but *out of common cattle: but the peace offerings of rejoicing* also out of the tithes *the 'Chagigah' of the first feast day of the Passover.* The school of Shammai saith, Let it be of *common cattle:* the school of Hillel saith, Let it be of the tithes. What is it that it teaches of *the Chagigah of the first feast day of the Passover?* Rabh Ishai saith, *the 'Chagigah' of the fifteenth day is so: the 'Chagigah' of the fourteenth, not.*" The Gloss is; "The burnt offerings of appearance were not offered the first day of the feast, although they were due to the feast, because compensation might be made by them the day following."

"The '*Chagigah*' of the first feast day was without doubt due; although it had flesh enough otherways." For, as it is said a little before, "They offered peace offerings on that feast day *because they had need of them for private food*": and although there was food enough, yet the *Chagigah* was to be offered as the due of the day.

"The *Chagigah* of the fourteenth day was this, *when any company was numerous*, they joined the *Chagigah* also with the paschal lamb, that they might eat the passover, even till they were filled. But now the *Chagigah* of that first day was not but of common cattle: but the *Chagigah* of the fourteenth day might also be of the tithes."

It was a greater matter to offer of common cattle (or cholin) than of the tithes of the first-born, for they were owing to the Lord by right: but to offer the *cholin* was the part of further devotion and free will.

That therefore which John saith, that "the Jews would not go into the judgment hall lest they should be polluted, but that they might eat the passover," is to be understood of that *Chagigah* of the fifteenth day, not of the paschal lamb: for that also is called the passover, [Deuteronomy 16:2](#); "Thou shalt sacrifice the *passover* to the Lord of thy flocks and of thy

herds." *Of thy flocks*; this indeed, by virtue of that precept, [Exodus 12:3](#): but what have we to do with *herds*? "'Of thy herds,' saith R. Solomon, for the *Chagigah*." And Aben Ezra saith, "'Of thy flocks,' according to the duty of the passover; 'of thy herds,' for the peace offerings," and produceth that, [2 Chronicles 30:24, 35:8](#). The Targum of Jonathan writes; "Ye shall kill the passover before the Lord your God, between the eves, and your sheep and oxen on the morrow, in that very day, in joy of the feast."

In one Glosser mention is made of *the less passover*; by which if he understands not the passover of the second month, which is very usually called by them *the second passover*, or the passover of the second month, instruct me what he means by it. However this matter is clear in Moses, that oxen, or the sacrifices offered after the lamb eaten, are called the 'passover,' as well as the lamb itself.

And no wonder, when the lamb was the very least part of the joy, and there were seven feast-days after he was eaten: and when the lamb was a thing rubbing up the remembrance of affliction, rather than denoting gladness and making merry. For the unleavened bread was marked out by the holy Scripture under that very notion, and so also the bitter herbs, which were things that belonged to the lamb. But how much of the solemnity of the feast is attributed to the *Chagigah*, and the other sacrifices after that, it would be too much to mention, since it occurs everywhere.

Hear the author of the Aruch concerning the *Chagigah* of Pentecost: "The word *chag* denotes dancing, and clapping hands for joy. In the Syriac language it is *chigah*: and from this root it is, because they eat, and drink, and dance [or make holiday]. And the sacrifice of the *Chagigah*, which they were bound to bring on a feast day, is that concerning which the Scripture saith, *and thou shalt make chag, a solemnity of weeks* to the Lord thy God, a free will offering of thy hand," &c. [Deuteronomy 16:10](#).

And now tell me whence received that feast its denomination, that it should be called *the feast of weeks*? Not from the offering of the loaves of first fruits, but from the *Chagigah*, and the feasting on the *Chagigah*. The same is to be said of the feast of the Passover. So that John said nothing strange to the ears of the Jews, when he said, "They went not into the judgment hall lest they might be polluted, but that they might eat the passover"; pointing with his finger to the *Chagigah*, and not to the lamb, eaten indeed the day before.

The word *passover* might sound to the same sense in those words of his also, "It was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour." It was the preparation to the *Chagigah*, and not to the lamb. But I suspect something more may be understood; namely, that on that day both food was prepared, and the mind too for the mirth of the whole feast. So that the passover denotes *the feast*, not this or that particular appendage to the feast. The burnt sacrifices which were offered in the *appearance, they all became God's*, as the masters say truly; and he who offered them carried not back the least part of them with him. But the sacrifices of the *Chagigah*, whether they were oxen or sheep, the greatest part of them returned

to them that offered them; and with them they and their friends made solemn and joyful feastings while they tarried at Jerusalem. So that the oblation of these on the first day of the feast was *the preparation of the passover*, and *the preparation of Pentecost*, and *the preparation of the feast of Tabernacles*: that is, the day and manner of preparing food for the following mirth of the feast. In the same sense was *the preparation of the sabbath*, namely, *the preparation* of food and things necessary to the sabbath. Of which we shall speak at verse 42.

Having thus despatched these things, let us now come to the *hour* itself. "It was the preparation of the passover (saith John), and about the *sixth* hour," when Pilate delivered Christ to be crucified. "And it was the *third* hour (saith Mark), and they crucified him."

It is disputed by the Gemarists, how far the evidences of two men may agree and consent, whereof one saith, 'This I saw done in that hour'; and the other saith, 'I saw it done another hour.' "One saith, the second hour; another, the third: *their testimony consists together*. One saith the third hour, another the fifth; *their testimony is vain*, as R. Meir saith. But saith R. Judah, their testimony consists together. But if one saith, the fifth hour, another, the seventh hour, their testimony is vain; because in the fifth hour the sun is in the east part of heaven; in the seventh, in the west part." They dispute largely concerning this matter in the place alleged, and concerning evidences differing in words; nevertheless, as to the thing itself, they conclude that both may be true, because witnesses may be deceived in the computation of hours: which to conclude concerning the evangelists, were impious and blasphemous. But there is one supposes the copiers were deceived in their transcription, and would have the computation of John corrected into *and it was about the third hour*: too boldly, and indeed without any reason, for it is neither credible nor possible indeed, that those things which went before our Saviour's crucifixion should be done (to use the words of the Talmudists) *in the three first hours of the day*. The harmony therefore of the evangelists is to be fetched elsewhere.

I. Let us repeat that out of Maimonides; "The great Sanhedrim sat from the morning daily sacrifice, until the afternoon daily sacrifice." But now when the morning daily sacrifice was at the third hour, the Sanhedrim sat not before that hour. Take heed, therefore, thou that wouldest have the words of John, "and it was about the *sixth* hour," to be changed into, "and it was about the *third* hour," lest thou becomest guilty of a great solecism. For Pilate could not deliver Christ to be crucified about the third hour, when the Sanhedrim sat not before the third hour, and Christ was not yet delivered to Pilate.

But you will say, the words of Mark do obscure these things much more. For if the Sanhedrim that delivered up Christ met not together before the third hour, one can no way say that they crucified him the third hour.

We do here propound two things for the explanation of this matter.

Let the first be taken from the *day* itself, and from the *hour* itself. That day was "the preparation of the passover," a day of high solemnity, and when it behoved the priests and

the other fathers of the Sanhedrim to be present at the third hour in the Temple, and to offer their Chagigahs that were preparative to the whole seven days' festivity: but they employed themselves in another thing, namely this. You may observe that he saith not, "it was the third hour *when*"; but "it was the third hour, *and* they crucified him." That is, when the third hour now was, and was passed, yet they omitted not to prosecute his crucifixion, when indeed, according to the manner of the feast and the obligation of religion, they ought to have been employed otherwise. I indeed should rather sit down satisfied with this interpretation, than accuse the holy text as depraved, or to deprave it more with my amendment. But,

Secondly, there is another sense also not to be despised, if our judgment is any thing, which we fetch from a custom usual in the Sanhedrim, but from which they now swerved. They are treating concerning a guilty person condemned to hanging, with whom they deal in this process: *they tarry until sunset approach, and then they finish his judgment and put him to death.* Note that: "They finish not his judgment until sunset draw near." If you ask the reason, a more general one may be given which respected all persons condemned to die, and a more special one which respected him which was to be hanged.

I. There was that which is called by the Talmudists *the affliction of judgment*: by which phrase they understand not judgment that is not just, but when he that is condemned, after judgment passed, is not presently put to death. "*If you finish his judgment on the sabbath [mark that], and put him to death on the first day of the week, you afflict his judgment.*" Where the Gloss is, "As long as his judgment is not finished, it is not the affliction of judgment, because he expects every hour to be absolved: but when judgment is ended, he expects death," &c. Therefore they delayed but little between the finishing of judgment and execution.

II. As to those that were to be hanged, "*they delayed the finishing his judgment,* and they hanged him not in the morning, lest they might grow slack about his burial, and might fall into forgetfulness," and might sin against the law, [Deuteronomy 21:23](#); "but near sunset, that they might presently bury him." So the Gloss. They put him to death not sooner, for this reason; they finished not his judgment sooner for the reason above said.

And now let us resume the words of Mark, "And it was the third hour, and they crucified him." The Sanhedrim used not to finish the judgment of hanging until they were now ready to rise up and depart from the council and bench after the Mincha, the day now inclining towards sunset: but these men finished the judgment of Jesus, and hastened him to the cross, when they first came into the court at the third hour, at the time of the daily sacrifice, which was very unusual, and different from the custom.

34. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

[*Eloi, Eloi.*] In Matthew it is *Eli, Eli*, in the very same syllables of [Psalm 22:1](#): Mark, according to the present dialect (namely, the Chaldee), useth at least according to the pronunciation of the word *Eloi*, [Judges 5:5](#) in the LXX.

42. And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath.

[*The preparation, that is, the day of the sabbath.*] You will ask, whether any day going before the sabbath was called *the preparation*. Among the Hebrews, indeed, it is commonly said *the eve of the sabbath*. But be it granted; whence is it called *the preparation*? Either that *they prepared themselves* for the sabbath; or rather, that *they prepared provisions* to be eaten on the sabbath; and that by the law, "On the sixth day they shall prepare, &c. Whatsoever ye will bake, bake today; and whatsoever ye will seethe, seethe today," &c. [Exodus 16:5,23](#). Hence *preparation* is a very usual word with them in this sense "*a common day prepares for the sabbath, and a common day prepares for a feast day.*" "But those reasons do not hold good *to forbid the preparation*, while as yet there remains much of the day": *preparation*.

But you will say, If a feast day prepares not for the sabbath (which Maimonides saith), such an interpretation will not suit with the words which we are now handling, that it should be called *the preparation*, in respect of provisions prepared for the sabbath on that day. Let the masters themselves answer.

"*On a feast day, which happens on the sabbath eve*, let not a man in the beginning seethe food after the feast day for the sabbath day, but let him seethe for the feast day, and if any remain, let it be reserved for the sabbath. But (according to the letter, *Let him make a boiling*, but the sense is) *Let him prepare food* on the eve of the feast day, and let him depend upon it for the sabbath. The school of Shammai saith, *a twofold food*: that of Hillel saith, *One food.*"

Maimonides speaks plainer: "On a feast day that falls in with a sabbath even, they do not bake nor seethe on the feast day what they eat on the sabbath." And this prohibition is from the words of the scribes: namely, That none seethe on a feast day for a common day; for this is arguing *from the greater to the less*: if a man seethe not for the sabbath day, much less for a common day. But if he provides food on the eve of the feast day, *on which he may depend*, then if he bake or seethe on the feast day for the sabbath, it is permitted: and that on which he depends is called *the mixing of food*. And why is it called *mixing* [*a mingling together*]? namely, as that *mixing* which they make concerning the courts or the vestries on the sabbath eve is for acknowledgment, that is, that they should not think that it is lawful to carry any thing from place to place on the sabbath; so this food is for acknowledgment

and remembrance, that they should not think or imagine that it is lawful to bake any thing on a feast day which is not eaten that day: therefore this food is called *the mixing of food*.

Of *the mixing of courts*, we speak [1 Corinthians 10:16](#). The sum of the matter is this, many families dwelt by one common court. Now therefore when it was not lawful to carry out any thing on the sabbath *from a place which was of one right and condition, to a place which was of another*; therefore it was not lawful for any one of those families to carry out any thing out of his house into the court joining to his door, and on the contrary; all partook of the communion and *mixture* of the right, and that by eating together of that food which was brought together by them all; and then it was lawful. So in this case whereof we are now treating. Since it was not lawful by the canons of the scribes to prepare any food on a feast day for the sabbath that followed on the morrow, and since of necessity something was to be prepared for the sabbath, they mollified the rigour of the canon thus; that first some food should be prepared on the feast day, which was *a mixture* as it were of right, and depending upon this thus prepared, they might prepare any thing for the morrow sabbath.

Of *the mixture of foods*, mention occurs in the Talmudists infinite times; and these things which have been spoken concerning them afford not a little light to the clause which we are now handling, and to others where the word *preparation* occurs; and make those things plainer which we have said concerning *the preparation of the Passover*; namely, that it denoteth not either *the preparation* of the Paschal lamb, nor *the preparation* of the people to eat the lamb; but *the preparation of meats to be eaten in the Passover week*. Nor in this place, if it be applied to the sabbath, doth it denote any other thing than *the preparation of food* for the sabbath now approaching. So that that day wherein Christ was crucified was a double *preparation* in the double sense alleged: namely, the whole day, but especially from the third hour, was *the preparation of the Passover*, or of the whole week following; and the evening of the day was *the preparation* of the sabbath following on the morrow.

Of that sabbath John saith, which we cannot let pass, that *the day of that sabbath was a great day*, chapter 19:31. For it was the *day* of the people's appearance in the Temple; it was the *day* of the offering of the sheaf of firstfruits: and I ask, whether before that day Christ's persecutors had offered their *Chagigahs*?

43. Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

[*An honourable counsellor.*] The Vulgar reads, *a noble officer*: Erasmus, *an honourable senator*: Beza, *an honourable senator*. The Talmud may serve here instead of a lexicon.

"Was it the chamber of *the chief men*? Was it not the chamber of *the counsellors*? First it was called, *the chamber of the counsellors*: but when the high priesthood was bought with money, and yearly changed, as *the chief counsellors* of the king are yearly changed, thence it was called *the chamber of chief men*." The Gloss is, *counsellors, denotes princes*. True, indeed,

and hence *noble men and common persons* are contradistinguished. But why should one not understand those princes and nobles in the proper sense of the word *counsellors*? For who sees not that the word is Greek? and so the Aruch; *it is a Greek word*.

Which fixeth our eyes faster upon the words of the Gloss at the Gemara in the place alleged; "From the beginning, in the days of Simeon the Just, who lived a greater while, they called it *the chamber of the counsellors*." What? did the Greek language so flourish at Jerusalem in the times of Simeon the Just, that a chamber in the Temple should be called by a Greek name? If that Simeon be he who met Alexander the Great, which the Talmudists suppose, then some reason appears for it; but if not, inquire further. However, that was the chamber of the high priest, as appears often in the Talmudists; not that he always lived there, nor that once in the year he resorted thither; but because it was that place where he sat with the council of the priests, and consulted concerning the public service and affairs of the Temple. Hence in the Jerusalem writers mention is made of *Simeon the counsellor*. And in this sense is that to be taken, if I mistake not, which occurs once and again in the Babylonian Talmudists, concerning *the sons of the high priests*, deciding several things; and *the house of judgment of the priests*.

Hence we think *Joseph of Arimathea* was called with good reason *a counsellor*, because he was a priest, and one of that sacerdotal bench. *It was called the chamber*, (saith the Aruch) *of counsellors*.

Chapter 16

1. And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

[*That they might come and anoint him.*] "What is that, that is allowed as to the living [on the sabbath day], but as to the dead it is not? It is *anointing*."

2. And very early in the morning the first *day* of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

[*And very early in the morning, &c.*] The distinction of the twilight among the Rabbins was this:

I. *The hind [cerva] of the morning*: the first appearance of light. "R. Chaija Rabba, and R. Simeon Ben Chalaphtha, travelling together in a certain morning, in the valley of Arbel, saw *the hind of the morning*, that its light spread the sky. R. Chaija said, Such shall be the redemption of Israel. First, It goes forward by degrees, and by little and little; but by how much the more it shall go forward, by so much the more it shall increase."

It was at that time that Christ arose; namely, in the first *morning*; as may be gathered from the words of Matthew. And to this the title of the two-and-twentieth Psalm seems to

have respect. See also [Revelation 22:16](#); "I am the bright and morning star." And now you may imagine the women went out of their houses towards the sepulchre.

II. *When one may distinguish between purple colour and white.* "From what time do they recite their phylacterical prayers in the morning? From that time, that one may distinguish between purple colour and white. R. Eliezer saith, Between purple colour and green." Before this time was *the obscurity of the begun light*, as Tacitus' expression is.

III. *When the east begins to lighten.*

IV. *Sunrise.* "From *the hind of the morning* going forth, until the east begins to lighten; and from the time the east begins to lighten, until sunrise," &c.

According to these four parts of time, one might not improperly suit the four phrases of the evangelists. According to the first, Matthew's, *as it began to dawn*. According to the second, John's, *early in the morning, when it was yet dark*. To the third, Luke's, *very early in the morning*. To the fourth, Mark's, *very early in the morning*, and yet *at the rising of the sun*.

For the women came twice to the sepulchre, as John teacheth; by whom the other evangelists are to be explained: which being well considered, the reconciling them together is very easy.

13. And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.

[*Neither believed they them.*] That in the verses immediately going before the discourse, the question is of the two disciples going to Emmaus, is without all controversy: and then how do these things consist with that relation in Luke, who saith, that "they...returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon," [Luke 24:33,34](#). The word *saying*, evidently makes those to be the words *of the eleven*, and of those that were gathered together with them: which, when you read the versions, you would scarcely suspect...in the original Greek, since it is the accusative case, it is plainly to be referred to the eleven disciples, and those that were together with them. As if they had discourse among themselves of the appearance made to Peter, either before, or now in the very access of those two coming from Emmaus. And yet saith this our evangelist, that when those two had related the whole business, they gave credit no not to them. So that according to Luke they believed Christ was risen and had appeared to Simon, before they told their story; but according to Mark, they believed it not, no not when they had told it.

The reconciling, therefore, of the evangelists, is to be fetched thence, that those words pronounced by the eleven, *The Lord is risen indeed*, &c., doth not manifest their absolute confession of the resurrection of Christ, but a conjectural reason of the sudden and unexpected return of Peter.

I believe that Peter was gong with Cleophas into Galilee, and that being moved with the words of Christ told him by the women, "Say to his disciples and Peter, I go before you into Galilee." Think with yourself, how doubtful Peter was, and how he fluctuated within himself

after his threefold denial; and how he gasped to see the Lord again, if he were risen, and to cast himself an humble supplicant at his feet. When, therefore, he heard these things from the women (and he had heard it indeed from Christ himself, while he was yet alive, that "when he arose he would go before them into Galilee"), and when the rest were very little moved with the report of his resurrection, nor as yet stirred from that place, he will try a journey into Galilee, and Alpheus with him. Which when it was well known to the rest, and they saw him return so soon, and so unexpectedly, "Certainly (say they) the Lord is risen, and hath appeared to Peter; otherwise, he had not so soon come back again." And yet when he and Cleophas open the whole matter, they do not yet believe even them.

15. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

[*To every creature.*] *To every creature*, a manner of speech most common among the Jews: by which,

I. Are denoted *all men*. "The Wise men say, Let the mind of man always be *mingled* [or *complacent*] *to the 'creatures'*." The Gloss there is; "To do with every man according to complacency." *He makes the Holy Spirit to dwell upon the 'creatures'*: that is, *upon men*. "In every judge in the bench of three is required prudence, mercy, religion, hatred of money, love of truth, *and love of the 'creatures'*": that is, *the love of mankind*.

II. But especially by that phrase the *Gentiles* are understood. "R. Jose saith, *Woe to 'the creatures,'* which see, and know not what they see; which stand, and know not upon what they stand; namely, upon what the earth stands," &c. He understands *the heathens* especially, who were not instructed concerning the creation of things. *The speech of all the 'creatures'* (that is, of *the heathens*) "is only of earthly things, *And all the prayers of the 'creatures'* are for earthly things; 'Lord, let the earth be fruitful, let the earth prosper.' But all the prayers of Israelites are only for the holy place; 'Lord, let the Temple be built,'" &c. Observe, how *the creatures* are opposed to *Israelites*.

And the parallel words of Matthew, chapter 28, do sufficiently prove this to be the sense of the phrase, *every creature*, in this place: that which in Mark is, *preach to every creature*, in that place in Matthew is, *disciple all nations*; as those words also of St. Paul, [Colossians 1:23](#), *the gospel that was preached in all the creation*.

In the same sense you must, of necessity, understand the same phrase, [Romans 8:22](#). Where, if you take the whole passage concerning the Gentiles breathing after the evangelical liberty of the sons of God, you render the sense very easy, and very agreeable to the mind of the apostle, and to the signification of the word *creature*, or *creation*: when they who render it otherwise dash upon I know not what rough and knotty sense. Let me, although it is out of my road, thus paraphrase the whole place:--

[Romans 8:19](#): "'For the earnest expectation of the creature, or of the heathen world, waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God.' For God had promised, and had very often

pronounced by his prophets, that he would gather together, and adopt to himself, innumerable sons among the Gentiles. Therefore, the whole Gentile world doth now greedily expect the revelation and production of those sons."

Verse 20. "*For the creature*, the whole heathen world, *was subjected to the vanity* of their mind (as [Romans 1:21](#), *became vain in their imaginations*; and [Ephesians 4:17](#), *the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind*), not willingly, but because of him that subjected it."

Verse 21. "Under hope, because *the creature* also" (or that *heathen world*) "shall be freed from the service of" (sinful) "corruption" (which is in the world through lust, [2 Peter 1:4](#)), "into the (gospel) liberty of the sons of God": from the service of Satan, of idols, and of lusts, into the liberty which the sons of God enjoy through the gospel.

Verse 22. "For we know, that the whole *creature*" (or *heathen world*) "groaneth together, and travaileth, and, as it were, with a convex weight, boweth down unto this very time, to be born and brought forth."

Verse 23. "Neither the Gentiles only, but we Jews also (however we belong to a nation envious of the heathen), to whom God hath granted the firstfruits of the Spirit, we sigh among ourselves for their sakes, waiting for the adoption, that is, the redemption of our mystical body, whereof the Gentiles make a very great part."

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica

John Lightfoot
(1602-1675)

A Chorographical Decad;
a searching unto some places of the Land of Israel;
those especially whereof mention is made in St. Mark.

When this our evangelist, whom we have undertaken to handle, makes mention of some places in the land of Canaan, whose situation is somewhat obscure and more remote from vulgar knowledge; I might seem to be wanting to my task, if I should pass them over unsaluted, and not clear them, as much as lies in me, with some illustration: which I thought very convenient to do here in the very entrance; partly, lest, by the thrusting-in of these discourses into the body of this comment, whatsoever it be, the order of it might be too much broken; and partly, because I would do the same here that I did before my animadversion on St. Matthew.

That I have enlarged upon some places, besides those in the evangelists, I have done it for the reader's sake; to whom, I hope, it will not be unacceptable to hear such things, which do either bring with them profit or pleasure,--or, at least, such as are not commonly heard of.

1. Idumea: [Mark 3:8](#).

There was a time when the land of Israel and Idumea were not only distinct countries, but separated with an iron wall, as it were, of arms and hostility: but, I know not how, Idumea at last crept into Judea; and scarcely left its name at home, being swallowed up in Arabia.

They were truths, which Pliny speaks, in that time, when he spake them; "Arabia is bounded by Pelusium sixty-five miles. Then Idumea begins, and Palestine, at the rising up of the Sirbon lake." But "thou art deceived, O Pliny," would the ancients have said; for Idumea is bounded by Pelusium sixty-five miles: then begins Palestine, at the rising up of the Sirbon.

We are beholden to Strabo, that we know the reason of the transmigration of that people and of the name. For thus he writes: "The Idumeans and the lake [of Sirbon] take up the farthest western parts of Judea, next to Casius. The Idumeans are Nabateans: but being cast out thence by a sedition, they joined themselves to the Jews, and embraced their laws."

Every one knows what the land of Edom, or Idumea, in the Old Testament, was: but it is not the same in the New; and if that old Idumea retained its name (which it scarcely did, but was swallowed up under the name of Arabia), then, by way of distinction, it was called

"Great Idumea." Idumea the Less, or the New, is that which we are seeking, and concerning which St. Mark speaks, no small part of Judea;--so called either from its nearness to Idumea properly so called, or because of the Idumeans that travelled thither and possessed it, and that became proselytes to the law and manners of the Jews. Such a one was Herod Ascalonita. When, therefore, it is said by the evangelist, that "a great multitude followed Jesus from Galilee, and from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea," he speaketh either of the Jews inhabiting that part of Judea, which, at that time, was called Idumea,--or at least of the Idumeans, who inhabited it, being now translated into the religion of the Jews. Concerning the country now contained under that name, we shall speak by and by, following, first, Pliny's footsteps a little, from the place where he sets out his progress,--namely, from Pelusium.

2. A few things of Pelusium.

In [Ezekiel 30:15,16](#), *Sin*, in the Vulgar interpreter is 'Pelusium': which the Latin interpreter of the Chaldee paraphrast follows there: nor without good reason. For *Sin*, and *Tin*, among the Chaldees, is *Mud*. See the Targum upon [Isaiah 57:21](#). And 'Pithom' and 'Raamses' ([Exo 1:11](#)), in the Targums of Jerusalem and Jonathan, are *Tanis and Pelusium*: thence those two gates of Nile, the 'Tanitic' and the 'Pelusiac,' in Ptolemy and the maps. But now, that country or place, which the Syrians and Chaldeans call *Sin*, that is, *Muddy*,--the Greeks call Pelusium, from *Mud*. And who sees not that *Tanis* is derived from *Tin*?

And here, for the sake of learners, let me observe, that Pelusium...which who would not presently interpret *Cappadocia*?

Would not any render the words thus, "If a man marries a wife in Cappadocia and divorces her in Cappadocia, let him give her the money of Cappadocia." But hear Rambam upon the place; [it] "is Caphtor, and is called by the Arabians *Damiata*: which all know is the same with Pelusium."

Hence the Targums of Jerusalem and Jonathan, and the Syriac interpreter upon [Genesis 10:14](#), for *Caphtorim*, read *Cappadokia*; but the Arabic reads *Damiatenos*; and the Seventy, upon [Deuteronomy 2:23](#), for "The Caphtorim going out of Caphtor," read "The Cappadocians going out of Cappadocia."

The Targum upon [Jeremiah 47:4](#), for "The remnant of the country of Caphtor," hath "of Kapotokia." Where Kimchi saith, "R. Saadiah interprets Caphtor *Damiata*."

"These words were written upon the gate of Pelusium; 'Anpak, Anbag, Antal.'" Which were the names of some measures, that it might be known to all, that they were to buy and sell according to that measure.

3. Casiotis.

We now go on from Pelusium to mount Casius: so Pliny; "From Pelusium, the trenches of Chabrias. Mount Casius, the temple of Jupiter Casius. The tomb of Pompey the Great," &c.

Casius was distant about three hundred furlongs from Pelusium (in Antoninus it is forty miles), and the lake of Sirbon was twenty-eight miles from Casius. Thus Pliny's sixty-five miles arise from 'Pelusium to the ending of Arabia.'

Casius, in Ptolemy, is written 'Cassion,' and 'Cassiotis,' with a double s; and so also it is in Dion Cassius, who adds this story:--

"Pompey died at mount Cassius, on that very day whereon formerly he had triumphed over Mithridates and the pirates. And when, from a certain oracle, he had suspicion of the Cassian nation, no Cassian laid wait for him, but he was slain and buried at the mountain of that name."

Those words of Moses do rack interpreters, [Exodus 17:16](#): *Jad Al Cas-jah*. The Seventy render it, "The Lord wars with a secret hand." All other versions almost render it to this sense, "The hand upon the throne of the Lord." So the Samaritan, Syrian, Arabic, Vulgar, and the Rabbins,--that is, 'God hath sworn.'

What if *Cas-jah* be Casiotis? For that country was the country of the Edomites, but especially of the Amalekites, concerning whom Moses treats in that history. We will not too boldly depart from the common consent of all, and we do modestly and humbly propound this conjecture: which if it may take any place, the words may there be rendered, without any scruple or knot, to this sense, "The hand of the Lord is against Cassiotis," (the country of the Amalekites; for) "the Lord hath war with Amalek from generation to generation."

4. Rhinocorura. The Arabic Interpreter noted.

We are now come to the river Sichor; called 'the river of Egypt'; not because it was within the Egyptian territories, but because it was the Jews' limits towards Egypt. There, heretofore, was 'Rhinocorura.' Whence the Seventy, in [Isaiah 27:12](#), render "Unto the river of Egypt," "Unto the Rhinocoruri." I suppose the Arabic interpreter imitated them, and writ first *Corura*; but that at last a little point crept in into the last letter, and so it was changed from 'r' into 'n.' So that now we read which is sounded *Coronis*, in the Latin interpreter.

5. The country of the Avites: a part of the new Idumea.

Passing the river, we enter into new Idumea, anciently the region of the Avites; in the Holy Scripture called Hazerim, [Deuteronomy 2:23](#): in the eastern interpreters, Raphia: in Pliny, Rhinocorura, and Raphia Inwards. Sometimes also in the Holy Scripture it is called

Shur; and instead of it, in those interpreters, it is called 'Chagra.' Whence is the name of mount Angaris concerning which Pliny speaks,--"Gaza, and inwards Anthedon, mount Angaris." For when the Syrians pronounced 'Chaggara,' the Greeks would sound a double Gamma by 'n' and 'g,' and would say 'Angara.'

Shur also is sometimes rendered by the eastern interpreters *Chaluzzah*, as the Jerusalem Targum upon [Genesis 16:7](#); and Jonathan upon [Exodus 15:22](#). The Arabic so renders *Gerarim*, [Genesis 20:1](#); and Jonathan, *Bared*, [Genesis 16:14](#). *Bared* indeed, signifies *hail*...

Shur, sometimes in the Syriac interpreter, is *Sud*, as [Exodus 15:22](#); the point for difference in the last letter being placed amiss. In [Genesis 16:7,14](#), *Shur* and *Bared* are rendered by them *Gedar*, instead of *Gerar*, by the same error. *Bared* in the Arabic is *Jared* there, with two points placed under the first letter instead of one.

The country of the Avites, call it by what name you will, ended at Gaza, being stretched out thither in length, from the river of Egypt, forty-four miles. But the Idumea which we seek ended not there, but extended itself farther into Judea, swallowing up, under the name, that whole breadth of the land, from the Mediterranean sea to the sea of Sodom, according to the length of it.

6. The whole portion of Simeon within Idumea.

It swallowed up, first, the whole portion of Simeon, a great part of which was contained within the country of the Avites; but not a small part also extended itself farther into Judea. Mention is made of his 'fourteen cities,' [Joshua 19](#) if you tell them one by one; but they are said to be only *thirteen*, verse 6; where the LXX make an even number, while they take *Sharuhén*, not for a city, but render it as if they had read 'their fields.' But Sheba seems rather to be one and the same with Beersheba; and so the number is made equal.

7. The whole southern country of Judea within Idumea.

It swallowed up also the whole country of south Judea, which was more generally marked out by two names, 'The Upper and the Nether South': more particularly and diffusively, as some of the Jews please, it is divided into seven parts...

So that when the Holy Scripture divides the south of Judea from Idumea, [Numbers 34](#) and [Joshua 15](#)--we must know that dividing line now is broken, and all the south of Judea is called Idumea. But here, by the way, I cannot but note the Arabic interpreter, who renders *Edom*, in [Joshua 15:1](#), by *Rome*--by what authority let himself look to it; so let the Jews do too, who commonly call the 'Romans,' 'Edomites.'

How much this New Idumea shot itself into Judea is not to be defined; since it admitted indeed no limits, but where either the force or fraud of that nation could not thrust itself in farther. If you betake yourself to Josephus, here and there speaking of that nation, you would

think that it extended almost as far as Hebron. Thence, perhaps, were those endeavours of some, of freeing the hill-country of Judea from tithing. Of which endeavour we can scarce conceive another reason, than that that country was now too much turned heathen, and tithes should not be taken from heathens. For these Idumeans were but a remove from heathen: they had passed into the Jewish rites; but they were neither friends to the Jews nor to their religion.

8. Of the third Palestine, or Palestine called 'the Healthful.'

While I am thinking of this New Idumea, I have a suspicion whether the 'third Palestine,' which is also called 'the Healthful,' may not be understood of this very part of Palestine; and, while I think upon it, I doubt again of the division of Palestine into two parts, in the code of Justinian and Theodosius; and into three parts in the Notitia.

In the edict of Theodosius and Valentinian are these words; "The chief of the Jews, who were over the Sanhedrims in both Palestines, or live in other provinces," &c.

The mention of 'both Palestines' seems plainly to exclude a threefold division; or at least to conclude, that there were no Sanhedrims in the third part. For without all scruple, the 'Notitia Imperii' gives us a 'third part,' in which are ranked, "Under the disposition of the worthy man, the Earl of the East, these provinces underwritten: Palestine, Phoenice, Syria, Cyprus, Palestine the second, Palestine the Healthful, Phoenice of Libanus."

And Justinian hath these words; "When all Palestine formerly was one, it was afterward divided into three parts."

The head of the first the same emperor assigns to be Caesarea; Gulielmus Tyrius to be Jerusalem: and concerning the second and third, he and Pancirolus do not agree. For the metropolis of the second, according to Tyrius, is Caesarea,--and Scythopolis of the third:--according to Pancirolus, Samaria is the metropolis of the second,--and Jerusalem of the third.

On the credit of Justinian, you may with good reason suppose the first to be that, whose head is Caesarea; the second, reason itself will persuade us to have been that of Jerusalem; and where you will go to seek the third, I, for my part, know not, if not in this our Idumea. It is not indeed to be dissembled, that, in the Notitia Imperii, in the scheme adorned with the pictures of the Roman garrisons, Jordan is painted, running between them, five being placed on this side, and eight on that. So that it may seem that the country beyond Jordan was the *third* part. But I shall not dispute here, whether that be not in part to be disposed under the governor of Syria or Arabia; but there are some things which seem to favour such an opinion, partly in the Notitia itself, but especially in the authors alleged.

If, therefore, I may be allowed my conjecture concerning this New Idumea, then some answer may be given about the Sanhedrims of both Palestines, in the meantime not denying

the threefold division of it. We must consider, indeed, that there were councils or Sanhedrims in the times of Theodosius and Valentinian, &c. They were, in times past, in that Palestine whose head was Caesarea, and in that Palestine whose head was Jerusalem: but not in that Idumea concerning which we speak, whose head, whether ye state it to be Gaza or Ascalon, or Eleutheropolis, concerning which Jerome so often speaks, and perhaps Bereshith Rabba, we do not define.

Mention indeed occurs in the Talmudists of "The southern Rabbins"; but not so called, because they dwelt in the furthest southern parts of Judea, for those of Jafne and Lydda had that name, but because Judea was south of Galilee. For the Rabbins of Tiberias give them that title.

But, whatsoever at last that 'Third Palestine' was, no less scruple arises why it was called 'Salutaris,' the 'Healthful.' Pancirolus will have it to be from the wholesome waters: and he learned from Sozomen, that they ran from Emmaus into Judea, namely, that fountain where Christ washed his disciples' feet: "From whence the water (to use his words), became medicinal for divers distempers."

But besides that that story savours enough of fable, the word *Emmaus*, if I may be judge, deceived its first author, which indeed sometimes is written for *Ammaus*, denoting "hot baths," and translates the word *Chammath* into Greek pronunciation; but he, whosoever was the first author of it, had scarcely found that town of Judea called Emmaus, written by the Jews *Chammath*, but *Ammaus*, very far from the signification of 'warm baths.'

To this add also, that mention is made in the same Notitia, of Galatia Salutaris, or the 'Healthful'; and there is a distinction between Macedonia and Macedonia the Healthful; Phrygia Pacatiana, and Phrygia the Healthful; Syria of Euphrates, and Syria the Healthful. In all which it will be somewhat hard to find medicinal waters: and the examples which the author alleged produeth concerning some of them are so incredulous, that I would be ashamed to relate them after him.

I should rather think these countries so called from the companies and wings of the Roman army, called 'Salutares': for mention is made, in the same Notitia, of 'Ala Salutis,' 'the wing of health,' or safety; as 'the second wing of safety,' under the duke of Phoenice; or perhaps the best appointed and strongest garrisons of the Romans, and such as conduced most to the safety and peace of the whole country, had their stations there. And in this our Idumea, which we suppose to be the Third Palestine, or Salutaris, were placed, and that out of the greater muster-roll,--

"The Dalmation horse of Illyria, at Berosaba," or in Beersheba.

"The shield-bearing horse of Illyria, at Chermula," or in Carmel, where Nabal dwelt.

"The promoted horse, inhabitants at Zodecath"; which I suspect to be the cave of Zedekiah, concerning which the Talmudists speak.

"The javelin-bearing horse, inhabitants at Zoar." But let these things be left in suspense.

And now to return thither whence this whole dispute was raised, when it is said by St. Mark, that "a great multitude followed Jesus from Galilee and Judea, and Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan"; he retains the known and common division of the land of Israel at that time, although not in the same terms. The division was into *Judea*, and *Galilee*: and "The country beyond Jordan."--'Galilee and the country beyond Jordan,' he expresseth in terms: and for Judea in general, he names the parts of it, Jerusalem and Judea, as distinguished from Idumea, and Idumea as the south part of Judea.

Chapter 2

1. The wilderness: [Mark 1:4, 12.](#)

The word *wilderness* stops us in a wilderness, if it is of so various and doubtful signification.

I. Sometimes it denotes only *the fields*, or *the country* in opposition to the city; which we observed at [Matthew 3:1](#): where if any one be displeased that I rendered 'Seah of the wilderness' by 'the country Seah,' when it might be rendered, and perhaps ought, 'the Seah which the Israelites used when they encamped in the wilderness,' let him, if he please, take another example for it.

"They do not water and kill the cattle of the wilderness." The Gloss is, "It was usual to water cattle before killing them, that they might the more easily be flayed. But they water domestic [or tame] cattle. And these are *cattle of the wilderness*, those that go out to pasture in time of the Passover, and return home at the first rain, that is, in the month Marchesvan. Rabba saith, These are cattle of the wilderness, *all that feed in the meadows* and come not home." The Gloss is "The cattle of the wilderness are those that are abroad in the fields."

II. The word "the wilderness," denotes a champaign country, where one man's ground is not distinguished from another's by fences.

"They do not breed up smaller cattle in the land of Israel, but in Syria they do. *And in the wildernesses of the land of Israel.*" Where the Gloss thus: "They do not breed such cattle in the land of Israel, that they feed not down the fields: now the fields in the land of Israel do belong, without doubt, to some Israelite." But they fed in the deserts; that is, where field was not distinguished from field, but all was common. Hence you may understand what is signified by the desert of Ziph, of Maon, of Tekoah, &c.; namely, a region or country near to cities, where also were scattered houses; but especially, either *champaign*, where no fences were to make distinction of lands; or *mountainous*, and that which was barren and without improvement.

III. There is no need to speak of the deserts that were altogether desolate and without inhabitant; such as the deserts of Arabia, of Libya, &c.

2. The wilderness of Judah.

Perhaps I shall be laughed at if I distinguish between the wilderness of Judah and the wilderness of Judea. And formerly such a distinction did deserve laughter; but when the name of Idumea, as I have shewed, swallowed up a great part of Judea, then it was not only to be borne with, but necessary also, to distinguish between the wilderness of Judah, of which [Joshua 15:61](#), and the title of [Psalm 63](#), and the wilderness of Judea where John baptized.

The title of that Psalm in the original Hebrew is thus, "A Psalm of David when he was in the desert of Judah." But the Greek interpreters render it, "A Psalm of David when he was *in the wilderness of Idumea*." And the Vulgar, "A Psalm of David when he was in the desert of Idumea": acting the part of no good interpreters, but of no ill paraphrasts. So [Jeremiah 9:26](#); "Upon Idumea, and upon Edom."

If you ask where David was when he composed that Psalm, it is answered ([1 Sam 24:1](#)), "In the wilderness of En-gedi": and if you search further for the precise place, it was there where the castle Masada was afterward built. For I doubt not at all, that that place, as Josephus describes it, was the same with "the rocks of the wild goats." [[1 Sam 24:3](#)]

I appeal here to the maps and their authors, in whom 'En-gedi' and 'Masada' (and 'Lot's cave') are placed not very far from the utmost north cost of Asphaltites: let them say whether Idumea stretched out itself so far. If not, let them correct the interpreters whom we have named; and thought it be so, they might show by what authority they place those places there, and let them friendly correct me putting them far elsewhere.

3. A scheme of Asphaltites, and of the wilderness of Judah, or Idumea adjacent.

We are now indeed out of our bounds; but we hope not out of the bounds of truth. Therefore, in one or two words, we thus confirm the situation that we have assigned to these places:

I. In [Genesis 10:19](#), Gaza and Sodom are made to lie in a parallel line.

II. Lasha is Callirrhoe. So Jonathan renders 'unto Lasha,' 'unto Callirrhoe.' So also Bereshith Rabbah, and the Jerusalem Talmudists, in the places cited at the margin.

You have the situation of it in Pliny, on the same coast with Macherus. "Arabia of the Nomades looks upon Asphaltites on the east,--Macherus, on the south. On the same side is Callirrhoe, a warm spring, of a medicinal wholesomeness."

And now let it be observed, from the place alleged out of Genesis, that, after the same manner as Sidon and Gaza, the limits on the west part, are placed, so are Sodom and Lasha seated on the east, one on the south, and the other on the north; and the other cities stood

in this order: from Lasha, southward, Zeboim; after it, Admah; after it, Gomorrah; and after it, on the utmost southern coast, Sodom.

III. The Asphaltites, saith Josephus, is extended in length, "unto Zoar of Arabia"; and, [Deuteronomy 34:3](#), Moses, from mount Nebo, beheld Zoar from the utmost bounds of the land on that side, as he had beheld the utmost bounds of it from other sides.

IV. En-gedi is Hazezon-tamar; so the Targum of Onkelos in [Genesis 14:7](#): see [2 Chronicles 20:2](#); and Tamar was the utmost south border: [Ezekiel 47:19](#).

V. "The border of Judea (saith Solinus) was the castle Masada. And that not far from Asphaltites."

Josephus indeed saith, that his castle was "not far from Jerusalem"; which seems to thwart me in placing it as I have done. But, besides that we might contend about that reading, when it is very usual with historians to use the words 'not far off,' and 'near,' in a very wide and loose sense,--one can hardly build any thing upon this. So Solinus; "Calirrhoe is a fountain very near Jerusalem"; when yet how far off was it! And in Strabo, Lecheus is "a port near Italy"; when yet it was distant many hundreds of miles.

Masada in Hebrew is *Matsadah*, which implies *fortification*: and that with good reason, when that castle was fortified even to a miracle. The name is taken from [1 Samuel 23:14,19](#)...For they read in the former place, "in the strait places"; and in the latter, "in Maserem" (otherwise *Masereth*), "in the strait places." The Syriac and Arabic read *Masroth*; as though they had read in the original. So Josephus; "He (David), with those that were with him, went up to the strait place of Mastheri."

4. The wilderness of Judea, where John Baptist was.

Thus far we have launched out into the wilderness of Judah, or Idumea; and that the more willingly, because in describing it, I have described also some part of New Idumea, of which discourse was had in the chapter aforegoing. Now we seek "the wilderness of Judea," concerning which the Gospels speak in the history of the Baptist.

I. And first, we cannot pass it over without observation, that it was not only without prophetic prediction that he first appeared preaching in the wilderness, [Isaiah 40:3](#), but it was not without a mystery also. For when the heathen world is very frequently in the prophets called 'the wilderness,' and God promiseth that he would do glorious things to that wilderness, that he would produce there pools of waters, that he would bring in there all manner of fruitfulness, and that he would turn the horrid desert into the pleasure of a paradise (all which were to be performed in a spiritual sense by the gospel); it excellently suited even in the letter with these promises, that the gospel should take its beginning in the wilderness.

II. I, indeed, think the Baptist was born in Hebron, a city of Aaron, in the hill-country of Judea, [Joshua 21:11](#), [Luke 1:5,39](#); he being an Aaronite by father and mother. The house of his cradle is shown to travellers elsewhere; concerning which, inquire whether Beth Zachariah, mentioned in Josephus, and the Book of the Maccabees, afforded not a foundation to that tradition. It was distant from Bethsura only seventy furlongs, or thereabouts, as may be gathered from the same Josephus (by which word the Seventy render South Beth-el in [1 Samuel 30:27](#)); and whether the situation does not agree, let them inquire who please.

A little cell of his is also shewed further in the wilderness, as it is called, of Judea, cut out of a rock, together with his bed, and a fountain running by; which we leave to such as are easy of belief: the wilderness certainly where he preached and baptized is to be sought for far elsewhere.

III. Luke saith, that "the word of the Lord came to John in the wilderness and he went into all the country about Jordan." He sojourned from wilderness to wilderness. In the wilderness, in the hill-country of Judea, he passed his youth as a private man; not as an eremite, but employed in some work or study; and assumed nothing of austerity, besides Nazariteship, before the thirtieth year of his age. Then the Spirit of prophecy came upon him, and "the word of the Lord came unto him," teaching him concerning his function and office, instructing him about his food and clothing, and directing him to the place where he should begin his ministry.

The region about Jericho was that place, or that country, that lay betwixt that city and Jordan, and so on this side of it and on that about the same space; also on this side Jericho, towards Jerusalem. A country very agreeable to the title which the evangelists give it, and very fit for John's ministry. For,

I. It was sufficiently desert, according to what is said, "John came preaching in the wilderness."

"The space (saith Josephus) from Jericho to Jerusalem, is desert and rocky; but towards Jordan and the Asphaltites, more level, but as desert and barren." And Saligniac writes; "The journey from Jerusalem is very difficult, stony, and very rough; the like to which I do not remember I have seen. Jericho is distant from Jordan almost ten miles," &c.

II. This country might, for distinction, be called 'the wilderness of Judea,' because other regions of Judea had other names: as, 'The King's mountain,' 'The plain of the South,' 'The plain of Lydda,' 'The valley from En-gedi,' 'The region about Betharon,' &c.

III. Although that country were so desert, yet it abounded very much with people. For, besides that abundance of villages were scattered here and there in it, 1. Jericho itself was the next city to Jerusalem in dignity. 2. There were always twelve thousand men in it, of the courses of the priests. 3. That way was daily trodden by a very numerous multitude, partly of such who travelled between those cities, partly of such who went out of other parts of Judea, and likewise out of the land of Ephraim into Perea, and of them who went out of

Perea into those countries. 4. John began his ministry about the time of the Passover, when a far greater company flocked that way.

IV. This country was very convenient for food and provision, in regard of its wild honey; of which let me say a few things.

5. Wild honey; [Mark 1:6](#).

When it is so often repeated in the Holy Scripture, that God gave to his people Israel "a land flowing with milk and honey," hence, 1. One would conclude that the whole land flowed with it; and, 2. Hence one would expect infinite hives of bees. But hear what the Talmudists say of these things:

"R. Jonah saith, The land flowing with milk and honey is the land, some part of which flows with milk and honey." And that part, they say, is in Galilee: for thus they speak; "For sixteen miles every way from Zippor is a land flowing with milk and honey": of which thing and country we shall speak elsewhere.

"R. Jose of Galilee saith, They bring not the firstfruits out of the country which is beyond Jordan, because that is not the land flowing with milk and honey." And he that brought the firstfruits was to say, "The Lord gave us this land flowing with milk and honey; and now I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me." [Deuteronomy 26:9,10](#).

But that part that flowed, how did it flow with honey? Learn that from Rambam upon the place: "When he saith 'and honey,' he understands *the honey of palms*. For the palm trees, which are in the plain and in the valleys, abound very much with honey."

There was honey also distilling from fig-trees. "R. Jacob Ben *Dositheus* saith, I went on a certain time from Lydda to Ono before day-break, up to the ancles in the honey of figs."

This is the 'wild honey,' of which the evangelists speak, as of the Baptist's food. And how convenient for this the region about Jericho was, which was called 'The country of palm-trees,' is clear to every eye. Diodorus Siculus hath these words of a certain nation of Arabians: "They have pepper from the trees, and much honey, called wild honey, which they use to drink with water." Whether it were also as plentiful in locusts we do not say; certainly, in this also it gave place to no country, if either barrenness or fruitfulness served for the breeding them: for Jericho and the adjacent parts was like a garden of pleasure in the midst of a desert. Certainly, the place was very convenient for that great work to be performed by the Baptist; that is, baptizing in Jordan.

6. "The region round about Jordan." [Matthew 3:5](#).

Here that of Borchard is not unuseful: "Know, that from the rise of Jordan under Libanus, unto the desert of Pharan, almost a hundred miles, Jordan itself, on both shores, hath spacious

and pleasant fields, which are compassed behind with very high mountains." The truth of which, if his eyes had not experienced it, he might have learned from Josephus, who speaks thus:

"Over Jericho hangs a mountain stretched forth northward, even to the country of Scythopolis; and southward to the country of Sodom, and the utmost borders of the Asphaltites. It is craggy, and not habitable by reason of barrenness. Against it runs out a mountain near Jordan, beginning at Julias, and the north country, and stretched out southward unto Gomorrah, where it bounds the rock of Arabia. The middle between these two mountainous regions is called *The great plain*, extended from the town Ginnabri into the Asphaltites: in length twelve hundred furlongs, in breadth one hundred and twenty. *And it is cut in the middle by Jordan.*" The plain of Jordan before the overthrow of Sodom, &c. [Genesis 19](#) is 'the country about it,' in the Seventy.

Those words teach what is "the region about Jordan": and the word, 'all,' added by the evangelist, may persuade us that the further side may also be taken in, especially if it be considered how small a distance the river made. The space was so little, that, as the Gemarists relate, "a fire kindled on one side reached over to the other." And they suppose, water on this side might be spirted to the other, in that caution: "Let no man take the waters of purification and the ashes of purification, and carry them beyond Jordan; nor let him stand on this side, and spirt to the other."

However, the river was not so broad, but that two, standing on each bank, might look upon one another, cast something over from the one side to the other, yea, and talk together. And then think, whether the inhabitants of the further side resorted not to the Baptist, being so near him, and, as it were, within sight of him.

The masters dispute, whether Jordan be to be esteemed as 'the bounds of the land of Israel,' or as 'the land itself'; and the occasion of that dispute ariseth from another question, namely this: The flock of one man is separated and divided into two parts, and those two parts feed in distant places: it is asked, Whether tithe is to be taken as of one flock, or two? Hence the discussion of the point glides to Jordan; one part of the flock is on this side Jordan, the other on the other. If Jordan be to be esteemed for 'the bounds of the land,' then one part is within the land, the other without. But if it be to be reputed for 'the land itself,' then the business is otherwise. Among other things in this dispute,

"Saith Rabbah Bar Bar Channah, R. Jochanan saith *Jordan is not, but inwards from Jericho, and beneath it.*" You would think me more skilful than a diver, to fetch this secret from the bottom. 'Jordan is not Jordan above Jericho,' is a paradox that vexes the Glossers themselves, much more therefore may it me. One understands the thing according to the bare letter; for "he that voweth (saith he) that he will not drink of Jordan, may drink above Jericho." Another understands it of Jericho, as being a bounds, yea, as the bounds named below Jericho only; [Joshua 18:20](#). We make no tarrying upon the business. But if Jordan

had such a limitation, that Jordan was not above Jericho, 'The region about Jordan,' is to be understood in the same limitation, namely, that it is only below Jericho. See the Seventy on [Genesis 13:10,12](#).

The masters, sifting this business, out of one scruple move another; for they speak these words; "Jordan floweth out of the cave of Paneas, goes along by the Sibbechean sea, by the sea of Tiberias, by the sea of Sodom, *and passeth on, and glides into the Great sea; but Jordan is not but inwards from Jericho, and below it.*" Let any shew me where Jordan flows out of the sea of Sodom into the Mediterranean. The river Shihor, carrying *blackness* in its name, may be taken for it, if it be any other; but neither does this appear concerning it.

While you see multitudes gathered together to John, and gladly baptized in Jordan, without fear, without danger, alas, how much was Jordan changed from that Jordan in that story of Saligniac! "Jordan (saith he), in which place Christ was baptized, is famous for a ruinous building. Here, therefore, all we pilgrims went into the holy river, and washed our bodies and our souls; those from filth, and these from sin; a matter of very great joy and health, had not an unhappy accident disturbed our joys. For a certain physician, a Frenchman, of our company, an honest man, going something further into the river, was caught with a crocodile (whether one should call it a dragon or a beast, it is uncertain), and swallowed him up, not without the common grief of our brethren."

The wilderness also, where our Saviour underwent his forty days' temptation, was on the same bank of Jordan where the baptism of John was; St. Luke witnessing it, that Jesus, being now baptized, "returned from Jordan," namely, from the same tract whereby he came thither.

Chapter 3

1. The Treasury; [Mark 12:41](#).

That which the Talmudists say of some other things, that "they were two, which at last became four," may have place as to the Corbans, or holy treasuries. They were *two*, as to their end; but *four*, as to the despatch of them to that end.

There was a Corban *for the repair* of the building of the Temple; and there was a Corban *for the preparing* such things as were necessary for the divine service in the Temple. And both were two. The duplicity of the former you have in this tradition:

"*There were two chambers in the Temple. The chamber of the silent* [or of the private]; where pious men offered privately; whence the children of pious parents were nourished also privately"; that is, they did their charity secretly for this pious use, that it might not be known who did it. There are some who think these *silent ones*, were the same with the Essenes; of which we will not dispute: nor do we number this charitable treasury among the Corbans,

concerning which we are now treating; because it conferred nothing to the business of the Temple. But the tradition goes forward;

"And there was *the chamber of the vessels*, where whosoever offered any vessel laid it. And after thirty days the treasurers opened the chambers; and whatsoever vessel was found in it, which was useful to the repairing of the building, was laid up for that use. And whatsoever was not useful was sold; and the price of it went *to the chamber for the repairing of the house*."

You observe, how there was a 'Corban of vessels,' or instruments of iron, brass, silver, &c.; and a 'Corban of money'; both for the same end, that is, for the repair of the building and structure of the Temple and courts, if by some means or other they might fall down, or might receive damage by the injury of time, of tempests, or rains.

Maimonides adds, *The veils of the Temple* also come out of the chamber for the repair of the building; but the veils of the doors out of the Corban *chamber*: of which afterward.

2. The Corban chests..

There was also a double Corban, whence the charges of things necessary for the divine worship were defrayed. The first was certain *chests*, of which thus the masters:

"*There were thirteen chests in the Temple*, in which was written, *New shekels* [that is, of the present year], *Old shekels* [or, shekels of the year past], *Turtles*," &c.

Maimonides still more largely and plainly: "In the Temple were thirteen chests formed like trumpets"; that is, narrower below, and more broad above.

"The first was for the shekels of the present year. The second was for the shekels of the year past. The third, for those who were to bring an oblation of two turtles, or pigeons, one for a burnt-offering, the other for a sacrifice for sin; the price of it they cast into this chest. The fourth, for him who otherwise ought an oblation of birds. The price of it he cast into this chest. The fifth for him who voluntarily offered money to buy wood for the altar. The sixth, for him who offered money to buy frankincense. The seventh, for him who offered gold for the mercy-seat. The eighth, for that which remained of the sacrifice for sin: namely, when one dedicated money for the sacrifice for sin, and bought a sacrifice with it, and something remained over and above, let him cast that into this chest. The ninth, for that which remained of the sacrifice for transgression. The tenth, for that which remained of the pigeons for the women that had fluxes, and that were delivered from childbirth. The eleventh, for that which remained of the oblations of the Nazarite. The twelfth, for that which remained of the sacrifice of the leper. The thirteenth, for him who offered moneys for the burnt-offering of cattle. And upon each chest was written that for which the money that was laid up in it was appointed."

In one of these chests the widow, commended by our Saviour, cast in her two mites: but where they were placed, we will inquire by and by.

3. The Corban chamber.

There was also a chamber in which whatsoever money was collected in these chests, of which we have spoken, was emptied out into three other chests; which is called by the Talmudists, emphatically *the chamber*.

"There were three chests, each containing three seahs, into which they empty the Corban, and on them were written Aleph, Beth, Gimel. And why, saith R. Jose, was Aleph, Beth, Gimel, written upon them? namely, that it might be known which of them was filled first, that it might first be emptied. R. Ishmael saith, The inscription was in Greek, Alpha, Beta, Gamma."

The chests which are here spoken of were those into which the three greater were emptied, which always stood unmovable in the chamber. The manner of the emptying of which take from the words of the Gloss in the place alleged: "Those chests in which the money was laid-up did contain twenty seven seahs (*each nine*); and they were covered with a linen cloth. He who was to empty entered with three chests containing nine seahs. He first filled the chest marked Aleph, out of the first of the three great chests; and then covered it with the linen cloth. Then he uncovered the second of the great chests; and out of it he filled the second chest, marked with Beth; and covered it again. Then he uncovered the third of the great chests, and filled the third chest, marked Gimel but covered not the other again," &c.

Moreover, of the manner and time of this emptying, thus the masters speak: "Thrice in a year *they take care about the chamber*" (for let me render it thus in this place); that is, as the Gloss writers [out of the thirteen chests they transferred whatsoever had been collected in them into these three great ones, which were in this chamber, and in like manner they emptied them into three less, of which before], "*About the space of half a month before Passover*, before Pentecost, and before the Feast of Tabernacles: or, in the beginning of the month Nisan, and of the month Tisri, and fifteen days before Pentecost."

And here I cannot but transcribe the words of the Glosser in that place of the Talmud, which we are now upon, as not a little illustrating the place in the Evangelists.

"They published (saith he) and made known that they should bring the oblation of the Lord (*the half-shekel*), they that were near (to Jerusalem), at the Passover; and they that were further off, at Pentecost; and they that were most remote, at the Feast of Tabernacles." These words serve for a light to the story in St. Matthew, chapter 17, of the collectors of the Didrachm, or half-shekel, requiring it of Christ at Capernaum, when the feast of the Passover was now past a great while ago. But we go on.

"He who went into the chamber to empty the chest, went not in with a folded garment, nor with shoes, nor with sandals, nor with phylacteries, nor with charms," &c. And the reason was, that there might be no opportunity, and all suspicion might be removed, of stealing and hiding any of the money under them.

The money taken thence served to buy the daily sacrifice, and the drink-offerings, salt, wood, frankincense, the showbread, the garments of the priests, and, in a word, whatsoever was needful for the worship and service of the Temple.

Yea, "Rabh Asa saith, *the judges of things stolen, who were at Jerusalem*, received as their stipend ninety-nine manas *out of the rent of the chamber*."

4. Where the treasury was.

We have searched out the things; now let us inquire after the places.

I. Those thirteen chests, which were called *trumpets*, we have fixed, without all doubt, in the court of the women: and that upon the credit of Josephus; "The walks (saith he, speaking of that court), running along between the gates, extended inwardly from the wall before the treasuries, were borne up with fair and great columns." To this let us add the words of the evangelist John, 8:20: "These words spake Jesus *in the treasury*":-if it had been said, *over-against the treasury*, which Mark saith, it might be understood of one of the chambers of which we have spoken: which sense the Arabic interpreter seems to follow; who renders it, that "Jesus sat *at the gate* of the treasury." But when it is said that he spake those words *in the treasury*, those chambers are wholly excluded, into which it would be ridiculous to think that they permitted Christ to enter.

But note, the word *treasuries*, in Josephus, is the plural number, and that he speaks of the court of the women, and you will be past doubting that he respected these chests under the word *treasuries*: and you will doubt as little that Mark looked the same way when you shall have observed that his speech is of the women, how both she and others cast money *into the treasury*; which, as appears from those things we have produced out of the Talmudists, was neither customary, nor allowed to do into other Corbans.

This court, indeed, is commonly called in the Jewish writers, *the court of the women*; not that women only entered in there, but because women might not go further; in the same sense as the outward court is called 'the court of the Gentiles,' not that heathens only might enter there, but because they might not go further. That court was also most ordinarily called *the Mountain of the Temple*; so this also whereof we are treating was called *the treasury*.

When, therefore, it is said by St. Mark that Jesus sat *over-against the treasury*, it comes to this, that he sat under the walk before which those chests were placed. And when John saith, "Jesus spake these words in the treasury," it is all one as if he had said, 'He spake these words in the court of the women'; yea, in that place where those chests were, that that place

might be distinguished from others which were in that court; for in every corner of that court there was a little court, each one called by its own name, as appears in the places written in the margin.

II. To trace the situation of the rest of the Corbans, concerning which we have made mention, is not now the business before us; for that which was propounded as our task we have despatched. But this we cannot but advise for the reader's sake, that on the north side of the court of Israel was a gate which was called 'the Corban-gate'; yea, by comparing the words of the masters, there seem to be two gates of the same name: one of which if you make to belong to that Corban-chamber, into which the money out of the thirteen chests was emptied, and the other to belong *to that Corban that was appointed for the repair and amending of the building itself*, perhaps you will not mistake. Certainly you will not find any place more probable in those writers.

5. Gad Javan in the Temple.

In the Talmudic book Zavim these words occur obscure enough: "He saw one [*woman*] multiplied [*or continued*] like three, which are as from Gad Javan to Siloah." The thing discoursed of is of the discovery of some profluvious issue. For example, one discovers such a profluvious issue in himself, now one by and by another, presently after a third; it is disputed how great or how little distance of time is to be assigned, to make it one or two profluviums; and consequently, to how great or how small an oblation the party is bound for his purification. The tradition which we have produced comes to this: namely, if one sees such an issue at one time, which is so continued, that it contains the space of three discoveries; that is, so much time as one might walk "from Gad Javan to Siloam, *behold! such a man is completely profluvious.*"

The Glossers and the Aruch teach us what was *Gad Javan*. Hear themselves; "*Gad Javan* is a phrase drawn from those words: 'That prepare a table for that troop': ([Isa 65:11](#): where the LXX read, 'preparing a table for the devil.' The Vulgar reads, 'who set a table for fortune.' The Interlinear, 'a table of Jupiter.') And it is a place where the kings of Grecia erected an idol: as it is said in the book Avodah Zarah, In the corner looking north-east the Asmoneans hid the stones of the altar, which the Greeks had profaned with their idols."

But whether these our interpreters suppose *Gad Javan* to be that chamber where those stones lay hid, laid up there by the Asmoneans when they repaired the altar, concerning which place see if you please the place in the margin; or whether they suppose it to be the place itself where the idol stood, inquire. But how much space it was thence, and what way they went from thence to Siloam, I heartily wish they had told us. They say only thus much of that matter, that "it was so much space as one might walk while a man twice bathed, and twice dried himself."

Being now in the Temple we cannot but take notice of a name of it usual among the masters, namely, *Birah*, that is, as the Aruch explains it, *a palace*. "If a mischance in the night [or a gonorrhoea] happened to any Levite going forth, *he went down into a secret walk which led away under Birah*, or the sanctuary, to a bath," &c. These things are related of the second Temple. But elsewhere, when it is disputed 'Whether men were better under the first Temple or the second,' Rabba determines it, *Birah may teach this which they had that lived before; but they had not that lived after*. If by *Birah*, is to be understood the Temple itself, both they that lived before and they that lived after had it; if some particular part of the Temple, they that lived after had that also, as appears from the places alleged. But by the thread of the discourse in the place quoted, it seems, that by *Birah*, Rabbah understood not the Temple itself, but the glory of the Temple, and those divine endowments of it, "The heavenly fire, the ark, Urim," &c. which were present to the first Temple, but absent from the second. For presently they slip into discourse concerning the ceasing of prophecy under the second Temple, and the Bath Kol's succeeding in its places. The word *Birah* is in David's mouth, [1 Chronicles 29:19](#); "to build the palace for which I have made provision."

6. Jerusalem, in Herodotus, is Cadytis.

Let us also salute Jerusalem, and that under its most glorious name, 'The Holy City.' Herodotus points it out, if we are not much mistaken, under the name of *Cadytis*. "From Phoenice unto the mountains of *Cadytis*, which is the city of those Syrians who are called Palestines." That Jerusalem is pointed out by him under this name, these things following persuade me:

I. It was commonly called *Kedoshah*, *Holy*. The Jewish money, wheresoever dispersed, spoke out this title of the city. But now when it was very common in the Syrian dialect to change Shin into Thau, how easy was it among them, and among other nations imitating them, that Cadysha should pass into Cadyta and Caditis: as *Chadasha*, *New*, passed into *Chadatha*.

II. He compareth *Cadytis* to the great city of Sardis. For "From the city *Cadytis*," as he goes on, "not much less than Sardis, as I think." But now there was no city at all within Palestine worthy to be compared with Sardis, a most famous metropolis in times past, except Jerusalem.

III. These things also he speaks of Nechoh king of Egypt: "But Necus joining in a foot battle with the Syrians in Magdulus, obtained the victory: and after that, too, Cadytis the great city of Syria."

Which passage, if it be compared with the holy story of Pharaoh Nechoh overcoming Josiah in the battle in the vale of Megiddo, and disposing of the Jewish throne, [2 Kings 23:33,34](#), it fixeth the thing beyond all controversy.

Herodotus goes forward; "From Cadytis, the sea mart towns as far as Jenysus, belong to Arabia; from Jenysus onward to the Serbon lake belong to the Syrians." Words obscure enough; especially which was the city *Jenysus*: the Talmudists indeed mention *Jenush* among the towns which they say are *in the confines*; but the situation does not agree. But we will not pursue the matter in this place.

7. The streets of Jerusalem.

"The streets of Jerusalem were swept every day." Hence, "The moneys that were found in Jerusalem before those that bought cattle are always tenths. The moneys found in the mount of the Temple are *profane* or *common*. In Jerusalem on other days of the year they are common; but in the time of the feasts they are all tenths. But, saith R. Shemaia, Upon what reason is this? when the streets of Jerusalem are swept every day."

The Gloss writes thus; "They are always tenths: both in the time of the feasts, and in the time when there are no feasts. But moneys found in the mount of the Temple were common, even in the time of the feasts. For it is supposed, those moneys fell from them [*or were lost*], in the mount of the Temple; and thereupon they are common. But why were they tenths in Jerusalem in the time of the feasts? And why is it not said, That they had fallen from them there before the feast, as we say of the mount of the Temple? Because the streets of Jerusalem were swept every day; and if moneys had been lost there before the feast, they who swept the street had found them before. But the mount of the Temple had no need to be swept every day: for dirt and dust remained not there; because the mount was shelving; and moreover, it was not lawful for any to enter there with his shoes, or with dust on his feet."

I cannot omit what he saith besides: "Much of the flesh which was eaten at Jerusalem," in the time of the feasts, 'was of the second tithes.' For scarce any one tarried there until he had eaten all his tithes; but he gave the moneys of the tithes either to the poor, or to his friends in the city. And, for the most part, with the moneys of the tithes they bought their thank-offerings.

8. The street leading from the Temple towards Olivet.

"Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai *sat under the shadow of the Temple*, and taught the people the whole day," The Gloss, "When the Temple was a hundred cubits high, it cast its shadow a great way in length, unto that street which was before *the Mountain of the House*. And because that street was spacious, and might contain a great multitude of men, Jochanan taught there by reason of the heat. For no synagogue could contain his hearers."

That street which was before the mount of the Temple, according to the accustomed form of speech, was that by which they went to the Temple at the east gate; concerning which street, and the people convened thither by Hezekiah, mention is made [2 Chronicles](#)

29:4. This street went out into the valley of Kedron, by the Water-gate. And this way the priest went out, that was to burn the red cow in Olivet. And this way our great High Priest entered with palms and Hosanna. This was called "the Street of the Temple," [Ezra 10:9](#).

Chapter 4

1. A sabbath-day's journey.

"As they came near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany." So also Luke: when, according to the order of the story, one would think it should rather be said, 'To Bethany and Bethphage.' For Christ, in his travelling, came to Bethany, and there lodged, [John 12](#); and from that city went forward by the space almost of a mile, before he came as far as Bethphage. And yet it is named by them in this order, "To Bethphage and Bethany"; that it might be shewn that the story is to be understood of the place where Bethany and Bethphage touch upon one another: Matthew therefore names Bethphage alone.

We have elsewhere shewn more at large these two things out of the Talmudists, which do not a little tend to the clearing of this matter:

I. That a tract, or one part of mount Olivet, was called Bethany, not from the town of that name, where Lazarus dwelt, but the town was so called from that tract; and that tract from the dates or palm trees growing there, *Beth Hene, the place of dates*.

II. That there was no town at all named Bethphage, but another tract of Olivet was so called, for *green figs* growing there; that is the meaning of *Beth-phagi*, 'The place of green figs'; and that the village, or outmost street of Jerusalem, lying next it, was called by the same name.

We observed also, that that place in mount Olivet, where these two tracts Bethany and Bethphage touched on one another, was a sabbath-day's journey from the city, or thereabouts. Which how it may be applied to illustrate the present business we are upon, let us say a few things concerning such a journey.

How far the bounds of a sabbath-day's journey reached, every one knows: and every one knows that that space was measured out every way without the cities, that the certain bounds might be fixed, and that there might be no mistake; and that, by some evident mark, the limits might be known, that they might not remain doubtful in a thing wherein they placed so much religion.

These are the rules of the masters concerning measuring two thousand cubits from every side of the city:

"A city which is long or square, when it hath four just corners, they let be as it is; and they measure two thousand cubits for it on every side. If it be round, they frame it into a square, and they measure from the sides of that square. If it be triangular, they frame it into

a square, and measure from the sides of the square," &c. And after, "They measure only with a line of fifty cubits, and that of flax."

An intimation is given concerning the marks of those bounds by that canon; "They do not ride upon a beast" (on the sabbath, and on a holy-day), "that they go not forth beyond the bounds." Where the Gloss is, "Because he that walketh not on foot *seeth not the marks of the bounds.*"

It is said by St. Mark, that the two disciples sent by Christ "found the colt tied where two ways met." Let me pass my conjecture,--that it was in such a place where a mark was set up of a sabbath-day's journey from the city; where the sabbath-way from the city, and the common way thence into the country, touched on one another.

2. Shops in mount Olivet.

"The shops of the children of Chanan, were laid waste three years before the destruction of the Temple." "*And why were the shops of Beth Heno laid waste three years before the destruction of the Temple? Because they established their doings upon the words of the law,*" &c. The Gloss is, "That which was forbidden by the words of the wise men, they found allowed by the words of the law."

The story is the same in both places. In the former place the shopkeepers are named; in the latter, the place of the shops. The shopkeepers were *the sons of Chanan* or *Jochanan*; for, in the Jerusalem language, *Chanan* and *Jochanan* are the same. The place was *Beth Heno*; which I fear not to assert to be the same with Bethany. The reason of my confidence is twofold: 1. Because the Talmudists call Bethany *Beth Hene*; to which how near does *Beth Heno* come! 2. Because in them there is open mention of shops in mount Olivet.

"There were two cedars (say they) in mount Olivet: under one of them there were four shops, where all things needful for purification were sold. From one of them they produced forty seahs of pigeons every month, whence women to be purified were supplied." Four shops were under one; and how many were there under another, whence so many pigeons should come? Therefore, either shew me some other village between the town of Bethany and the first skirt of Bethphage; or else allow me to believe that this was that to which the two disciples were sent, and which, then when they were sent, was "the village over-against you": namely, either a village consisting of those various shops only, or a village, a part of which those shops were.

3. The lavatory of Bethany.

Pardon the word which I am forced to frame, lest, if I had said *the bath*, or *the laver*, they might straiten the sense of the thing too much. That place whereof we are now speaking was a pool, or a collection of waters, where people were wont to wash; and it agreeth very

well with those things that were spoken before concerning purifications. Here either unclean men or unclean women might wash themselves; and presently buying in the neighbouring shops what was needful for purification, they betook themselves to Jerusalem, and were purified in the Temple.

Of this place of washing, whatsoever it was, the Gemarists speak in that story, "*A fox rent a sheep at the lavatory of Beth Hene*: and the cause was brought before the wise men, and they said, *It is not a rending*." We doubt not that *Beth Hene* is *Bethany*: and this cause was brought thence before the wise men of Jerusalem, that they might instruct them whether it were lawful to eat of the carcase of that sheep, when the eating of a beast that was torn was forbidden. See, if you please, their distinction between *snatching away* by a wild beast, and *tearing*, in the place cited, where they discuss it at large [Bab. Cholin, fol. 53. 1.].

Travellers speak of a cistern near the town of Bethany, "near which, in a field, is shewn the place where Martha met our Lord coming to Bethany." They are the words of Borchard the monk. Whether the thing itself agrees with this whereof we are speaking, must be left uncertain.

4. Migdal Eder.

By occasion of these places discovered to us by the Talmudists, I cannot but observe another also out of them on another side of the city, not further distant from the city than that whereof we now spake, if it were as far distant as that; that is, *Migdal Eder*, or *the Tower of the Flock*, different from that mentioned [Genesis 35:21](#). The Jerusalem Talmudists, of this our place, speak thus: "The cattle which are found *from Jerusalem as far as Migdal Eder* on every side," &c. The Babylonian writers more fully; "The cattle which are found from Jerusalem as far as Migdal Eder, and in the same space on every side being males, are burnt-offerings, females are peace-offerings."

In that place the masters are treating and disputing, Whether it is lawful to espouse a woman by some consecrated thing given in pledge to assure the thing. And concerning cattle found between Jerusalem and Migdal Eder, and the same space every where about Jerusalem, they conclude that they are to be reputed for consecrated. "Because it may be supposed" (as the Gloss speaks), "that they were strayed out of Jerusalem; for very many cattle going out thence were to be sacrificed."

They have a tradition not unlike this, as we said before, of money found within Jerusalem: "Moneys which are found in Jerusalem, before those that buy cattle, are always tithes," &c.

But to our business. From the words alleged we infer that there was a tower or a place by name Migdal Eder, but a very little space from Jerusalem, and that it was situate on the south side of the city: I say, "a little space from Jerusalem"; for it had been a burden to the inhabitants dwelling about the city not to be borne, if their oxen or smaller cattle, upon any

occasion straying away and taken in stray, should immediately become consecrated, and that the proper owner should no longer have any right in them. But this tower seems to be situate so near the city, that there was no town round about within that space. We say also, that that tower was on the south side of the city; and that upon the credit, (shall I say?) or mistake of the Seventy interpreters.

5. The Seventy Interpreters noted.

Here, reader, I will resolve you a riddle in the Seventy, in [Genesis 35](#). In Moses the story of Jacob in that place is thus: "They went from Beth-el; and when it was but a little space to Ephrath, Rachel travailed," &c. And afterward; "Israel went on and pitched his tabernacle beyond the tower Eder."

The Seventy invert the order of the history, and they make the encamping of Jacob beyond Migdal Eder to be before his coming to the place where Rachel died. For thus they write: "And Jacob, departing from Beth-el, pitched his tent over-against the tower Gader. And it came to pass when he approached to Chabratha to come to Ephratha, Rachel travailed," &c.

I suspect, unless I fail in my conjecture, that they inverted the order of the history, fixing their eyes upon that Migdal Eder which was very near Jerusalem. For when Jacob travelled from Beth-el to the place of Rachel's sepulchre, that tower was first to be passed by, before one could come to the place; and when Jacob in his journey travelled southward, it is very probable that tower was on that quarter of the city.

There was, indeed, a Migdal Eder near Beth-lehem, and this was near Jerusalem; and perhaps there were more places of that name in the land of Israel. For as that word denotes *the Tower of a Flock*, so those towers seem to have been built for the keeping of flocks; that shepherds might be there ready also a-nights; and that they might have weapons in a readiness to defend their flocks, not only from wild beasts, but from robbers also. And to this sense we suppose that expression, 'the Tower of the Keepers,' is to be taken in that saying, "From the Tower of the Keepers to the strong city," [2 Kings 17:9, 18:8](#).

Hence the Targumist Jonathan, to distinguish Migdal Eder of Beth-lehem from all others, thus paraphraseth Moses' words: "And Israel went forward and pitched his tabernacle beyond Migdal Eder, the place whence the Messiah is to be revealed in the end of days." Which very well agree with the history, [Luke 2:8](#). Whether Micah, chapter 4:8, speak of the same, inquire.

6. The pomp of those that offered the firstfruits.

We have spoken of the places nearest the city, the mention of them taking its rise from the triumph of Christ sitting upon the ass, and the people making their acclamations: and

this awakens the remembrance of that pomp which accompanied the bringing of the firstfruits from places also near the city. Take it in the words of the masters, in the place cited in the margin:

"After what manner did they bring their firstfruits? All the cities *which were of one station*" (that is, out of which one course of priests proceeded) "were gathered together into a station-ary city, and lodged in the streets. In the morning, he who was the first among them said, Arise, let us go up to Zion, to the house of the Lord our God."

"An ox went before them with gilded horns, and an olive crown upon his head" (the Gloss is, that ox was for a peace-offering); "And the pipe played before them until they approached near to Jerusalem. When then they came to Jerusalem, they crowned their firstfruits" (that is, they exposed them to sight in as much glory as they could), "and the chief men, and the high officers, and treasurers of the Temple came to meet them, and that to do the more honour to them that were coming; *and all the workmen* in Jerusalem rose up to them" (as they were in their shops), "and saluted them in this manner, 'O our brethren, inhabitants of the city N., ye are welcome.'"

"The pipe played before them till they came to the Mount of the Temple. When they came to the Mount of the Temple, *even king Agrippa himself* took the basket upon his shoulder, and went forward till he came to the court; the Levites sang, 'I will exalt thee, O Lord, because thou hast exalted me, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over me' ([Psa 30:1](#)). While the basket is yet upon his shoulder, he recites that passage ([Deut 26:3](#)), 'I profess this day to the Lord my God,' &c. R. Judah saith, When he recites these words, 'A Syrian ready to perish was my father,' &c. verse 5, he casts down the basket from his shoulders, and holds its lips while the priest waves it hither and thither. The whole passage being recited to verse 10, he placeth the basket before the altar, and adores, and goes out."

Chapter 5 Dalmanutha. [Mark 8:10](#).

[Matthew 15:39](#): "And came to the coasts of *Magdala*."--[Mark 8:10](#): "came into the parts of *Dalmanutha*."

The story is one and the same; and that country is one and the same: but the names *Magdala* and *Dalmanutha* are not so to be confounded, as if the city 'Magdala' was also called *Dalmanutha*; but *Dalmanutha* is to be supposed to be some particular place within the bounds of *Magdala*. I observe the Arabic interpreter in the London Polyglott Bible, for *Dalmanutha*, in Mark, reads *Magdala*, as it is in Matthew; in no false sense, but in no true interpretation. But the Arabic of Erpenius' edition reads *Dalmanutha*.--"Erasmus notes (saith Beza upon the place), that a certain Greek copy hath *Magdala*. And Austin writes,

that most copies have *Mageda*. But in our very old copy, and in another besides, 'into the parts of *Dalmanutha*,' is written 'into the coasts of *Madegada*.'"

If the name and situation of *Magdala* in the Talmudists had been known to these interpreters, I scarcely think they would have dashed upon so many uncertainties. We have largely and plainly treated of it in another volume, out of those authors: and out of the same, unless I mistake, something may be fetched, which may afford light to Mark's text of *Dalmanutha*. Which thing before we take in hand, perhaps it will not be unacceptable to the reader, if we describe the sea of Gennesaret, and the places adjoining, by some kind of delineation, according to their situation, which we take up from the Hebrew writers.

1. A scheme of the sea of Gennesaret, and the places adjacent.

Comparing this my little map with others, since you see it to differ so much from them, you will expect that I sufficiently prove and illustrate the situation of the places, or I shall come off with shame. I did that, if my opinion deceive me not, a good while ago, in some chapters in the Chorographical century. I will here despatch the sum total in a few lines:

I. "Chammath was so called, because of *the warm baths* of Tiberias: from which it was so very little distant, that, as to a sabbath-day's journey, the men of Tiberias and the men of Chammath might make but one city."

It is called *Chammath of Gadara*, not only to distinguish it from *Chammath of Pella*, that is, 'Callirrhoe'; but because a part of it was built upon the bank of Gadara, and another part upon the bank of Nephthali, or Tiberias, the bridge lying between: which shall be shewn presently.

Tiberias stood touching on the sea; "for on one side it had the sea for a wall."

"Gennesaret was a place near Tiberias, where were gardens and paradises." They are the words of the Aruch.

Capernaum we place within the country of Gennesaret upon the credit of the evangelists, [Matthew 14:34](#), and [Mark 6:53](#), compared with [John 6:22,24](#).

Taricha was distant from Tiberias thirty furlongs: Bethmaus, four furlongs.

Magdala was beyond Jordan; for it is called *Magdala of Gadara*: and that which is said by the Talmudists, "The Gadarenes might, by the permission of R. Juda Nasi, come down to Chammath on the sabbath, and walk through it, unto the furthest street, even to the bridge," is expressed and expounded by them in the same place, "That the people of Magdala, by the permission of R. Judah Nasi, went up to Chammath," &c. From which single tradition one may infer, 1. That Magdala was on the bank of Gadara. 2. That it was not distant from Chammath above a sabbath-day's journey. 3. That it was on that side of Chammath, which was built on the same bank of Gadara by which it reached to the bridge above Jordan, which joined it to the other side on the bank of Galilee.

"Hippo was distant from Tiberias thirty furlongs." With which measure compare these words, which are spoken of Susitha; which that it was the same with Hippo, both the derivation of the words and other things do evince:

"R. Juda saith, The monoceros entered not into Noah's ark, but his whelps entered. R. Nehemiah saith, Neither he nor his whelps entered, but Noah tied him to the ark. *And he made furrows in the waves, for as much space as is from Tiberias to Susitha.*" And again, "The ark of Noah swam upon the waters as upon two rafters, *as much space as is from Tiberias to Susitha.*"

Gadara was distant sixty furlongs from Tiberias.

"Bethsaida was in *lower Gaulonitis*," beyond Jordan in Batanea. It is shown to pilgrims on the shore of the sea of Gennesaret in Galilee; and thence the error of the maps was taken. Hear our countryman Biddulph, who saw those places about the year 1600:

"March the twenty-fourth, we rode by the sea of Galilee, which hath two names, [John 6:1](#), 'The sea of Galilee,' and 'Tiberias of Galilee,' because it is in Galilee; and 'of Tiberias,' because the city of Tiberias was built near it: also Bethsaida, another ancient city. We saw some ruins of the walls of both. But it is said in that chapter, [John 6:1](#), that Jesus sailed over the sea of Galilee. And elsewhere, that he went over the lake; and [Luke 9:10](#), it is said that he departed into a desert place near the city Bethsaida. Which text of John I learned better to understand by seeing, than ever I could by reading. For when Tiberias and Bethsaida were both on the same shore of the sea, and Christ went from Tiberias to, or near, Bethsaida; hence I gather, that our Saviour Christ sailed not over the length or breadth of the sea, but that he passed some bay, as much as Tiberias was distant from Bethsaida. Which is proved thence, in that it is said elsewhere, That a great multitude followed him thither on foot; which they could not do if he had sailed over the whole sea, to that shore among the Ger-gasenes which is without the holy land." These are his words.

But take heed, sir, that your guides, who show those places under those names, do not impose upon you. If you will take Josephus for a guide, he will teach, that "Philip repaired the town Bethsaida; and he called it Julias, from Julias the daughter of Caesar": and, that "that Julias was in *lower Gaulonitis*." Nor is the argument good, "otherwise they would not follow him a-foot"; for, from Capernaum and Tiberias, there was a very beaten and common way by the bridge of Chammath into the country of the Gadarenes, and so to Bethsaida.

Cana was a great way distant from Tiberias: Josephus spent a whole night travelling from this town to that with his army. It was situate against Julias of Betharamphtha, as may be gathered from the same author in the place quoted in the margin. Now that Julias was situate at the very influx of Jordan into the sea of Gennesaret.

These things might be more largely explained and illustrated, but we are afraid of being too long; and so much the more, because we have treated copiously of them elsewhere. This

will be enough to an unbiased reader, to whose judgment we leave it; and now go on to Dalmanutha.

2. Zalmon. Thence Dalmanutha.

If we may play a little with the name Dalmanutha, hear a Talmudical tradition. "He that sells a farm to his neighbour, or that receives a place from his neighbour, *to make him a house of betrothing for his son, or a house of widowhood for his daughter*; let him build it four cubits this way, and six that." Where the Gloss, "*A house of widowhood for his daughter*, whose husband is dead, and she now returns to the house of her father."

The meaning of this tradition is, 'When the son of any one had married a wife, he did not use to dwell with his father-in-law; but it was more customary for his father to build him a little house near his own house.' So also when the husband was dead, and the daughter, now being a widow, returned to her father, it was also customary for the father to build her a little house; in which she dwelt, indeed, alone, but very near her father.

But now from some such house of more note than ordinary, built for some eminent widow; or from many such houses standing thick together, this place, perhaps, might be called *Dalmanutha*, that is, "The place of widowhood." And if some more probable derivation of the name occurred not, it might, not without reason, have had respect to this.

But we suppose the name is derived elsewhere; namely, from *Zalmon*, Tsade being changed into Daleth; which is no strange thing to the Syrians and Arabians.

Of Zalmon we meet with mention, [Judges 9:48](#);--namely, a mountain, or some tract in a mountain, near Sychem: but that place is a very great way off of that concerning which we are now treating. But the Talmudists mention a place called Zalmon, which agrees excellently well with Dalmanutha. "There is a story (say they) of a certain man in Zalmon, who said, I, N., the son of N., am bitten by a serpent, and behold I die. They went away and found him not: they went away, therefore, and married his wife." The Gloss is, "They heard the voice of him crying, and saying, Behold, I die; but they found not such a man in Zalmon." And again; "There is a story in Zalmon, of a certain man who planted his vineyard sixteen and sixteen cubits; and a gate of two ranks of vines: now he turned on this side, and the year following on the other, and ploughed on both sides. And the cause was brought before the wise men, and they approved of it."

None will suspect this Zalmon to be the same with that near Sychem, when it is said, that "they brought the cause before the wise men": for what had the Samaritans to do with the wise men of the Jews? One might rather believe it to be some place near to Tiberias (where was a university of wise men), well known and commonly spoke of, and mentioned in the traditions cited as a place so known. So divers places about Tiberias are mentioned by the Talmudists as well known, which you will scarce find any where but in the books of

the Talmudists. Such are Chammath, Magdala, Beth Meon, Paltathah, Caphar Chittaia, &c. Concerning which we have spoken in another place. There was also *Mizgah*, the seat of Simeon Ben Lachish; and *Eltis of Tiberias*, a place near Tiberias, of an unwholesome air; and *The cave of Tiberias*; and *Bar Selene*; and others which are nowhere mentioned but in these authors; but in them of very noted name. Of this number we suppose this Zalmon was, a place so near to Tiberias, and so known, that it was enough to name it only. But now, when any that spake Hebrew would pronounce it Zalmon and Zalmanutha, he that spake Syriac would pronounce it Dalmon and Dalmanutha.

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica

John Lightfoot

(1602-1675)

A Chorographical Decad;
a searching into some places of the Land of Israel;
those especially whereof mention is made in St. Mark.

Chapter 6 The coasts of Tyre and Sidon; [Mark 7:24](#).

1. The maps too officious.

You will see, in some maps, the Syrophoenician woman pictured, making her supplication to our Saviour for her possessed daughter, almost at the gates of Sidon. But by what right, I fear the authors will not tell me with solidity enough.

In one of Adrichomius' the woman is pictured and no inscription added: but in the Dutch one of Doet she is pictured with this inscription; "Here the Canaanitish woman prayed for her daughter," [Matthew 15](#). In that of Geilkirch, with these words written at it, "The gate of Sidon, before which the Canaanitish woman obtained health for her daughter possessed with a devil," [Matthew 15](#).

"Before the gate of Sidon (saith Borchard the monk) eastward, there is a chapel, built in the place where the Canaanitish woman prayed our Saviour for her demoniacal daughter: concerning whom we read thus [Matthew 15](#), that 'going out of the coasts of Tyre and Sidon she came to Jesus.'"

There are two things which plainly disagree with that situation and opinion:--

I. That it is not credible that Christ ever passed the bounds of the land of Israel. For when he said of himself, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of Israel only"; and to his disciples, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles"; and, "If these wonderful works had been done in Tyre and Sidon";--you will never persuade me that he ever went as far as the gates of Sidon.

II. It is said by St. Mark, that after that maid was healed, Christ came "from the coast of Tyre and Sidon to the sea of Galilee, through the middle of the coasts of Decapolis." What! from the gate of Sidon to the sea of Galilee, through the midst of Decapolis? It would have been more properly said, "Through the midst of Galilee": and hence, as it seems, some have been moved to place Decapolis within Galilee, with no reason at all. We shall meet with it in another place, in the following chapter, and in such a place, that it is not easy to conceive how Christ could pass through it from the gate of Sidon to the sea of Galilee.

2. A coast.

To determine concerning "the coasts of Tyre and Sidon," in this story, we first propound this to the reader: It is said, [1 Kings 9:11,12](#), that "Solomon gave to Hiram, the king of the Tyrians, twenty cities in Galilee": which when he had seen and liked them not, "he called the land *Chabul* unto this day." The LXX render it, "he called them the border or coast." Now let any one, I beseech you, skilled in the tongues, tell me what kin there is between *Chabul* and a *bound*, or *coast*, that moved the LXX so to render it.

The Talmudists speak various things of the word *Chabul*: but the sense and signification of the word *a coast*, is very far distant from their meaning. The Jerusalem Talmudists speak thus; "Chabul signifies a land which bears not fruit." The Babylonian thus; "What is the meaning of the land Chabul? Rabba Honna saith, Because its inhabitants *were wrapped up in silver and gold*. Abba saith to him, Is it so? Behold, it is written, 'That the cities pleased him not.' Should they displease him because they were wrapped up in silver and gold?--He saith to him, Yea, because they were wealthy and delicate, they were not fit for the king's works. Rabh Nachman Bar Isaac saith, *It was a salt land*, and gaping with clefts. Why is it called Chabul? *Because the leg is plunged in it up to the garters*." Josephus thus, "Outwards they called it the land of *Chabal*: for this word *Chabal*, being interpreted, signifies in the Phoenician tongue, *that which pleaseth not*."

These things they speak, tracing the sense of the word as well as they can; but of the sense of a *bound* or *coast*, they did not so much as dream.

I cannot pass away without taking notice of the Glosser at the place cited out of the Babylonian Talmudists, having these words; "The text alleged speaks of twenty-two cities, which Solomon gave to Hiram": he reckons 'two-and twenty,' when in the Hebrew original and in all versions, 'twenty cities' only are mentioned. Whether it be a failing of the memory, or whether he speaks it on purpose, who is able to define? Much less are those words of the Holy Ghost to be passed over, [2 Chronicles 8:2](#). The grammatical interpretation is very easy, "And the cities which Hiram gave to Solomon, Solomon built them": but the historical interpretation is not so easy. For it is demanded, Whether did Hiram give those cities of his own? or did he restore them, which Solomon gave to him, when they pleased him not? And there are some versions which render the word not, he *gave*, but he *restored* or gave back again; and in this sense, Solomon built the cities which Hiram had *restored* back to Solomon. As if Hiram would not keep those twenty cities in the land Chabul, because they displeased him, but restored them back to Solomon in some indignation.

Kimchi on the place more rightly, "It is very well expounded, that Hiram gave cities to Solomon in his own land; and he placed Israelites there to strengthen himself. And he, in like manner, gave cities to Hiram in Galilee; and that to strengthen the league between them. In the Book of the Kings it is recorded what Solomon gave to Hiram; and in this," of the

Chronicles, "what Hiram gave to Solomon." Most true indeed: for that Hiram gave to Solomon some cities in his jurisdiction, appears beyond all controversy from thence, that Solomon is said to build Tadmor in the wilderness, [1 Kings 9:18](#). But what is that place Tadmor? Josephus will teach us: "Thadamor (saith he), the Greeks call Palmyra." And the Vulgar interpreters read, "He built Palmyra." Therefore we must by no means think that Hiram rejected the cities that were given him by Solomon, however they pleased him not; but kept them for his own, which Solomon also did with them which Hiram gave to him.

But whence should the Greek interpreters render that place called *Chabul* by a *coast*, when there is no affinity at all between the significations of the words?

3. The Greek Interpreters noted.

The Greek interpreters are not seldom wont to render the names of places, not by that name as they are called in the Hebrew text, but as they are called in after-times under the second Temple: which is also done often by the Chaldee Targumists. Of this sort are, *Cap-padocians*, for Capthorim: *Rhinocorura*, for 'the river of Egypt'; of which we have spoken before: and among very many examples which might be produced, let us compare one place out of the Talmudists with them.

The Jerusalem Talmudists, calling some cities, mentioned [Joshua 19](#), both by their ancient and present names, speak thus at verse 15:

"*Kattah* is *Katonith*." The LXX render it *Katanath*.

"*Nahalal* is *Mahalol*."

"*Shimron* is *Simoniah*." The LXX render it *Symoon*.

"*Irala* is *Chiriah*." The LXX render it *Jericho*.

He that observes, shall meet with very many such. And from this very thing you may perhaps suspect that that version savours not of the antiquity of the times of Ptolemeus Philadelphius.

The same that they are wont to do elsewhere, we suppose, is done by them here: and rejecting the former name, whereby that region of Galilee was called in the more ancient ages, namely *Chabul*, they gave it the name and title whereby it now ordinarily went, that is, the *bound* or the *coast*.

Border I suspect denotes the very same thing in that tradition in the Jerusalem writers; "*Those cities are forbidden in the border, or coast, Tzur, Shezeth, and Bezeth, &c.; and those cities are permitted in the border, or coast, Nebi Tsur, Tsiar,*" &c. The permission or prohibition here spoke of--as much as we may, by guess, fetch from the scope of the place--is in respect of tithing; and the determination is, from which of those cities tithes were to be required and taken, and from which not. They were to be required of the Israelites, not from

the heathen: which thing agrees very well with the land of Chabul, where cities of this and that jurisdiction seem to have been mixed, and, as it were, interwoven.

4. Midland Phoenicia.

There was a Midland Phoenicia, as well as a Phoenicia on the sea coast. That on the sea coast all know: of the Midland, thus Ptolemy; "The midland cities of Phoenicia are Arca, Palaeobiblus, Gabala, Caesarea of Paneas."

Whether Midland Phoenicia and Syrophoenicia be to be reckoned all one, I am in doubt. I had rather divide Phoenicia into three parts, namely, into Phoenicia on the sea coast, Midland Phoenicia, and Syrophoenicia. And the reason is, because I ask whether all Midland Phoenicia might be called Syrophoenicia: and I ask, moreover, whether all Syrophoenicia were to be reckoned within the bounds of Tyre and Sidon? Certainly Nicetas Choniates mentions the Syrophoenician cities as far as Antioch. For he, in the story of John Comenius, hath these words, "He resolved to set upon the Syrophoenician cities bordering upon Antioch, which were possessed by the Agarenes." But now, will you reckon those cities as far as Antioch to be within the jurisdiction of Tyre and Sidon? But certainly there is nothing hinders but you may reckon those to be so which Ptolemy esteems to belong to Midland Phoenicia; only the scruple is about Caesarea of Paneas, which is Caesarea Philippi: and that, we shall see, belonged to the Decapolitan cities, and may be determined, without any absurdity, to be within that jurisdiction of Tyre and Sidon, as also Leshem of old, which was the same city, [Judges 18:28](#).

Let one clause of the Talmudists be added; and then those things which are spoken may be reduced into a narrower compass. They, reducing the bounds of the land under the second Temple, fix for a bound "Tarnegola the Upper, which is above Caesarea." Observe, that Caesarea is a city of Midland Phoenicia, according to Ptolemy; and yet Tarnegola, which bends more northward, is within the land of Israel, according to the Hebrews.

So that in this sense, Christ might be within "the coasts of Tyre and Sidon," and yet be within the limits of the land of Israel. We must therefore suppose, and that not without reason, that he, when he healed the possessed maid, was, 1. in that country, in the outermost coasts of Galilee, which formerly was called Chabul, in the Seventy called the *coast*; in the Talmudists the *border*; which anciently was given by Solomon to the king of Tyre; and from that grant in the following ages it belonged to the right and jurisdiction of Tyre and Sidon; however it were within those boundaries, wherein the land of Israel was circumscribed from the beginning; yea, wherein it was circumscribed under the second Temple. 2. We suppose him to have been not far from the springs or stream of Jordan, which being passed over, he could not come to the sea of Galilee, but by the country of Decapolis.

5. Of the Sabbatic river.

When we are speaking of Syrophenicia, we are not far off from a place where the sabbatic river either was, or was feigned to be: and I hope the reader will pardon me, if I now wander a little out of my bounds, going to see a river that kept the sabbath: for who would not go out of his way to see so astonishing a thing?

And yet, if we believe Pliny, we are not without our bounds, for he fixeth this river within Judea. "In Judea (saith he) a river every sabbath day is dry."--Josephus otherwise; "Titus (saith he, going to Antioch) saw in the way a river very well worthy to be taken notice of, between the cities of Arca and Raphana, cities of the kingdom of Agrippa. Now it hath a peculiar nature. For, when it is of that nature, that it flows freely, and does not sluggishly glide away; yet it wholly fails from its springs for six days, and the place of it appears dry. And then, as if no change at all were made, on the seventh day the like river ariseth. And it is by certain experience found that it always keeps this order. Whence it is called the 'Sabbatic river,' from the holy seventh day of the Jews."

Whether of the two do you believe, reader? Pliny saith, That river is in Judea: Josephus saith, No. Pliny saith, It is dry on the sabbath days: Josephus saith, It flows then. The Talmudists agree with Pliny; and Josephus agrees not with his own countrymen.

In the Babylonian tract Sanhedrim, Turnus Rufus is brought in, asking this of R. Akibah, "*Who will prove that this is the sabbath-day?* [The Gloss, 'For perhaps one of the other days is the sabbath.'] R. Akiba answered, *The Sabbatic river will prove this. He that hath a python, (or a familiar spirit) will prove this. And the sepulchre of his father will prove this.*" The Gloss writes thus: "'The Sabbatic river will prove this.' That is a rocky river, which flows and glides all the days of the week, but ceaseth and resteth on the sabbath. 'He that hath a python or a familiar spirit, will prove this.' For a python ascendeth not on the sabbath-day. And the sepulchre of Turnus Rufus, all the days of the year, sent forth a smoke; because he was judged and delivered to fire. But transgressors in hell rest on the sabbath-day." Therefore, his sepulchre sent not forth a smoke on the sabbath day.

Do you not suspect, reader, whence and wherefore this fable was invented? namely, when the brightness of the Christian sabbath was now risen, and increased every day, they had recourse to these monsters either of magic or of fables, whereby the glory of our sabbath might be obscured, and that of the Jews exalted. The various, and indeed contrary relations of historians bring the truth of the story into suspicion.

Chapter 7 The region of Decapolis, what; [Mark 7:30](#).

1. The region of Decapolis not well placed by some.

We meet with frequent mention of Decapolis in the evangelists, as also in foreign authors; but no where in a more difficult sense than in those words of St. Mark, chapter 7, where it is thus spoken of Christ, "And again departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came to the sea of Galilee through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis." The difficulty lies in this; that supposing by the 'coasts of Tyre and Sidon,' a place near the gates of Sidon is to be understood, of which before, it can scarcely be conceived how Christ went through the middle of Decapolis to the sea of Galilee, unless it be supposed that Decapolis was within Galilee.

Hence Borchard certainly, and others that follow him, seem to be induced to number these towns of Galilee for Decapolitan towns; Tiberias, Sephet, Kedesh-Naphtali, Hazor, Capernaum, Caesarea Philippi, Jotopata, Bethsaida, Chorazin, Scythopolis. Upon whose credit Baronius writes thus: "The province of Decapolis (saith he) was placed in the same Galilee; so called, because there were ten cities in it, among which one was reckoned Capernaum." Confidently enough indeed, but without any ground. Pliny much otherwise: "There is joined to it (saith he), on the side of Syria, the region of Decapolis, from the number of the towns, in which region all do not keep the same towns. Yet most do. Damascus and Opoto, watered with the river Chrysorrhoea, fruitful Philadelphia, Raphana, all lying backwards towards Arabia: Scythopolis (heretofore called Nysa, from father Bacchus' nurse being there buried), from Scythians drawn down [*and planted*] there: Gaddara, [*the river*] Hieromias gliding by it, and that which is now called Hippon Dion, Pella rich in waters, Galasa, Canatha. The tetrarchies run between these cities, and compass them about, which are like to kingdoms, and are divided into kingdoms, namely, Trachonitis, Paneas, in which is Caesarea, with the fountain before spoke of, Abila, Arca, Ampeloessa."

Whom should we believe? Borchard and his followers place all Decapolis within Galilee, being extended the whole length of Galilee, and adjacent to Jordan, and on the shore of the sea of Gennesaret. Pliny and his followers place it all in the country beyond Jordan, except only Scythopolis.

In Scythopolis both parties agree, and I, in this, with both: but in others I agree with Borchardus hardly in any, and not with Pliny in all. In them, it is absurd to reckon the most famed cities of Galilee for cities of Decapolis, when, both in sacred and profane authors, Galilee is plainly distinguished from Decapolis. In Pliny, it seems an unequal match to join Damascus and Philadelphia, formerly the two metropolises of Syria and the kingdom of Ammon, with the small cities of Gadara and Hippos.

With Pliny and his followers Josephus also consents, in reckoning up some cities of Decapolis. For severely chiding Justus of Tiberias, he has these words: "You also and all the men of Tiberias have not only taken up arms, but have fought against the cities of Decapolis in Syria." Observe that: The cities of Decapolis in *Syria*, not in *Galilee*. "Thou hast set their cities on fire." And a little after, "After that Vespasian was come to Ptolemais, *the chief men of Decapolis of Syria* sharply accused Justus of Tiberias, *that he had fired their towns.*" But

what those towns of Decapolis were, he hints elsewhere in these words: "Then Justus persuading his fellow-citizens to take arms, and compelling those that would not, and going forth with all these, *he fires the villages of the Gadarenes and the Hippens.*"

You see how, with Pliny, Josephus joins the region of Decapolis to the side of Syria, and how he reckons Gadara and Hippos for Decapolitan towns with him. And yet, as we said, Pliny doth not please us in all: but that which in him might seem most ridiculous and absurd, namely, that he reckons Scythopolis, which is beyond Jordan, with the other cities pleaseth me most of all. For from that very city we are certified what were the other cities, and why they were of such singular name and note: having first taken notice of the condition of Scythopolis, it will be more easy to judge of the rest.

2. Scythopolis, heretofore Beth-shean, one of the Decapolitan cities.

The Talmudists very frequently propound the particular example of the city Beth-shean, which is also called Scythopolis, (see the LXX in [Judges 1:27](#)), and do always resolve it to stand in a different condition from the other cities of the land of Israel.

"Rabbi (say they) looseth Beth-shean, Rabbi looseth Caesarea, Rabbi looseth Beth Gubrin, Rabbi looseth Caphar Tsemach from the Demai"; that is, from the tithing of things doubtful. Jarchi citing these words addeth these moreover; "For all those places were like to Beth-shean, which the Israelites subdued coming up out of Egypt; but they subdued it not when they came out of Babylon."

"R. Meir (say they) ate the leaves of herbs [*not tithed*] in Beth-shean, and thenceforth Rabbi Meir loosed all Beth-shean from tithing." Upon which story thus Jarchi again; "R. Meri ate leaves in Beth-shean not tithed, because tithing is not used out of the land of Israel." Note this well, I pray; that Beth-shean, which plainly was within the land of Israel, yet is reckoned for a city which is out of the land of Israel, and for a heathen city: and the reason is given, because, although it were within the land, and came into the possession of the Israelites in the first conquest of it, yet it came not into their possession in their second conquest, but was always inhabited by heathens. The same, with good grounds, we judge of the rest of the cities of Decapolis, which were indeed within the limits of Israelitic land, but which the Syrians or heathens had usurped, and until then possessed. After we have numbered some of those cities, the thing will appear the more clearly.

But if you ask, by the way, who the inhabitants of Beth-shean were when the Jews came up out of Babylon; and who would not, could not be subdued by the Jews, is a matter of more obscure search: you would guess them to be Scythians from the derivation of the word, and from the words of Pliny: "Scythopolis, heretofore Nysa, from Scythians brought down thither." But if you go to Herodotus, discoursing concerning the empire of the Scythians in Asia, and especially in Palestine, you will find that that empire was extinct when the

grandfather of Cyrus was scarce born: that it may seem more a wonder that the name of Scythopolis did so flourish, when the Jews under Cyrus went back to their own land. But concerning this matter we will not create more trouble either to the reader or to ourselves.

3. Gadara and Hippo, cities of Decapolis.

So Pliny and Josephus in the words lately alleged out of them: and so the evangelists not obscurely concerning Gadara. For Mark saith, "He began to preach in Decapolis"; Luke, "He departed preaching throughout all the city of Gadara."

And that Gadara was of heathen jurisdiction, besides what may be gathered out of those words of Josephus, may be made out also from thence, that hogs were kept there in so great a number, [Matthew 8](#): the keeping of which was forbidden the Jews by the Talmudic canons, as well as the eating them by the Mosaic law. Hence in our notes on [Mark 5](#), we are not afraid to pronounce that possessed Gadarene to be a heathen; and that, if our conjecture fail us not, upon good grounds.

That Hippo also was of heathen jurisdiction, the testimonies of the Jews concerning the city Susitha may sufficiently argue: which as it is of the same signification with the word Hippo, so without all doubt it is the same place. So they write of its heathenism. "The land Tobh, to which Jephthah fled, is Susitha. And why is the name of it called Tobh [that is, *good*]? because it is free from tithes." And whence came it to be free from tithes? because it was of heathen possession. For there was no tithing without the land, that is out of any place which belonged to the heathen. And again, "If two witnesses come forth out of a city, the greater part of which consists of Gentiles, as Susitha," &c.

4. Pella, a city of Decapolis.

Pliny numbers Pella also among the Decapoltan cities: and so also doth Epiphanius: and that it was of the same condition under which, we suppose, the other Decapoltan cities were put, namely, that it was inhabited by heathens, the words of Josephus make plain: "The Jews recovered these cities of the Moabites from the enemy, Essebon, Medaba, Lemba, Oronas, Telithon, Zara, Cilicium Aulon, Pella. But this (Pella) they overthrew, because the inhabitants would not endure to be brought over unto the customs of the country." Behold the citizens of Pella vigorously heathen, so that their city underwent a kind of martyrdom, if I may so call it, for retaining their heathenism. And when it was restored under Pompey, it was rendered back to the same citizens, the same Josephus bearing witness.

But take heed, reader, that his words do not deceive you concerning its situation; who writes thus of Perea, "The length of Perea is from Macherus to Pella, and the northern coasts are bounded at Pella": that is, of Perea, as distinct from Trachonitis and Batanea. For Pella was the furthest northern coast of Perea, and the south coast of Trachonitis. Hence

Josephus reckons and ranks it together with Hippo, Dio, Scythopolis, in the place before cited.

There is no need to name more cities of Decapolis beyond Jordan; these things which have been said make sufficiently for our opinion, both concerning the situation of the places, and the nature of them. Let us only add this, while we are conversant beyond Jordan, and about Pella: "Ammon and Moab (say the Gemarists) tithed the tithe of the poor in the seventh year," &c. Where the Gloss thus; "Ammon and Moab are Israelites who dwell in the land of Ammon and Moab, which Moses took from Sichon. And that land was holy, according to the holiness of the land of Israel: but under the second Temple its holiness ceased. They sow it, therefore, the seventh year; and they appoint thence the first tithe, and the poor's tithe the seventh year, for the maintenance of the poor; who have not a corner of the field left, nor a gleaning that year: thither therefore the poor betake themselves, and have there a corner left, and a gleaning, and the poor's tithe."

We produce this, for the sake of that story which relates how the Christians fled from the siege and slaughter of Jerusalem to Pella. And why to Pella? Certainly if that be true which obtains among the Jews, that the destruction of Jerusalem was 'in the seventh year,' which was the year of release, when on this side Jordan they neither ploughed nor sowed, but beyond Jordan there was a harvest, and a tithing for the poor, &c.; hence one may fetch a more probable reason of that story than the historians themselves give; namely, that those poor Christians resorted thither for food and sustenance, when husbandry had ceased that year in Judea and Galilee. But we admire the story, rather than acquiesce in this reason.

5. Caphar Tsemach. Beth Gubrin. Caphar Carnaim.

We neither dare, nor indeed can, number up all the cities of Decapolis of the same condition with Beth-shean: yet the Jerusalem Talmudists fix and rank these three under the same condition with it, in those words which were alleged before, Caphar Carnaim excepted, of which afterward.

I. *Caphar Tsemach*. Let something be observed of its name out of R. Solomon.

1. In the Jerusalem Talmudists it is *Caphar Tsemach*; but R. Solomon citing them reads *Caphar Amas*; which one would wonder at. But this is not so strange to the Chaldee and Syriac dialect, with which it is very usual to change Tsade into Ain. So that the Rabbin in the pronouncing of the word *Amas*, plays the Syrian in the first letter, and the Grecian in the last, ending the word in Samech for Cheth.

2. We dare pronounce nothing confidently of the situation of the place: we have only said this of it before, that it is reckoned by the Jerusalem writers among "the cities forbidden in the borders"; perhaps, *in the coast*, of which before: but I resolve nothing.

II. *Beth Gubrin*. The situation of this place also is unknown. There was a Gabara about Caesarea Philippi, called by the Rabbins 'Tarnegola the Upper.' But we dare not confound words and places. It is famous for R. Jochanan of Beth Gubrin, who said, "There are four noble tongues," &c.

III. "Caphar Karnaim (say the Jerusalem Talmudists) is of the same condition with Beth-shean"; that is, of heathen jurisdiction.

And now let the reader judge whether these were some of the Decapolitan cities. Whether they were or no, we neither determine, nor are we much solicitous about it: that which we chiefly urge is, that, by the places before mentioned, it appears, as I suppose, that the cities of Decapolis were indeed within the limits of the land of Israel, but inhabited by Gentiles. Jews indeed dwelt with them, but fewer in number, inferior in power, and not so free both in their possessions and privileges. And if you ask the reason why they would dwell in such an inferiority with the heathens, take this: "The Rabbins deliver. Let one always live in the land of Israel, though it be in a city the greatest part of which are heathens. And let not a man dwell without the land, yea, not in a city the greatest part of which are Israelites. For he that lives in the land of Israel hath God; but he that lives without the land is as if he had not God; as it is said, 'To give you the land of Canaan, that God may be with you,'" &c. Would you have more reasons? "Whosoever lives within the land of Israel is absolved from iniquity. And whosoever is buried within the land of Israel is as if he were buried under the altar." Take one for all: "The men of Israel are very wise; for the very climate makes wise." O most wise Rabbins!.

6. Caesarea Philippi.

This city also is of the same rank with Beth-shean in the Talmudists: and Ptolemy besides encourages us to number it among the cities of Decapolis, who reckons it among the cities of Midland Phoenicia; and Josephus, who, in his own Life, intimates Syrians to be its inhabitants. We correct here that which elsewhere slipped us, namely, that the Arabic interpreter, while he renders Caesarea for Hazor, [Joshua 11:1](#), may be understood of 'Caesarea of Strato,' when he seem rather to respect this Caesarea.

And now, from what has been said, think with yourself, reader, what is to be resolved concerning those words of St. Mark, "Jesus went from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis": think, I say, and judge, whether by the 'coasts of Tyre and Sidon,' any place can be understood at the very gates of Sidon; and not rather some place not very remote from Caesarea Philippi. And judge again, whether Decapolis ought to be placed within Galilee, and not rather (with Pliny and Josephus) that a great part of it at least ought not to be placed in the country beyond Jordan;

and if any part of it stood in Galilee, whether it ought not to be placed in the utmost northern coast of it, except only Scythopolis, or Beth-shean.

7. The city Orbo.

By occasion of the mention of Beth-shean, I cannot but subjoin the mention of the city *Orbo* from the words of R. Judah, in the place at the margin:--"R. Judah saith, *the ravens* (or *the people of Orbo*) brought bread and flesh, morning and evening, to Elias. [1 Kings 17:6] *That city was in the borders of Beth-shean, and was called Orbo.*"

Some Jews raise a scruple whether ravens brought Elias bread and flesh, or men called *Ravens*. So Kimchi upon the place: "There are some, who, by *ravens* understand merchants, according to that which is said, "The men of Orbo of thy merchandise," [Ezekiel 27:27](#). Hence you may smell the reason why the Arabic renders it *Orabimos*. To which sense our R. Judah, who thinks that they were not *ravens*, but the *inhabitants of the city of Orbo*, that ministered to Elias. But here the objection of Kimchi holds "God commanded Elias (saith he), that he should hide himself, that none should know that he was there. And we see that Ahab sought him every where," &c.

But omitting the triflingness of the dream, we are searching after the chorographical concern: and if there be any truth in the words of R. Judah, that there was a city *Orbo* by name near Beth-shean, we find the situation of the brook Cherith,--or, at least, where he thought it ran. That brook had for ever laid hid in obscurity, had not Elias lay hid near it; but the place of it as yet lies hid. There are some maps which fix it beyond Jordan, and there are others fix it on this side; some in one place, and some in another, uncertainly, without any settled place. But I especially wonder at Josephus, who saith, that "he went away towards the north, and dwelt near a certain brook"; when God in plain words saith, *And thou shalt turn thee, or go towards the east*, for he was now in Samaria. God adds, "Hide thee at the brook Cherith, *which is before Jordan.*" So, you will say, was every brook that flowed into Jordan. But the sense of those words, "which is before Jordan," is this, "which (brook), as thou goest to Jordan, is flowing into it on this side Jordan." So that although the Rabbin mistakes concerning the creatures that fed Elias, yet perhaps he does not so mistake concerning the place where the brook was.

The story of the Syrophenician woman, beseeching our Saviour for her possessed daughter, and of his return thence by Decapolis to the sea of Galilee, hath occasioned a discourse of 'the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and the region of Decapolis.' And now, having finished the search after the places, let us speak one word of the woman herself. She is called by Mark 'a Syrophenician Greek,' which is without all scruple; but when she is called 'a Canaanitish woman,' by Matthew, that is somewhat obscure. If those things which in our animadversions upon Matthew we have said upon that place do not please any, let these

things be added: 1. That Canaan and Phoenicia are sometimes convertible terms in the Seventy, [Joshua 4:1,12](#), &c. 2. If I should say that *a Greek woman*, and *a Canaanitish woman*, were also convertible terms, perhaps it may be laughed at; but it would not be so among the Jews, who call all men-servants and women-servants, not of Hebrew blood, Canaanites. It is a common distinction, *a Hebrew servant*, and *a Canaanite servant*; and so in the feminine sex. But now *a Canaanite servant*, say they, is a servant of any nation besides the Hebrew nation. Imagine this woman to be such, and there is nothing obscure in her name: because she was a servant-woman of a heathen stock, and thence commonly known among the Jews under the title of *a Canaanite woman-servant*.

Chapter 8 Some measurings.

1. The measures of the Jews.

It obtained among the Jews, "That the land of Israel contained the square of four hundred *parsae*." And they are delighted, I know not how nor why, with this number and measure. "Jonathan Ben Uzziel interpreted from the mouth of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi; *and the land of Israel was moved four hundred parsae every way*." "When a hog was drawn up upon the walls of Jerusalem, and fixed his hoofs upon them, the land of Israel shook four hundred *parsae* every way."

A parsae contains in it four miles. "Ten *parsae* (saith the Gloss at the place in the margin) are forty miles": which might be proved largely elsewhere, if need were. So that four hundred *parsae* (or so many thirty furlongs), made a thousand six hundred miles. Which measure why they ascribed it to the land of Israel on every side of the square of it, whether from the measurings of Ezekiel, or from somewhat else, we do not here inquire. But we cannot but observe this, that the same number is mentioned, and perhaps the same measure understood, [Revelation 14:20](#): "Blood issued out of the lake to the horses' bridles, for a thousand six hundred furlongs." Where the Arabic reads, "for the space of a thousand six hundred miles."

The Talmudists measure sometimes by *miles*, sometimes by *parsae*, sometimes by *diets*. Every one of these you will meet with in them very frequently.

Of the Talmudic mile, take this admonition of theirs namely, that "it consisted" (not of eight, as the Greek and Roman did, but) "of seven furlongs and a half."

And of the *diet*, take this: "R. Jochanan saith, *How much is a man's journey in one day? Ten parsae*. From the first dawning of the morning to sun-rise, five miles. From sun-set until stars appear, five miles. *There remain thirty. Fifteen from morning to noon. Fifteen from noon till even*." Behold a day's journey of forty miles in one sense, that is, as much as may be despatched in one day; and of thirty in another, that is, as much as most usually was wont

to be despatched. Where you are admonished by them also, that these are computed "according to the equinoctial day."

They feign, that Saul in one day travelled sixty miles, as the Israelites did also from Jordan to mount Gerizim: but most commonly they judge the diet to be according to what was said, namely, that under it are comprehended thirty miles.

And hither let those passages be brought. "What is a long way? From Modim" (the sepulchres of the Maccabees) "and forward; and, according to this measure, on every side. He saith, moreover: From Modim to Jerusalem were fifteen miles." The dispute is upon that, [Numbers 9:10](#), where it is commanded, that every one keep the Passover in the first month, unless he be unclean, "or in a long way"; and it is concluded, that by a *long way* is to be understood the distance of fifteen miles at the least, which was the half of a common *diet*.

2. The Jews' measuring out the land by diets.

In the place noted in the margin, the masters ask, "How long is any bound to make known, by public outcry, concerning something found? R. Judah saith, Three feasts, and seven days after the last feast: namely, three days for any to go home to seek whether he hath lost any thing, and three days to come back [*to Jerusalem*], and that still one day might remain for public outcry." (The Gloss is, "That he might make an outcry,--I lost such a thing, and these are the marks of it.") "But they object, the third day of the month Marchesvan they pray for rains. Rabban Gamaliel saith, The seventh of that month, which is the fifteenth day from the Feast of Tabernacles: namely, that the last of all the Israelites [who came up to the feast] might go to Euphrates, and not be caught by the rains."

It is presumed by this tradition, that the utmost bounds of the land of Israel was within three days' journey of Jerusalem: nor amiss: and under the same condition the utmost bounds of the land beyond Jordan are reckoned; namely, that they exceeded not that distance; but how much they came short of it is left in doubt. It is not my purpose to determine of that business in this place: that which we pursue is, to measure out the breadth of the land within Jordan.

3. The Talmudists' measuring the breadth of the land within Jordan.

There was a tradition and national custom famous among them, concerning which we have mention somewhere, "That a vineyard of four years old, should go up to Jerusalem in a days' journey on every side." The sense of the tradition is this; the second tithes were either to be eaten at Jerusalem, or, being sold at home, the money was to be brought to Jerusalem, whence some things were bought to be eaten there. Now provision is made by this canon, that the tithes of vineyards which were within a diet of the city, should not be sold, but that they should be brought to Jerusalem and eaten there.

But "What are the bounds, say they, of that day's journey? 'Elath on the south. Acrabat on the north. Lydda on the west. Jordan on the east."

So both Misnas. But the Babylonian Gemara, in the places noted in the margin, reads "*Elath on the north, Acrabat on the south.*" By what reason, and in what sense, these words agree, commentators endeavour to resolve obscurely enough; but it is not of so much moment to detain us.

Elath recalls to my mind some things which are spoken by the Notitia of the eastern empire. Where, "under the disposition of the honourable man, the duke of Palestine," is substituted, among others, "The lieutenant of the tenth Fretensian legion at Aila." Where Pancirolus writes, that "Aila was seated on the shore of the Red sea." St. Jerome, upon [Ezekiel 47](#) writes thus; "the tongue of the Red sea, on the shore of which Aila is seated, where a Roman legion and garrison is now quartered." And the same father elsewhere; "Aila (saith he) is in the utmost borders of Palestine, joined to the south desert, and the Red sea, whence men sail out of Egypt into India, and thence into Egypt. And there also is a Roman legion called Decima," *the tenth*.

We dare not contradict so great an oracle; otherwise my thoughts would run back to this our Elath: and that upon this reason especially, because it seems somewhat hard to substitute a garrison at the Red sea "under the duke of Palestine," when that was so far distant from Palestine, and since there was a 'duke of Arabia' (in which Elath at the Red sea was) as well as of Palestine.

You see the Fathers of the traditions measuring from Lydda by Jerusalem to Jordan in a double diary: but here also they leave us again at uncertainties of the breadth of the land; because Lydda was not upon the utmost coast of the land on that side. Unless, perhaps, you might say, that whatsoever space went between Lydda and the sea was "the region of the sea," esteemed as heathen land; when Caphar Lodim, which was seated in that interval, and not far from Lydda, was of no better account. Let us get therefore, if we can, more certain accounts, and more faithful direction.

4. Ptolemy consulted and amended.

It would be ridiculous so much as to dream, that the breadth of this land is every where the same: since the seas bounding on all sides, here the Mediterranean, there that of Sodom, the sea of Gennesaret, the sea of Samochonitis, and Jordan gliding between them, cannot but make the space very unequal by their various windings.

Take a proof of this from Ptolemy in the Mediterranean shore:--...

Thus the Latin version of him:

Caesarea Startonis

66.15.

Joppa	65.40.
The haven of the Jamnites	65.
The haven of the Gazites	64.45.
Gaza	65.26.

And more of the like variation.

Of the last, namely, of 'the haven of the Gazites,' and Gaza itself, we may justly be at some stand. In Ptolemy himself, as you see, 'the haven of the Gazites' is in 65.45. But the Latin interpreter hath 64.45:--nor indeed without reason, when Gaza itself is only in 65.26. But indeed, on the contrary, it is more probable that the haven of the Gazites should be placed in 65.26, and Gaza itself in 65.45; where, by the *haven* is by no means to be understood that place where ships put in and unladed, but the whole bay, comprehended within the promontories that thrust themselves out into the sea; the very last point of which thrusting forth you may conceive to be in degree 65 and 26: from the city 19 minutes.

If, therefore, you are minded to follow Ptolemy with this amendment, in measuring out the breadth of the land between Gaza and Asphaltites, take it thus. Let Gaza be in degree 65.45. And also the Latin version is, "The middle of Asphaltites contains degrees 66.50." From Gaza, therefore, to the middle of the Dead sea, will be a whole degree and [some] minutes; to which 65 miles, 5 minutes, do answer: whence if you withdraw the half of the Asphaltites, there will remain 65 miles, or thereabouts, from the shore of it to Gaza.

5. Pliny to be corrected.

And here I cannot but amend the reading of Pliny, or at least shew that it wants mending; in whom we read thus: "Thence the Nabateans inhabit the town called Petra, the Rock, in a valley little less than two miles in bigness, surrounded with inaccessible mountains, a river running between. It is distant from Gaza, a town of our shore, 600 miles: from the Persian bay, 122 miles. Two double ways meet here; the way of those who went to Palmyra of Syria; and of those who came from Gaza." Those words, "it is distant from Gaza," &c. are they with which we have to do.

What! *six hundred miles* from Gaza to Petra, the metropolis of the Moabites? I wonder the very learned Heidman should so softly swallow down these words, and that without any regret. But let me have leave to conjecture that Pliny, in his own copy, wrote thus, "It is distant from Gaza, a town of our shore, CX.M": but by the carelessness of the transcribers,

the numerical letter X was cut into two parts, after this manner,) (, and the left half of it, at length, closed in with the former C, in this manner (), and so at last passed into D; and the other right-hand half remained thus, C, and was reckoned for a hundred.

However we may mistake in our conjecture, yet certainly concerning the space and number of the miles, we do not so mistake. For allow thirty-eight miles, or thereabouts, between Petra and Asphaltites, and grant twenty miles, or thereabouts, to the breadth of that sea (that we may go something in the middle between Pliny and Josephus concerning the breadth of it), then there will remain of the hundred and ten miles which we suppose Pliny wrote, fifty-two miles, or thereabout, from that sea to Gaza: which is not far from the mark. But the mark is vastly overshot, when six hundred miles are assigned from Gaza to Petra. You will surely favour our computation, and conjecture of the injury done Pliny by the transcribers, when you shall have observed, that the first shore of Gaza is, according to Ptolemy, as we have said, in degree 65.26; and Petra is only in degree 66.45.

Let us, therefore, grant fifty-two or fifty-three miles, or thereabouts, for the breadth of the land from the shore of the Mediterranean sea to the Asphaltites: you must allow some more miles between the Mediterranean shore and Jordan: because by how much the more broad the Asphaltites is, so much the less broad is the land; and the same must be said of the sea of Gennesaret and Samochonitis. And Galilee is not only straitened according as they are enlarged; but it is straitened also by the territories of Tyre and Sidon running between it and the sea.

So that it would be in vain to trace out an exact *breadth* of the land every where; and it would be ridiculous to measure it by any one measure or extension. It is well enough, if one come near the thing by some convenient guess here and there, or err not much of it.

The determination of the *length* of the land seems more sure, while it is measured out by towns and cities, from Sidon to the river of Egypt: but here also is not the same space to all; and in some places the measuring is very uncertain.

6. The length of the land, out of Antoninus.

Thus the Itinerary of Antoninus:--

From Sidon to Tyre (Phoenicia)	24 miles
To Ptolemais	32
Sicamina	24
Caesarea	20

Betaro (Palestine)	18
Diospoli	22
Liamnia	12
Ascalon	20
Gaza	16
Papa	22
Rhinocolura	22
	232

We have elsewhere measured out this space by the cords of Pliny and Strabo, less than this number by thirteen miles: where if some mistake hath crept into the computation, let Gulielmus Tyrius bear the blame, who stretched the bounds of Phoenicia four or five miles only from Tyre southward.

But what shall we say of another Itinerary? Which whether it be Antoninus' I dare not define; where it is thus,

From Caesarea to Betaron	31 miles:
To Diospolis	38 miles:

exceeding the former computation nine-and-twenty miles. There is somewhat there also, which how to reconcile with Josephus, it is not easy to shew: for it is said,

From Neapolis to Aelia	30 miles,
To Eleutheropolis	20 miles,
To Ascalon	24 miles.

Where from Aelia or Jerusalem to Ascalon run out only 44 miles; whereas Josephus saith of Ascalon, that it was "distant from Jerusalem 520 furlongs," or 65 miles. This breach is a little filled up by this; that New Ascalon was nearer to Jerusalem than the old by sixteen miles, as Benjamin relates.

Whether Betaron were the same with *Betar*, where that horrible slaughter was under Ben Cozba, we will not dispute here: there is no doubt to be made but Liarnia is illy writ for Jamnia. And now let us follow Antoninus to Pelusium:--

Rhinocolura	
Ostracena	24 miles,
Cassio	26 miles,
Pentascino	20 miles,
Pelusio	20 miles.

Which how they agree with Pliny, who numbers only sixty-five miles from Pelusium to the ending of Arabia, viz. to the Sirbon, on which Rhinocolura borders, I shall not take upon me to say. This I have said elsewhere, that it is a wonder that some maps should place the Sirbon between Cassius and Pelusium, when the contrary manifestly appears both here and in Pliny and Strabo. Perhaps they took the error from Ptolemy, or at least from his interpreter, in whom Cassius is in latitude, degree 31.15: but the breaking to of the Sirbon in 31.10.

7. The breadth of the ways.

"The Rabbins deliver. *A private way* is four cubits. *A way* from a city to a city is eight cubits. *A public way* is sixteen cubits. The way to the cities of refuge is two-and-thirty cubits. The king's way hath no measure: for the king may break down hedges to make himself a way. And the way to a sepulchre hath no measure, *for the honour of the dead.*" Compare [Matthew 7:13,14](#).

There was this difference between *a way* from a city to a city, and *a public way*; that a *public way* was that along which all cities passed; *a way* from a city to a city was that along which this city passed to that, and that to this, but no other city passed that way.

"That way from a city to a city was eight cubits (saith the Gloss), that if haply two chariots met, there might be space to pass."

The way to a sepulchre had no measure, that those that attended the corpse might not be separated by reason of the straitness of the way. They add, "A station, as the judges of Zippor say, is as much as contains four cabs." By *station*, they understand the place where those that return from the sepulchre stand about the mourner to comfort him. "For men-servants and women-servants they do not stand, nor for them do they say the blessing of the mourners." The Gloss is, "When they returned from the sepulchre, they stood in rows comforting him. And that row consisted not of less than ten. They made him sit, and they stood about him."

"A piece of ground containing four cabs of seed (saith the Gloss), is thirty-three cubits and two handbreadths broad, and fifty long."

8. The distance of sepulchres from cities.

Burying-places "were not near the cities." They are the words of the Glosser upon Kid-dushin in the place quoted; and that upon this tradition: "For all the thirty days he is carried in his mother's bosom, and is buried by one woman and two men; but not by one man and two women." The sense is this, An infant dying before the thirtieth day of his age hath no need of a bier, but is carried in his mother's bosom to burial, two men accompanying; but he is not carried by two women, one man only accompanying. And this reason is given; because when the burying-places were a good way distant from the city, it might happen that two women might be enticed by one man to commit whoredom, when they were now out of the sight of men; but two men would not so readily conspire to defile one woman.

They produce examples: "A certain woman (say they) carried out a living infant as though it were dead, to play the whore with him who accompanied her to the place of burial."--And, "Ten men took up a living woman as though she were dead, that they might lie with her." Certainly thou forgettest thyself, O Jew, when while thou sayest that two men would scarcely conspire together for the defiling the same woman, and other while that ten men did.

The burying-places were distant two thousand cubits from the Levitical cities; from all other cities a great space, if not the same. How far Jerusalem agreed with these in this matter, or not agreed, we must observe elsewhere.

Chapter 9 Some places scatteringly noted.

1. The Roman garrisons.

Being to speak of some places, scatteringly taken notice of here and there, let us begin with the Roman garrisons, which were dispersed all the land over: and this we do the rather,

because the Notitia Imperii, whence they are transcribed, is not so common in every one's hand.

NOTITIA.

Under the command of the honourable person, the duke of Palestine.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Equites Dalmatae Illyriciani Berosabae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Equites Promoti Illyriciani Menoide. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Equites Scutarii Illyriciani Chermulae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Equites Mauri Illyriciani Aeliae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Equites Thamudeni Illyriciani Bitsanae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Equites Promoti Indigenae Sabaiae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Equites Promoti Indigenae Zodocathae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Equites Sagittarii Indigenae Havanae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Equites Sagittarii Indigenae Zoarae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Equites primi Felices Sagittarii Indigenae Palaestinae Saburae, sive Veterocariae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Equites Sagittarii Indigenae Mohaile. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Praefectus Legionis Decimae Fretensis Ailae.
And those that are taken out of the lesser Muster-roll. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ala prima miliaria Sebastena Asuadae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ala Antana Dromedariorum Admathae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ala Constantiniana Tolohae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ala secunda Felix Valentiniana apud Praesidium. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ala Prima miliaria hastae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ala Idiota constitutae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Cohors Duodecima Valeria Afro. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Cohors Decima Carthaginiensis Carthae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Cohors Prima Centenaria Tarbae. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Cohors Quarta Phrygum Praesidio. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Cohors Secunda Gratiana Jehybo. |

<input type="checkbox"/>	Cohors Prima equitata Calamonae.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cohors Secunda Galatarum Arieldelae.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cohors Prima Flavia Maoleahae.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cohors Secunda Cretensis juxta Jordanem fluvium.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cohors Prima Salutaria inter Aeliam et Hierichunta.
	The Office stands thus:--
<input type="checkbox"/>	Principem de Schola Agentium in rebus.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Numerarios et Adjutores eorum.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Commentariensem.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adjutorem.
<input type="checkbox"/>	A libelis, sive subscribendarium.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exceptores, et caeteros Officiales.

All this out of Notitia.

2. Zin. Cadesh.

These places are named in the line bounding the land southward. [Numbers 34](#) and [Joshua 15](#).

The Jews teach us, that it was called the 'Desert of Zin' from a mountain of that name, and that the mountain was so called from the groves of *palm-trees*; and that it was famous for iron mines. For those words, [Numbers 34:4](#), "And pass on to Zin," are rendered by the Jerusalem Targumist, "And the border passed on to the mountain of Iron." By Jonathan, "And passed on to the palms of the mountain of Iron"...

It seems, therefore, to be some mountainous tract, very near to the borders of the land of Israel, famous for palms of a lower size, and iron-mines, called, from its palm-trees, *Tsin*, and from that name giving a denomination to the adjacent country, which was desert.

Cadesh, in the eastern interpreters *Rekam*, was a bound of the land; yet Cadesh itself was, in effect, without the land. Hence those words, "He that brings a bill from a heathen place, &c.; yea, that brings it from *Rekam*." And, "All the spots that come from *Rekam* are clean." The Gloss is, "Some spots in the garments" (namely, of a profluvius woman) "which came from *Rekam* were clean, because they determined not of the spots of strangers." Another Gloss thus: "In *Rekam* were Israelites; and yet spots coming from *Rekam* are clean, because they belong to Israelites, and the Israelites hide their spots," &c.

Cades, as Bridenbachius relates, is called Cawatha by the Arabians: for thus he writes; "At length we came into a certain country, which, in the Arabian tongue, is called Cawatha, but in the Latin Cades." Which while we read, those things come into my mind which the eminent Edward Pocock, a man of admirable learning, discourseth concerning the word *Kawa*, in his very learned *Miscellaneous Notes*, that it should signify *crying aloud, an outcry*, &c. To which whether the word *Gohe* and (whereby *Rekam* is also called) *bellowing*, may any way answer, it is more fit for that great oracle of tongues to judge than for so mean a man as I am.

3. Ono.

"Ono was distant three miles from Lydda. R. Jacob Ben *Dositheus* said, From Lydda to Ono are three miles; and I, on a certain time, went thither before daybreak, up to the ankles in honey of figs." R. Simai and R. Zadok went to intercalate the year in Lydda, and kept the Sabbath in Ono.

The Talmudists suppose this city was walled down from the days of Joshua; but fired in the war of Gibeah: because it is said, "All the cities also, to which they came, they set on fire," [Judges 20:48](#); but that it was rebuilt by Elpaal, a Benjamite, [1 Chronicles 8:12](#); "R. Lazar Ben R. Josah saith, It was destroyed in the days of the concubine in Gibeah; but Elpaal stood forth and repaired it."

With Lod and Ono is also joined "The valley of craftsmen," [Nehemiah 11:35](#); which some of the Jews suppose to be a particular city; and that it was walled from the days of Joshua. "But saith R. Chananiah, in the name of R. Phineas, Lod and Ono *themselves are the valley of craftsmen*." That R. Chananiah was *a citizen of the city of Ono*, eminent among the Rabbins, "one of the five learned who judged before the wise men. These were Ben Azzai, Ben Zuma, Chanan, and Chananiah, and Ben Nanas."

Why the maps placed Lod and Ono near Jordan, not far from Jericho, I can meet with no other reason than that in Josephus is found the town Adida, not far from thence, and Hadid is reckoned with Lod and Ono in [Ezra 2:33](#); and Lod and Hadid are framed into one word *Lodadi*, [Ezra 2:33](#), and *Lodadid*, [Nehemiah 7:37](#), by the Seventy interpreters. But there were more places called by the name of Adida; so that that reason fails, if that were the reason. For there was 'Adida in Sephel,' ('Adida in the valley'); and "The city *Adida* in the mountain; under which lie the plains of Judea." And "Adida in Galilee before the great plain," if it were not the same with "Adida in Sephel."

Of Lydda, which we are now near when we are speaking of Ono, let that be considered, for the sake of young students, which the Gloss adviseth, That Lydda is called also *Lodicea*: and frequent mention is made of "the martyrs in Lydda," which is sometimes also pronounced "the martyrs in Lodicea"; as in that story among other places; "When the tyrant [or *Trajan*]

endeavoured to kill Lolienus [perhaps *Julianus*] and Papus his brother *in Lodicea*, &c." [the Gloss, *Lodicea*, that is, *Lydda*] "he said to them, If you are of the people of Ananias, Michael, and Azarias, let your God come, and deliver you out of my hand."

The martyrdom of these brethren is much celebrated, which they underwent for the king's daughter, who was found slain; and the enemies of the Jews said that the Jews had slain her; and these brethren, to deliver Israel, said, 'We slew her'; therefore those alone the king slew. So the Gloss...

Chapter 10 Of the various inhabitants of the land.

1. It was the land of the Hebrews before it was the Canaanites'.

Abraham is called *Hebrew*, then only when the difference between him and the Elamites was to be decided by war. And the reason of the surname is to be fetched from the thing itself which then was transacted.

I. The hereditary right of the Holy Land, which, by divine disposal, was Sem's land, Elam, the first-born of Sem, did deservedly claim; nor was there any of the sons of Sem upon whom, in human judgment, it was more equally and justly devolved. But the divine counsel and judgment had designed it another way; namely, that it should come to the family of Arphaxad, and Heber, of which family Abraham was. Him, therefore, God strengtheneth against the army of Elam, and declares him heir by a stupendous victory; which Sem himself likewise does, blessing him, although he had overthrown in battle his sons the Elamites, born of his first-born Elam. For that most holy man, and a very great and noble prophet withal, acknowledged the counsel of God; whom he is so far from opposing for the slaughter of his sons, that, on the contrary, he blesseth the conqueror, and yields him the choicest fruits of his land, bread and wine, not only for refreshment to him and his soldiers, but also, perhaps, for a sign rather of resignation, and investing him with the hereditary right of it, whom God, by so signal a mark, had shown to be the heir. Upon very good reason, therefore, Abraham is called *Hebrew*, to point as it were with the finger, that God would derive the inheritance of that land from the family of Elam to the family of Heber, from the first-born to him that was born after; which was also done afterward with Reuben and Joseph.

II. It neither ought, nor indeed can be passed over without observation, that the country of Pentapolis, and the countries adjacent, were subjects and tributaries to Chedorlaomer king of Elam. What! was there any part of the land of Canaan subject to the king of the Persians, when so many kings and countries lay between it and Persia? No idle scruple and difficulty, I assure you; nor, as far as I can see, any otherwise to be resolved, than that Elam, the first-born of Sem, or Melchisedek, by his birthright, was heir of that land, which his father Sem possessed by divine right and patent; and the sons of Elam also held after him,

and his grandsons, unto Chedorlaomer. For when it is said that those cities and countries had served Chedorlaomer *twelve years*, the times of his reign seem rather to be reckoned than the years of the reign of the Elamites. Not that those nations were subject to the sceptre of the Elamites twelve years only, but that that year was only the twelfth of Chedorlaomer. But now God translates the inheritance to the family of Heber, called Hebrew before, but now more particularly, and more honourably, since, of all the families of Sem, that was now most eminent. *Heber* denotes Hebrews, as *Assur* denotes Assyrians, in those words of Balaam, [Numbers 24:24](#), "and shall afflict *Assur*, and shall afflict *Heber*."

It is a dream of somebody among the Rabbins, "That, when the whole land was divided among the seventy nations at the confusion of tongues, the land of Canaan came to none: therefore the Canaanites betook themselves thither; and being found not only empty, but conferred by lot upon none, they usurped it for their own."

But what then shall we say of Melchizedek, whom now all acknowledge for Shem? Which is more probable, that he intruded among the Canaanites, now inhabiting the land, or that they intruded upon him? Was not that land hereditary to him and his, rather than usurped by wrong and intrusion? And did not he, by the direction of the Spirit of God, betake himself thither, rather than either that he, wandering about uncertainly, lighted upon that land by chance, or, acted by a spirit of ambition or usurpation, violently possessed himself of it? For my part, I scarcely believe, either that the Canaanites went thither before the confusion of tongues, or that Shem, at that time, was not there: but that he had long and fully inhabited the land of *Canaan* (as it was afterward called), before the entrance of the Canaanites into it: and that by the privilege of a divine grant, which had destined him and his posterity hither: and that afterward the Canaanites crept in here; and were first subjects to the family of Shem, whose first-born was Elam, but at length shook off the yoke.

When, therefore, all those original nations, from the confusion of tongues, partook of their names immediately from the fathers of their stock; as, the Assyrians from *Assur*, the Elamites from *Elam*, &c.; the same we must hold of the Hebrew nation, namely, that it, from that time, was called Hebrew from *Heber*: and that it was called the land of the Hebrews, before it was called the land of the Canaanites. For I can neither think that the stock of the Hebrews had no name for almost three hundred years after the confusion of tongues, until the passing of Abraham out of Chaldea found a name for it, which some would have; nor methinks is it agreeable that Abraham was therefore called *Hebrew*, because, travelling out of Chaldea into the land of Canaan, he *passed* Euphrates; when, upon the same reason, both Canaan himself, and the fathers of all the western nations almost, should be called *Hebrews*; for they passed over Euphrates, traveling out of Chaldea. And when the patriarch Joseph himself is called by his mistress a "Hebrew servant," [Genesis 39:17](#), and so called by the servants of Pharaoh, chapter 41:12; and when he saith of himself, that he was stolen away "out of the land of the Hebrews," [Genesis 40:15](#),--it is scarcely probable that that whole land was

known to other countries under that name, only for one family now dwelling there; and that family a stranger, a traveller, and living in danger from the inhabitants: but rather that it was known by that name from ancient ages, even before it was called "The land of the Canaanites." Nor, if we should raise a contest against that opinion, which asserts that the language of the Canaanites and the Hebrews was one and the same, would that argument any whit move us, that the towns and cities of the Canaanites bore names which were also Hebrew; for those their Hebrew names they might receive from Shem, Heber, and their children, before they were places of the Canaanites.

Heber lived when the tongues were confounded, and the nations scattered; and when none denied that the sons of Heber were Hebrews, (yea, who would deny that that land was the land of Heber?) by what reason should not they and that nation take their name from him, after the same manner as other nations took theirs from their father, at the confusion of languages?

2. Whence Canaan was a part only of Canaan, [Judges 4:2](#).

Canaan with his people wandering from Babylon after the confusion of languages, passed over Euphrates through Syria, and travelled towards Palestine, and the way led him straight into the northern part of it first. And that which the Jews say of Abraham travelling thither, may be said of this person also in this regard: "God said to Abraham (say they), To thee, to thee; the words being doubled by reason of a double journey, one from Aram Naharaim, the other from Aram Nachor. While Abraham lived in Aram Naharaim, and Aram Nachor, he saw men eating, drinking, and playing: he said therefore, Let not my portion be in that land. But after he came *to the ladder of the Tyrians*, he saw men labouring in digging their grounds, in gathering their vintage, and in husbandry: and then he said, Let my portion be in this land."

Note, how Abraham coming into the land of Canaan is first brought into the north part of it; for there was 'Scala Tyrriorum,' 'The ladder of the Tyrians.' Canaan, in like manner with his sons, travelling from Babylon went the same way, and possesseth first the north parts, both those that were without the land of Canaan, and those that were parts of the land of Canaan itself.

First, let the seats of these his four sons without the land of Canaan be observed.

I. *Arvadi*, the Arvadites. Which word in all versions almost is read as *Aradi*, the Aradites. And their seats are easily discovered in Arad and Antarad. Jonathan for *Arvadi*, the Arvadites, reads [*Lutasi*] the Lutasites. Which people in what part of the world were they? When I search in the Aruch what the word *Lutas* means, he cites these words out of Bereshith Rabba; "A certain woman of the family of *Tiberinus* was married *to one Lutas*": and when, accordingly, I search Bereshith Rabba, I find it there written, "She was married *to a certain robber*"...

II. *Zemari*, the Zemarites. In the Targumists, both that of Jerusalem and of Jonathan, it is *Chamatsi*. So it is in the Arabic, and in the Jerusalem Gemarists; and also in Bereshith Rabba; which either supposeth them called Zemarites, or alludes to the word... "because they wrought in *Zemar*, woolen manufacture." But 'Chamats' and 'Apamia' are convertible terms in the Jerusalem Talmudists: "The sea of Apamia (say they) is the sea of Chamats." But not that Apamia we show elsewhere is the same with Sepham; on the utmost coast of the land of Israel, north and northeast.

III. *Arki*, the Arkites. "Arki is Arcas of Libanus." Pliny writes thus; "Paneas, in which is Caesarea with the spring before spoken, Abila, Arca," &c. Borchard thus, "*On* [or rather *between*] the borders of Libanus and Antilibanus, we found the strong-hold Arachas, and built by Aracheus the son of Canaan, when the deluge was over."

IV. *Hamathi*, the Hamathites. In the Jerusalem Targum it is Antioch. And Bereshith Rabba not much from that sense, though in very different words, "*A Sinite* (saith he) and *Arethusia*; *Chamathi is Epiphania*." Thus Pliny; "The rest of Syria hath these people, except what shall be said with Euphrates, the Arethusians, the Bereans, and the Epiphonians."

You see the Antiochian and Syrophoenician Syria possessed by the Canaanites; and yet we are not come as far as the land of Canaan.

Let us therefore proceed onwards with Canaan and the rest of his sons. The borders of the Canaanites, saith the Holy Scripture, "were from Sidon to Gerar, even unto Gaza," [Genesis 10:19](#). You will say they were from Antioch, and utmost Phoenicia, and a great part of Syria. True, indeed, those countries, as we have seen, were planted by the sons of Canaan, but the Scripture doth not call them Canaanites; but where their coasts end towards the south, there the Canaanites' begin. The tract therefore, or region first possessed by them, is called by a peculiar name *Canaan*, as distinct from the rest of the land of Canaan, [Judges 4:2](#); where "Jabin the king of Hazor" is called "the king of Canaan," that is, of the northern coast of the land of Canaan. And among the seven nations devoted by God himself to a curse and cutting-off, the Canaanites are always numbered, when all indeed were Canaanites: and that, as it seems, upon a double reason; partly, because that country was distinctly so called, as another country, and was of a peculiar difference from those countries inhabited by the sons of Canaan, of whom we have spoke: partly, because Canaan the father probably fixed his seat there himself; and thence both that country was called Canaan, and the whole land moreover called "The land of Canaan."

3. The Perizzites, who.

Reckon the sons of Canaan in [Genesis 10](#); and where do you find the Perizzites? And yet, a matter to be wondered at, they are always numbered in that black catalogue of the seven nations to be cut off.

I know it is supposed by some that they are called *Perizzites*, as much as to say *villagers*, because they dwelt in *villages*, and small towns unfortified: which, indeed, varies not much from the derivation of the word: but certainly it is needless, when all the Canaanitish families are reckoned up, which possessed the whole land, to add *the villagers* over and above, who were sufficiently included in the aforesaid reckoning.

But that which we know was done by the Israelites, we justly suppose was done by the Canaanites also; namely, that some families of the Canaanite stock were denominated, not from the very immediate son of Canaan, from whom they derived their original, but from some famous and memorable man of that stock. Nor do we say this upon conjecture alone, but by very many examples among the Israelites; and, indeed, among other nations, and this in that very nation of which we are speaking. In [Genesis 36](#), Zibeon was the son of Seir, verse 20; and the whole nation and land was called, "The nation and land of the sons of Seir." But now that that Seir was of the Canaanite pedigree, appears sufficiently hence, that his son Zibeon was called a Hivite, verse 2. After the same manner therefore as the Seirites, who were of Canaanite blood, were so named, I make no doubt the Perizzites were named from one Perez, a man of great name in some Canaanite stock.

4. The Kenites.

Of the same rank were the Kenites, the Kenizzites, Cadmonites: by original indeed Canaanites, but so named from some Cain, and Kenaz, and Cadmon, men of famous renown in those families. If so be the Cadmonites were not so called from their antiquity, or rather from their habitation *eastward*: which is the derivation of *Saracens*; from *Saracon*, *the east*.

The masters of the traditions do not agree among themselves what to resolve concerning these nations. In the Jerusalem Talmudists you have these passages: "Your fathers possessed seven nations, but you shall possess the land of ten nations. The three last are these, the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Cadmonites. R. Judah saith, These are the Salmeans, the Sabbeans, and the Nabatheans. R. Simeon saith, Asia...and Damascus. R. Lazar Ben Jacob saith, Asia and Carthagen, and Turkey. Rabbi saith, Edom and Moab, and the firstfruits of the children of Ammon."

In the Babylonian Talmudists these passages: "Samuel saith, All that land which God shewed to Moses, is bound to tithes. To exclude what? To exclude the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Cadmonites. A tradition. R. Meir saith, These are the Naphtuchites, the Arabians, and the Salmeans. R. Judah saith, Mount Seir, Ammon, and Moab. R. Simeon saith...Asia and Spain."

"These nations were not delivered to Israel in this age; but they shall be delivered in the days of the Messias."

"In the days of the Messias they shall add three other cities of refuge. But whence? From the cities of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, and the Cadmonites. Concerning whom God gave a promise to our father Abraham; but they are not as yet subdued."

We may borrow light concerning these nations from those words of Moses, [Genesis 10:18](#), "Afterward the families of the Canaanites were dispersed." First they replenished Phoenicia, and the northern country of the land of Canaan; by little and little, the whole land of Canaan within Jordan. Then they spread themselves into the land which afterwards belonged to the Edomites, and there they were called Horites from mount Hor; and the children of Seir, from Seir the father of those families, he himself being a Canaanite. On the east, they spread themselves into those countries which afterward belonged to the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Midianites; and they were called Kenites, Kenizzites, Cadmonites, from one Cain, one Kenaz, and perhaps one Cadmon, the fathers of those families; if so be the Cadmonites were not so called from the aforesaid causes.

The mention of a certain Cain calls to my mind the town or city Cain, which you see in the maps placed not far from Carmel: in that of Doet, adorned (shall I say?) or disfigured with a Dutch picture of one man shooting another, with this inscription, "Cain was shot by Lamech," [Genesis 4](#). A famous monument forsooth! That place, indeed, is obscure, [Genesis 4](#): and made more obscure by the various opinions of interpreters: and you, Doet, have chosen the worst of all. If the words of Lamech may be cleared from the text, (and if you clear it not from the context, whence will you clear it?) they carry this plain and smooth sense with them: He had brought in bigamy: that also had laid waste the whole world, [Genesis 6](#). For so wretched a wickedness, and which, by his example, was the destruction of infinite numbers of men, divine justice and vengeance strikes and wounds him with the horror and sting of conscience; so that, groaning and howling before his two bigamous wives, Adah and Zillah, he complains and confesseth that he is a much more bloody murderer than Cain, for he had only slain Abel; but he, an infinite number of young and old by his wicked example.

5. Rephaim.

The Samaritan interpreter always renders these, Aseans;--in [Genesis 15:20](#), written with Cheth, but in [Deuteronomy 2:20](#), with Aleph. If they were called Aseans, as they were by him, so by all other speaking Syriac and Chaldee; I know not whence the word Asia may more fitly be derived, than from the memory of this gigantic race, living almost in the middle of Asia, and monstrous and astonishing above all other Asiatics. The LXX call them *Titans*, [2 Samuel 5:18,22](#). The word used by the Samaritan denotes *Physicians*, and so it is rendered by me in the Polyglott bible, lately published at London, [Deuteronomy 2](#), partly, that it might be rendered word for word, but especially, that it might be observed by what sound,

and in what kind of pronunciation he read the word *Rephaim*. So the LXX render it *Physicians*, [Isaiah 26:14](#), &c.

To The
Most Reverend Father in Christ,
Gilbert,
By Divine Providence Archbishop of Canterbury,
Primate of all England, &c.

May It Please Your Grace,

Having at length finished (in such a manner as it is) this undertaking of mine upon the four Evangelists, religion, gratitude, and duty require it from me, to commemorate and recognise the infinite mercy of God towards me in bringing me thus far, continuing my life, preserving to me that strength of eyesight, vigour both of body and mind, to and in so great a degree of old age. To all which the same divine mercy hath added this great benefit,--that it hath indulged me your Grace's compassion, favour, and patronage. This hath not a little sweetened all the rest, securing to me so much leisure for books, tranquility in my studies, the settlement of my family, and an easy condition of life. Without this, my mind, bent towards studies, must have wanted its opportunities: I must have been to seek for leisure, retirement, and a quiet seat. The blossomings of these my labours (if now there be any thing in them that is valuable) must have withered in their first putting out, if, by the Divine favour, the dew of your Grace's favour had not watered them.

Your Grace may have forgotten (for you are not wont to write your good turns in marble) what great things you did for me in my straits: what kindness and good will I then found from you, what industry of doing me good, even to admiration. However, they must never slip out of my remembrance and acknowledgment till I have forgot myself, and remember no more what I am. But since your humanity hath been such as cannot be fully spoken out, let me comprise the whole matter in this short compendium; that my family had perished, if God's mercy, by the means of your compassion, had not saved it.

What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits? and what to your Grace for so great a one? But can such a one as I think of making returns to God or you? Let God himself, the Father of mercies, (since I cannot) become your reward: and by an addition of his mercy, make me capable of rendering him myself; grant that I might be wholly his, and he yours. I pray that he would long preserve, protect, and direct your Grace, and at length make you everlastingly happy. This, from the heart and without ceasing, is the prayer of,

Most Reverend Father,
Your Grace's most humble and most devoted servant,
John Lightfoot

1. Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

[*Forasmuch as many have taken in hand, &c.*] Whereas it was several years after the ascension of our Lord before the four books of the holy gospel were committed to writing; the apostles, the seventy disciples, and other ministers of the word, in the mean time everywhere dispersing the glad tidings: no wonder if any pious and greedy auditors had, for their own memory's sake and the good of others, noted in their own private table-books as much as they were capable of carrying from the sermons and discourses which they so frequently heard. Nor is it more strange if some of these should from their own collections compile and publish now and then some commentaries or short histories of the passages they had met with. Which, however they might perform out of very good intentions, and a faithful impartial pen, yet were these writings far from commencing an infallible canon, or eternal unalterable rule of the Christian faith.

It was not in the power of this kind of writers either to select what the Divine Wisdom would have selected for the holy canon, or to declare those things in that style wherein the Holy Spirit would have them declared, to whom he was neither the guide in the action nor the director of their pen.

Our evangelist, therefore, takes care to weigh such kind of writings in such a balance as that it may appear they are neither rejected by him as false or heretical, nor yet received as divine and canonical: not the first, because he tells us they had written even those very things which the heavenly preachers *had delivered* to them; not the latter, for to those writings he opposeth, that he himself was *one that had perfect understanding of things from above*. Of which we shall consider in its proper place.

[*To set forth in order a declaration.*] A kind of phrase not much unlike what was so familiar amongst the Jews, *an orderly narration*: saving, that that was more peculiarly applied by them to the commemoration of the Passover. And yet it is used in a larger sense too, *who was he who set forth in order a declaration*.

[*Of those things which are most surely believed among us, &c.*] Let us recollect what the unbelieving Jews think and say of the actions, miracles, and doctrine of Christ; and then we shall find it more agreeable to render this clause, *of those things which are most surely believed among us*, according to what Erasmus, Beza, our own English translators, and others, have rendered it, than with the vulgar, *of the things which are fulfilled amongst us*. They had said, "This deceiver seduceth the people, those wonders he did were by the power of magic; 'but we do most surely believe those things which he did and taught.'"

2. Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;

[*Which from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, &c.*] If *from the beginning* have reference to the time wherein Christ published the gospel upon earth, as no

one need to doubt, then there is little distinction to be made between *eyewitnesses and ministers*: for who from that time had been made a *minister of the word*, that had not been an *eyewitness* and seen Christ himself? so that we may easily conjecture who are these *eyewitnesses* and *ministers* here, viz., the apostles, the seventy disciples, and others that filled up the number of the hundred and twenty, mentioned [Acts 1:15](#).

It is said of Mnason, that he was *an old disciple*, [Acts 21:16](#). It may be supposed of him, that he had been a disciple *from the beginning*; that is, from the very time wherein Christ himself published his glad tidings. Those words *a good while ago*, [Acts 15:7](#), ought to be understood also in this sense.

3. It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

[*Having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first.*] This is not indeed ill rendered, *having understood these things from the very first*: but it may perhaps be better, *having attained to an understanding of these things from above*,--from heaven itself. So *from above* signifies *from heaven*, [John 3:3,31, 19:11](#); [James 1:17, 3:17](#), &c. For,

I. This version includes the other: for he that hath a perfect understanding of these things *from above*, or by divine inspiration, did understand them *from the beginning*.

II. Take notice of the distinction that is in Josephus, *He that undertakes to give a true relation of things to others, ought himself to know them first very accurately, having either very diligently observed them himself, or learned by inquiry from others*. Now if St. Luke had writ his history as "he had learned from others" (as they wrote whom he instances in verse 1), then he had been amongst *those that had learned from others*. Nor could he promise more than they might do, of whom he said, *that many had taken in hand*, &c.

[*Most excellent Theophilus.*] There is one guesses this *most excellent Theophilus* to have been an Antiochian, another thinks he may be a Roman; but it is very uncertain either who or whence he was. There was one Theophilus amongst the Jews, at that very time, probably, when St. Luke wrote his Gospel; but I do not think this was he. Josephus mentions him; "King Agrippa, removing Jesus the son of Gamaliel from the high priesthood, *gave it to Mathias the son of Theophilus: in whose time the Jewish war began.*"

5. There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

[*Of the course of Abia.*] They are very little versed in the Holy Scriptures, and less in the Jewish learning, that could imagine this Zacharias to have been the high priest, when he is said to have been but of the eighth course, and to have attained this turn of attendance by lot.

As to the institution of the courses under the first Temple, there is no need to say anything, because every one hath it before him, [1 Chronicles 24](#). But under the second Temple there was indeed some difference, not as to the order of their courses, but as to their heads and families. Of which thing the Talmudists treat largely, and indeed not altogether from the purpose: let them comment in my stead:

"Four *courses* of priests went up out of Babylon; Jedaiah, Harim, Pashur, and Immer, [Ezra 2:36](#), &c. The prophets, who were conversant amongst them at that time, obliged them, that if Jehoiarib himself should come up from the captivity, that he should not thrust out the course that preceded him, but be, as it were, an appendix to it. The prophets come forth, and cast in four-and-twenty lots into the urn; Jedaiah comes, and having drawn five, himself was the sixth. Harim comes, and having drawn five, himself was the sixth. Pashur comes, and having drawn five, himself was the sixth. Immer comes, and having drawn five, himself was the sixth. It was agreed amongst them that if Jehoiarib himself should return out of captivity, he should not exclude the foregoing course, but be, as it were, an appendix to it. The heads of the courses stand forth, and divide themselves into the houses of their fathers," &c. We have the same thing in Babyl. *Erachin*, fol. 12. 1.

If these things be true (and, indeed, by comparing them with the place in Ezra before quoted, we may believe they are not much amiss), then *the course of Abiah*, both here and [Nehemiah 12:17](#), must not so much be understood of the stock or race of Abijah, as that that course retained the name of Abijah still. For though there were four-and-twenty classes made up of the four only named, yet did they retain both their ancient order and ancient names too. If therefore Jehoiarib, i.e. his course, should come up out of Babylon (which, however, did not happen), it was provided that he should not disturb the fixed and stated order by intruding into the first place; but retaining the name of Jehoiarib in the first class, which consisted now of those of Jedaiah, his *course*, should be distributed amongst those orders.

II. The Rabbins have a tradition: there were twenty-four *courses* of priests in the land of Israel, and twelve *courses* in Jericho. What! twelve in Jericho? This would increase the number too much. No; but there were twelve of those in Jericho; that when the time came about that any *course* should go up to Jerusalem, half a *course* went up from the land of Israel, and half a *course* from Jericho, that by them might come a supply both of water and food to their brethren that were at Jerusalem.

Gloss:--"When the time came that any *course* should go up to Jerusalem, it divided itself, that half of it should go to Jericho, that they might supply their brethren with water and food," &c.

III. As to the circulation of these *courses* or *turns*, we may guess something of it from the Gloss in *Midras Coheleth*. The Midras itself hath these words: "It is R. Chaija's tradition:

It is written, *Seven weeks shall be complete*, i.e. between the Passover and Pentecost, [Leviticus 23:15](#). But when are they so? *When Joshua and Shecaniah do not interfere.*"

Where the Gloss, from another author, hath it thus: "when the calends of the month Nisan fall in with the sabbath, then doth the Passover fall in with the sabbath too: and then let them begin to number from the going out of the sabbath, and the weeks will be complete according to the days of the creation. He takes an instance from Joshua and Shecaniah. For there were twenty-four courses, which took their turns alternately every sabbath: amongst which Joshua was the ninth, and Shecaniah the tenth. On the first week of the month Nisan, Jehoiarib was the first course; on the second week Jedaiah; *on the paschal week, all the courses attended together*. The six weeks to that sabbath that immediately preceded the Pentecost, there ministered six courses, Harim, Seorim, Malchijah, Mijamin, Hakkos, Abiah. In the sabbath that precedes the Pentecost, Joshua enters, but does not attend till after Pentecost. Behold, Joshua and Shecaniah are not between the Passover and Pentecost: for if Joshua was between the Passover and Pentecost, the weeks would not be complete according to the days of the creation."

He adds a great deal more, but, I confess, it is beyond my reach: such is that that immediately follows: "They are not complete as the days of the creation; *for we may number from three to three, or from five to five*, and so Joshua and Shecaniah will enter [*upon their course*] before the Pentecost. For behold, the sabbath before Nisan, let it be Jehoiarib's turn, *and let there be seven weeks to the Passover,*" &c.; which must either be some fault in the printer, or a riddle to me that I cannot tell what to make of.

However, by the whole series of the discourse it appears, that the beginning of the double circulation of the *courses* was with the twofold beginning of the year, Nisan and Tisri: as also that all the *courses* performed their ministry together in the feasts. Here, indeed, is mention only as to the Passover; but we do not want for authorities to make it out, that as they did so then, so also at the feast of Pentecost and Tabernacles. Let Jehoiarib, therefore, begin the first course in the beginning of the month Nisan; and (remembering, that all the *courses* together performed their service at the Passover and Pentecost) the *courses* will all have run out in half the year; for so (taking in those two feasts) six-and-twenty weeks are spent off. Then let Jehoiarib begin again with the month Tisri; and suppose all the *courses* jointly ministering at the feast of Tabernacles, and they will have finished their round (excepting one week over) by the month Nisan again: which gap of that one week how it is filled up, as also the intercalary month when it happened, would be too much for us to discuss in this place.

IV. The *course* of Bilgah is put out of its just order, and thrown into the last place, if that be true, which we meet with in Jerusalem *Succah*. They say, "All that went into the Mountain of the Temple made their entry on the right hand, and went out at the left: but Bilgah went towards the south, because of the apostasy of his daughter Mary: for she went and married

a certain soldier of the kingdom of the Grecians. He came and struck the top of the altar, saying, 'O wolf, wolf, thou that devourest all the good things of Israel, and yet in a time of straits helpst them not.' There are also that say, that the reason why this was thus ordered was, because Bilgah's *course* was once neglected, when it came about to them to have gone up to have performed their ministry. Bilgah, therefore, was always amongst those that went out, as Isbab was amongst those that came in; having cast that *course* out of their order."

V. "*For every course there was a stationary assembly* of priests, Levites, and Israelites, at Jerusalem. When the time came, wherein the *course* must go up, the priests and the Levites went up to Jerusalem; but the Israelites that were within that *course*, all met within their own cities, and read the history of the creation, [Genesis 1](#); and the stationary men fasted four days in that week; viz. from the second to the fifth."

Gloss: "There was a *stationary assembly* for every *course* stated and placed in Jerusalem, who should assist in the sacrifices of their brethren: and besides these that were stated in Jerusalem, there was a *stationary assembly* in every city. All Israel was divided into twenty-four *stations*, according to the twenty-four *courses*. There was the *station* of priests, Levites, and Israelites, at Jerusalem; the priests of the *course* went up to Jerusalem to their service, the Levites to their singing; and of all the *stations*, there were some appointed and settled at Jerusalem that were to assist at the sacrifices of their brethren. The rest assembled in their own cities, poured out prayers that the sacrifices of their brethren might be accepted; fasting, and bringing forth the book of the law on their fast-day," &c. So the Gloss hath it.

The reason of this institution as to stationary-men is given us in the Misna; *For how could every man's offering be made, if he himself were not present?* Now, whereas the daily sacrifice, and some other offerings, were made for all Israel, and it was not possible that all Israel should be present, these stationaries were instituted, who, in the stead of all Israel, should put their hands upon the daily sacrifice, and should be present at the other offerings that were offered for all Israel. And while these were performing this at Jerusalem, there were other stationaries in every *course*, who, by prayers and fasting in their own cities, helped forward, as much as they could, the services of their brethren that were at Jerusalem.

"The children of Israel lay on their hands, but the Gentiles do not. The men of Israel lay on their hands, but the women do not. R. Jose saith, Abba Eliezer said to me, We had once a calf for a peace offering: and bringing it into the Court of the Women, the women put their hands upon it: not that this belonged to the women so to do, *but that the women's spirits might be pleased.*" A remarkable thing.

The priests, throughout all the *courses* grew into a prodigious number, if that be true in *Jerusalem Taanith*; "R. Zeora in the name of Rabh Houna said, That the least of all the *courses* brought forth eighty-five thousand branches of priests." A thing not to be credited.

[*And he wife was of the daughters of Aaron.*] In the Talmudists, a *priestess*; viz. one born of the lineage of priests. It was lawful for a priest to marry a Levites, or indeed a daughter

of Israel: but it was most commendable of all to marry one of the priests' line. Hence that story in *Taanith*, "Fourscore pair of brethren-priests took to wife fourscore pair of sister-priestesses in Gophne, all in one night."

There was hardly any thing among the Jews with greater care and caution looked after than the marrying of their priests; viz. that the wives they took should not by any means stain and defile their priestly blood: and that all things which were fit for their eating should be hallowed. Hence that usual phrase for an excellent woman, *She deserves to marry with a priest*.

Josephus speaks much of this care, *that the whole priestly generation might be preserved pure and unblended*.

[*Elisabeth.*] The Seventy give this name to Aaron's wife, [Exodus 7:23](#).

6. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

[*In all the commandments and ordinances, &c.*] So [Numbers 36:13](#), *These are the commandments and judgments*. It would perhaps seem a little too fine and curious to restrain the *commandments* to the *declogue*, or *ten commandments*, and the *ordinances* to the *ceremonial and judicial laws*, though this does not wholly want foundation. It is certain the precepts delivered after the declogue, from [Exodus 21](#) to chapter 24, are called *judgments*, or *ordinances*, [Exodus 21:1, 24:3](#).

The Vulgar can hardly give any good account why he should render *ordinances* by *justifications*, much less the followers of that translation why they should from thence fetch an argument for *justification* upon observation of the commands, when the *commands and institutions of men* are by foreign authors called *ordinances*; nay, the *corrupt customs* that had been wickedly taken up have the same word, [1 Samuel 2:13](#), *the priest's 'custom' with the people was*, &c. [2 Kings 17:8](#), *and walked in the 'statutes' of the heathen*

The word *ordinance* is frequently rendered by those interpreters from *ordain*; which, to wave all other instances, may abundantly appear from [Psalm 119](#). And the very things which the Jews speak of the Hebrew word obtain also in the Greek.

"Perhaps Satan and the Gentiles will question with Israel, what this or that command means, and what should be the reason of it. The answer that ought to be made in this case is, *It is ordained*, it is a law given by God, and it becomes not thee to cavil."

"*Ye shall observe my statutes*, [[Lev 18:4](#)] that is, even those which Satan and the nations of the world do cavil at. Such are those laws about eating swine's flesh; heterogeneous clothing; the nearest kinsman's [*leviri*] putting off the shoe; the cleansing of the leper, and the scapegoat. If, perhaps, it should be said that these precepts are vain and needless, the text saith, 'I am the Lord. I, the Lord, have ordained these things; and it doth not become thee to dispute them.'" They are *ordinances*, just and equal, deriving their equity from the authority of him that ordained them.

8. And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,

[*In the order of his course.*] "The heads of the *courses* stood forth, and divided themselves into so many houses of fathers. In one *course*, perhaps, there were five, six, seven, eight, or nine houses of fathers: of the *course* wherein there were but five houses of fathers, there were three of them ministered three days, and two four days; if six, then five served five days, and one two days; if seven, then every one attended their day; if eight, then six waited six days, and two one day; if nine, then five waited five days, and four the other two."

Take the whole order of their daily attendance from Gloss in *Tamid*, cap. 6: "The great altar [or the altar of sacrifice] goes before the lesser [or that of incense]. The lesser altar goes before the pieces of wood [laid on the hearth of the great altar]; the laying on the wood goes before the sweeping the inner altar [or that of the incense]; the sweeping of the inner altar goes before the snuffing of the lamps; the snuffing of the lamps goes before the sprinkling of the blood of the daily sacrifice; the sprinkling of the blood of the daily sacrifice goes before the snuffing of the two other lamps; the snuffing of the two other lamps goes before the incense; the incense goes before the laying on the parts of the sacrifice upon the altar; the laying on the parts goes before the *Mincha*; the *Mincha* goes before the meal [or the two loaves] of the chief priest; the two loaves of the chief priest go before the drink offering; the drink offering before the additional sacrifices. So Abba Saul." But a little after; "The wise men say, 'The blood of the sacrifice is sprinkled; then the lamps snuffed; then the incense; then the snuffing of the two other lamps: and this is the tradition according to the wise men.'"

9. According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

[*According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was, &c.*] "The ruler of the Temple saith, *Come ye, and cast your lots* [that it may be determined] who shall kill the sacrifice, who sprinkle the blood, who sweep the inner altar; who cleanse the candlestick, who carry the parts [of the sacrifice] to the ascent of the altar; the head, the leg, the two shoulders, the tail of the back bone, the other leg, the breast, the gullet, the two sides, the entrails, the flour, the two loaves, and the wine. *He hath it, to whom it happens by lot.*"

"The room Gazith [in which the lots were cast] was in the form of a large hall: the casting of the lots was on the east side of it, some elder sitting on the west [Gloss: Some elder of the Sanhedrim, that instructed them in the custom and manner of casting the lot.] The priests stood about in circle; and the ruler coming, snatched off a cap from the head of this or that person, and by that they understood where the lot was to begin."

"They stood in a circle; and the ruler, coming, snatches off a cap from the head of this or that man: from him the lot begins to be reckoned, every one lifting up his finger at each number. The ruler also saith, 'In whomsoever the number ends, he obtains this or that office

by lot: and he declares the number'; e.g., there is, it may be, the number one hundred, or threescore, according to the multitude of the priests standing round. He begins to reckon from the person whose cap he snatched off, and numbers round till the whole number is run out. Now, in whomsoever the number terminates, he obtains that office about which the lot was concerned. And so it is in all the lots."

I will not inquire at present whether this casting of lots was every day, or whether for the whole week, wherein such or such a course performed its attendance. It seems that at this time the number, whatever it was, for the choice of one to burn incense, ended in our Zacharias: whose work and business in this office, let it not be thought tedious to the reader to take an account of in these following passages:

[*To burn incense.*] "*He whose lot it was to burn incense took a vessel containing the quantity of three cabs, in the midst of which there was a censer full and heaped up with incense; over which there was a cover.*"

"*He to whom the lot fell of the vessel wherein the coals were to be taken up, takes it and goes up to the top of the altar; and there, stirring the fire about, takes out some of the hottest coals, and, going down, pours them into a golden vessel.*"

"When they had come from hence to the space between the altar and the porch of the Temple, one of them tinkles a little bell; by which, if any of the priests be without doors, he knows that his brethren the priests are about to worship: so that he makes all speed, and enters in. The Levite knows his brethren the Levites are beginning to sing, so he makes haste, and enters in too. Then the chief head or ruler of the course for that time sets all the unclean in the east gate of the court, that they may be sprinkled with blood."

"When they were about to go up the steps of the porch, those whose lot it was to sweep off the ashes from the inner altar and the candlestick went up first; he that was to sweep the altar went in first, takes the vessel, worships, and goes out."

"He who, by lot, had the vessel for gathering up the coals, placeth them upon the inner altar, lays them all about to the brim of the vessel, then worships and goes out."

"He who was to burn the incense takes the censer from the midst of the vessel wherein it was, and gives it to one standing by. If any incense had been scattered in the vessel, he gives it him into his hand; scatters the incense upon the coals, and goes out. He does not burn the incense till the ruler bids him do it."

10. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

[*The whole multitude of the people were praying without.*] When the priest went in unto the holy place to burn incense, notice was given to all by the sound of a little bell, that the time of prayer was now: as hath been already noted.

I. As many as were in the court where the altar was retired from between the Temple and the altar, and withdrew themselves lower: *They drew off from the space that was between the porch and the altar while the incense was burning.*

R. Jose saith, "That in five circumstances the space between the porch and the altar is equal to the temple itself. For no one comes thither bareheaded, disturbed with wine, or with hands and feet unwashed. And as they withdraw themselves from the temple itself in the time of incense, so do they the same at that time from the space that is between the porch and that altar."

II. In the other courts they were not bound to retire or change their place; but in all they gave themselves to prayer, and that in deep silence: "The fathers ordained prayers in the time of the daily sacrifice": And of what kind soever the prayers were, whether their phylacterical ones alone, or their phylacterical in conjunction with others, or others without their phylacterical, still they uttered them very silently: "He that repeats his prayers in that silent manner that he does not hear himself, he does his duty. But R. Jose would have it, that he repeats his prayers so that the sound of his own voice may reach his own ears." To this deep silence in the time of incense and prayers that passage seems to allude, [Revelation 8:1,3](#).

When the incense and prayers were ended, the parts of the sacrifice were laid upon the altar, and then the Levites began their psalmody, and their sounding the trumpet.

11. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

[*There appeared unto him an angel of the Lord.*] It might be a reasonable doubt whether ever there had appeared an angel in the Temple, even in the first, when elsewhere the appearance of angels was so very familiar, much less in the second, when every thing of that nature had so perfectly ceased, till now that the gospel began to dawn and shine out.

What we find related concerning Simeon the just, how "for those forty years wherein he had served as high priest, he had seen an angel clothed in white coming into the Holy Place on the day of Expiation, and going out again: only his last year he saw him come in, but did not see him go out again; which gave him to understand that he was to die that year": we may suppose this invented rather for the honour of the man than that any such thing happened for the greater solemnity of the day.

[*Standing on the right side of the altar of incense.*] "It is a tradition. The table [*of the shewbread*] was on the north side, distant from the wall two cubits and a half. The candlestick on the south, distant from the wall two cubits and a half. The altar [*of incense*] placed in the middle and drawn out a little towards the east."

So that the angel standing on the right side of the altar stood on the north side: on which side if there were an entrance into the Holy of Holies, as R. Chaninah thinks, then we may suppose the angel, by a sudden appearance, came out from the Holy of Holies.

15. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

[*Neither wine nor strong drink.*] That is, if the Jews may be our interpreters properly enough, "neither new nor old wine"; [Numbers 6:3](#). Greek, *he shall separate himself from wine and strong drink*. Targum, *He shall separate himself from wine new and old*. So [Deuteronomy 14:26](#).

"R. Jose of Galilee saith, Why doth the Scripture double it, *wine and strong drink*? For is not wine strong drink, and strong drink wine?" *Strong drink* is *wine* no doubt, [Numbers 28:7](#); *Thou shalt cause the strong wine to be poured out before the Lord*. Targum, *a drink offering of old wine*.

Whilst I a little more narrowly consider that severe interdiction by which the Nazarite was forbidden the total use of the vine, not only that he should not drink of the wine, but not so much as taste of the grape, not the pulp nor stone of the grape, no, not the bark of the vine; I cannot but call to mind,

I. Whether the vine might not be the tree in paradise that had been forbidden to Adam, by the tasting of which he sinned. The Jewish doctors positively affirm this without any scruple.

II. Whether that law about the Nazarites had not some reference to Adam while he was under that prohibition in the state of innocency. For if the bodily and legal uncleannesses, about which there are such strict precepts, [Numbers 5](#), especially the leprosy, the greatest of all uncleannesses, did excellently decipher the state and nature of sin; might not the laws about Nazarites which concerned the greatest purities in a most pure religion, be something in commemoration of the state of man before his fall?

There was, as the doctors call it, *the wine of command*; which they were bound by precept to drink. Such was "that wine of the tithes," [Deuteronomy 12:17,18](#), that twas commanded to be drunk at Jerusalem, and the cup of wine to be drunk at the Passover. What must the Nazarite do in this case? If he drink, he violates the command of his order; if he do not drink, he breaks the command about tithes and the laws of his fathers. *Let Elias untie this knot when he comes*.

17. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

[*In the Spirit and power of Elias.*] I. The Baptist is Elias, as our Saviour was David; that is, the antitype, [Jeremiah 30:9](#); [Malachi 4:5](#); [Hosea 3:5](#), &c. It is less wonder that the Jews, from the words of Malachi, should expect the personal coming of Elijah, since there are not a few Christians that would be looking for the same thing, although they have an angel in this place interpreting it otherwise, and our blessed Saviour elsewhere himself [[Matt 11:14](#)]; "This is Elias which was for to come." But they misunderstood the phrase of the "great and

dreadful day of the Lord"; as also were deceived into the mistake by the Greek version, "that Elias must come before the last judgment."

II. It is not said by the prophet Malachi, "Behold I will send you Elijah the *Tishbite*," but "Elijah the *prophet*"; which perhaps might be better rendered, "Behold I send you a prophet Elijah." And I may confidently say it would not be so wide from the sense and meaning of Malachi as the Greek interpreters, who by a prodigious daringness in favour of the Jewish traditions, have rendered it, *I send you Elijah the Tishbite*.

III. If I mistake not, "Elias the prophet" is but twice mentioned (I mean in those very terms) throughout the whole book of God: once in this place in Malachi, the other in [2 Chronicles 21:12](#). And in both those places I believe it is not meant Elijah the Tishbite in his own person, but some one in the spirit and power of him. That the words in Malachi should be so understood, both the angel and our Saviour teach us, and it seems very proper to be so taken in that place in the Chronicles.

IV. That great prophet that lived in Ahab's days is called the *Tishbite*, throughout the whole story of him, and not the *prophet*. Nor is he called the prophet, [Luke 4:25](#) (where yet it is said, 'Eliseus the prophet'); nor by St. [James 5:17](#). For the very word *Tishbi*, which is his epithet, sufficiently asserts his prophetic dignity when it denotes no other than a *converter*. For whence can we better derive the etymology? to which indeed the prophet Malachi seems to have alluded, "Behold, I send you Elijah the prophet, *and he shall turn*," &c.

V. But be it so that he might be called *Tishbite* from the city *Toshab*, as the Targum and other Rabbins would have it (which yet is very farfetched), that very thing might evince that it is not he himself that is meant by Malachi, but some other, because he doth not mention the *Tishbite*, but a *prophet* Elias, that is, *a prophet in the spirit of Elias*.

So among the Talmudists, any one skilled in signs and languages is called Mordecai, viz. because he is like him who lived in the days of Ahasuerus.

[*To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.*] John came *in the power* of Elias; not that power by which he wrought miracles [for John wrought none, [John 10:41](#)]; but "in the power of Elias turning the hearts of men," &c. Elias turned many of the children of Israel towards the Lord their God, [1 Kings 18](#): so did John, who over and above "turned the hearts of the fathers towards their children." Which what it should mean is something dark and unintelligible. You will hardly allow the Jews' gloss upon this place, who do so greatly mistake about the person, and who will allow nothing of good to be done by the Elias they expect, but within the compass of Israel. But are not the Gentiles to be converted? They in the prophets' dialect are 'the children of Zion, of Jerusalem, of the Jewish church': nothing more frequent. And in this sense are the words of Malachi we are now handling to be understood: 'Elias the Baptist will turn the hearts of the Jews towards the Gentiles, and of the Gentiles towards the Jews.' This was indeed the great work of the gospel, to bring over the Jew and Gentile into mutual embraces through the acknowledgment of Christ: which John most

happily began, who came that "all men through him might believe," [John 1:7](#): yea, and the Roman soldiers did believe as well as the Jews, [Luke 3:14](#).

[*The disobedient to the wisdom of the just.*] The Greek in Malachi hath it, *the heart of a man towards his neighbour*. The words of the prophet having been varied, the angel varies too, but to a more proper sense. For the Gentiles were not to be turned to the Jews as such, or to the religion of the Jews, but to God "in the wisdom of the just." "The children to the fathers": the phrase *fathers*, according to the Jewish state at that time, was of doubtful sound, and had something of danger in it; for by that word generally at that time, was meant nothing else but the Fathers of Traditions, to whom God forbid any should be turned to those fathers in the folly of traditions, but to God in the wisdom of the just.

18. And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

[*For I am an old man.*] If so *old a man*, why then was he not sequestered from the service of the Temple by the law of superannuation? [Numbers 4:3](#), [8:24,25](#). Hear what the Rabbins say in this case:

"There is something that is lawful in the priests, that is unlawful in the Levites: and there is something lawful in the Levites, that is unlawful in the priests. The Rabbins deliver; the priests upon any blemish are unfit; as for their years they are not unfit; the Levites for their years may be unfit, but by reason of blemish are not. From that which is said, that at the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting, we learn that years may make the Levites unfit. Perhaps the priests also are made unfit through years: and indeed, does it not seem in equity, that if the Levites, whom a blemish doth not make unfit, should yet be made unfit by superannuation, should not much more the priests be made unfit by superannuation, when even a spot or blemish will make them unfit? But the text saith, This is the law of the Levites; not, This is the law of the priests. The Rabbins deliver: What time a priest comes to maturity, till he grow old, he is fit to minister; and yet a spot or blemish makes him unfit. The Levite from his thirtieth to his fiftieth year is fit for service; but being superannuated, he becomes unfit. How must this be understood concerning the Levites? To wit, for that time wherein the ark was in the wilderness: but at Shiloh and in the Temple they were not rendered unfit, unless through the defect of their voice."

21. And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

[*They marvelled that he tarried so long.*] There is something of this kind told of Simeon the Just, concerning whom we have made some mention already:

"The high priest made a short prayer in the holy place. He would not be long in prayer, lest he should occasion any fear in the people. There is a story of one who tarried a long while in it, and the people were ready to have entered in upon him. They say it was Simeon

the Just. They say unto him, 'Why didst thou tarry so long?' He answered them, saying, 'I have been praying for the Temple of your God, that it be not destroyed.' They answered him again, 'However, it was not well for you to tarry so long.'

22. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

[*He beckoned unto them.*] There is also, verse 62, *they made signs. The deaf and dumb man, he nods to them, and they nod to him.*

The Talmudists distinguish the judgments given by a dumb man into *the nodding of the head*, and *the dumb man's making signs*.

"If any person be dumb, and yet hath his understanding, should they say to him, May we write a bill of divorce to thy wife, *and he nod with his head*, they make the experiment upon him three times," &c. And a little after *they do not much rely upon the signs of the deaf and dumb man*. For as it is in the same place, *the dumb person, and the deaf and dumb, differ*. Gloss: "The one can hear and not speak; the other can neither hear nor speak."

Amongst the doctors, *the deaf and dumb person* is commonly looked upon as one made so by some fit of palsy or apoplexy, by which the intellectuals are generally affected: whence the deaf and dumb are, according to the traditional canons, deprived of several offices and privileges of which others are capable.

This case therefore of Zacharias might have occasioned a considerable question, whether he ought not to have been sequestered from his ministry, and deprived of all the privileges of his priesthood, because he had been struck deaf and dumb, but that it happened to him in so signal and extraordinary a way.

24. And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months; saying,

[*She hid herself five months.*] "*She hid herself five months*, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me, in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men."

She was big with child, it is plain, because God had looked on her, and taken away her reproach among men. She hid herself, because the Lord had dealt so with her, till he had taken away her reproach; giving her so remarkable a son, one who was to be so strict a Nazarite, and so famous a prophet. Lest therefore she should any way defile herself by going up and down, and thereby contract any uncleanness upon the Nazarite in her womb, she withdraws, and sequesters herself from all common conversation. Consult [Judges 13:4](#).

There were several amongst the Jews that were wont to take upon them the sect of the Nazarites by their own voluntary vow. [Three hundred at once in the days of Jannaeus the king came together to Simeon Ben Shetah.] But there were but two only set apart by divine appointment, Samson and the Baptist: whom the same divine appointment, designing to

preserve untouched from all kind of pollution even in their mothers' wombs, directed that the mothers themselves should keep themselves as distant as might be from all manner of defilement whatsoever. Elizabeth obeys; and for the whole time wherein she bore the child within her, *she hid herself*, for her more effectually avoiding all kind of uncleannesses; although it is true we have the mention but of *five months*, by reason of the story of *the sixth month*, which was to be immediately related, verse 26.

26. And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

[*The angel Gabriel.*] "R. Simeon Ben Lachish saith, The names of angels went up by the hand of Israel out of Babylon. For before it is said, Then flew one of the seraphim unto me; the seraphim stood before him, [Isaiah 6](#); but afterward the man Gabriel, [[Dan 9:21](#)] and Michael your prince," [[Dan 10:21](#)].

The angel calls Zacharias back to [Daniel 9](#), where the prediction concerning the coming of Messiah was foretold by Gabriel.

29. And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

[*Was troubled, &c.*] I. It was very rare and unusual for men to salute any women; at least if that be true in *Kiddushin*. Rabh Judah, the president of the academy of Pumbeditha, went to Rabh Nachman, rector of the academy of Neharde, and after some talk amongst themselves, "Saith Rabh Nachman, Let my daughter Doneg bring some drink, that we may drink together. Saith the other, Samuel saith, We must not use the ministry of a woman. But this is a little girl, saith Nachman. The other answers, But Samuel saith, We ought not to use the ministry of any woman at all. Wilt thou please, saith Nachman, to salute Lelith my wife? But, saith he, Samuel saith, The voice of a woman is filthy nakedness. But, saith Nachman, thou mayest salute her by a messenger. To whom the other; Samuel saith, They do not salute any woman. Thou mayest salute her, saith Nachman, by a proxy her husband. But Samuel saith, saith he again, They do not salute a woman at all."

II. It was still much more rare and unusual to give such a kind of salutation as this, *Hail, thou that art highly favoured*, by which title Gabriel had saluted Daniel of old: with this exception, that it was terror enough so much as to see an angel.

32. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

[*Shall be called the Son of the Highest.*] That is, "he shall be called the Messiah": for *Messiah* and *the Son of God* are convertible terms...

35. And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

[*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, &c.*] I. This verse is the angel's gloss upon that famous prophecy, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bring forth." The veracity of which Mary not questioning, believing further that she herself was that virgin designed, and yet being utterly ignorant of the manner how so great a thing should be brought about, she only asks, "How shall this be?" &c. Doubtless she took the prophecy in its proper sense, as speaking of a virgin untouched. She knew nothing then, nor probably any part of the nation at that time so much as once thought of that sense by which the Jews have now for a great while disguised that place...

II. Give me leave, for their sakes in whose hand the book is not, to transcribe some few things out of that noble author Morney, which he quotes concerning this grand mystery from the Jews themselves:

"Truth shall spring out of the earth." "R. Joden," saith he, "notes upon this place, that it is not said, Truth shall *be born*, but shall *spring out*; because the generation and nativity of the Messiah is not to be as other creatures in the world, but shall be begot without carnal copulation; and therefore no one hath mentioned his father, as who must be hid from the knowledge of men till himself shall come and reveal him." And upon Genesis: "Ye have said (saith the Lord), We are orphans, bereaved of our father; such a one shall your Redeemer be, whom I shall give you." So upon Zechariah, "Behold my servant, whose name is Branch": and out of [Psalm 110](#), "Thou art a priest after the order of Melchizedek": he saith, R. Bera-chiah delivers the same things. And R. Simeon Ben Jochai upon Genesis more plainly; viz. "That the Spirit, by the impulse of a mighty power, shall come forth of the womb, though shut up, that will become a mighty Prince, the King Messiah."--So he.

36. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

[*Hath also conceived a son in her old age.*] The angel teaches to what purpose it was that women, either barren before or considerably stricken in years, should be enabled to conceive and bring forth; viz. to make way for the easier belief of the conception of a virgin. If they, either beside or beyond nature, conceive a child, this may be some ground of belief that a virgin, contrary to nature, may do so too. So Abraham by faith saw Christ's day, as born of a pure virgin, in the birth of his own son Isaac of his old and barren wife Sarah.

39. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda:

[*She went into the hill country, &c.*] That is, to Hebron, [Joshua 21:11](#). For though it is true indeed that the priests after the return from Babylon were not all disposed and placed

in all those very same dwellings they had possessed before the captivity, yet it is probable that Zacharias, who was of the seed of Aaron, being here said to dwell in *the hill country of Judah*, might have his house in Hebron, which is more peculiarly said to be 'the city of Aaron's offspring.'

41. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

[*The babe leaped in her womb.*] So the Seventy, [Genesis 25:22](#), *the children leaped in her womb. Psalm 114:4, the mountains skipped.* That which is added by Elizabeth, verse 44, *the babe leaped in the womb for joy*, signifies the manner of the thing, not the cause: q.d. *it leaped with vehement exultation.* For John, while he was an embryo in the womb, knew no more what was then done, than Jacob and Esau when they were in Rebekah's womb knew what was determined concerning them.

"At the Red Sea, even the infants sang in the wombs of their mothers"; as it is said, *from the fountain of Israel Psalm 88:27*; where the Targum, to the same sense, "Exalt the Lord *ye infants in the bowels of your mothers*, of the seed of Israel." Let them enjoy their hyperboles.

Questionless, Elizabeth had learned from her husband that the child she went with was designed as the forerunner of the Messiah, but she did not yet know of what sort of woman the Messiah must be born till this leaping of the infant in her womb became some token to her.

56. And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

[*Abode with her three months.*] A space of time very well known amongst the doctors, defined by them to know whether a woman be with child or no: which I have already observed upon [Matthew 1](#).

59. And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

[*And they called it, &c.*] I. "The circumciser said, 'Blessed be the Lord our God, who hath sanctified us by his precepts, and hath given us the law of circumcision.'" The father of the infant said, "Who hath sanctified us by his precepts, and hath commanded us to enter the child into the covenant of Abraham our father." But where was Zacharias' tongue for this service?

II. God at the same time instituted circumcision, and changed the names of Abram and Sarah: hence the custom of giving names to their children at the time of their circumcision.

III. Amongst the several accounts why this or that name was given to the sons, this was one that chiefly obtained, viz. for the honour of some person whom they esteemed they gave the child his name: which seems to have guided them in this case here, when Zacharias

himself, being dumb, could not make his mind known to them. Mahli the son of Mushi hath the name of Mahli given him, who was his uncle, the brother of Mushi his father, [1 Chronicles 23:21,23](#).

"R. Nathan said, 'I once went to the islands of the sea, and there came to me a woman, whose first-born had died by circumcision; so also her second son. She brought the third to me. I bade her wait a little, till the blood might assuage. She waited a little, and then circumcised him, and he lived: they called him, therefore, by my name, *Nathan of Babylon*.'" See also Jerusalem *Jevamoth*.

"There was a certain family at Jerusalem that were wont to die about the eighteenth year of their age: they made the matter known to R. Jochanan, Ben Zacchai, who said, 'Perhaps you are of Eli's lineage, concerning whom it is said, The increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age. Go ye and be diligent in the study of the law, and ye shall live.' They went and gave diligent heed to the law, and lived. They called themselves, therefore, *the family of Jochanan*, after his name."

It is disputed in the same tract, whether the son begot by a brother's raising up seed to his brother should not be called after the name of him that is deceased: for instance, if one dies without a son, and his name be Joseph, or Jochanan, whether the son that is born to this man's brother, taking his brother's widow to wife, should not have the name after him that afirst had her, and be called 'Joseph,' or 'Jochanan.' Otherwise, indeed, it was very seldom that the son bore the name of the father, as is evident both in the Holy Scriptures and the Rabbinical writers. It cannot be denied but that sometimes this was done; but so very rarely, that we may easily believe the reason why the friends of Zacharias would have given the child his own name was merely, either because they could by no means learn what he himself designed to call him, or else in honour to him, however he lay under that divine stroke at present, as to be both deaf and dumb.

78. Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us.

[*The dayspring from on high.*] I would readily have rendered it the *branch from on high*, but for what follows, "to give light," &c...

80. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel.

[*In the deserts.*] Whether John was an eremite in the sense as it is now commonly taken, we may inquire and judge by these two things: I. Whether there was ever any eremite in this sense among the Jews. II. Whether he absented himself from the synagogues; and whether he did not present himself at Jerusalem in the feasts: and to this may be added, whether he retired and withdrew himself from the society of mankind. If he absented from the synagogues, he must have been accounted *a wicked neighbour*. If from the feasts, he transgressed

the command, [Exodus 23:17](#). If from the society of mankind, what agreeableness was there in this? It seems very incongruous, that he that was born for this end, "to turn the disobedient," &c. should withdraw himself from all society and converse with them. Nothing would persuade me sooner that John was indeed an anchorite, than that which he himself saith, that he did not know Jesus, [John 1:31](#), whereas he was so very near akin to him. One might think, surely he must have lain hid in some den or cave of the earth, when, for the space of almost thirty years wherein he had lived, he had had no society with Jesus, so near a kinsman of his, nay, not so much as in the least to know him. But if this were so, how came he to know and so humbly refuse him, when he offered himself to be baptized by him? [Matthew 3:14](#); and this before he was instructed who he was, by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him? [John 1:33](#).

[eremite - hermit; esp.: a religious recluse.--Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary.]

From this question may arise two more:--

I. Whether John appeared or acted under the notion of a prophet before his entrance into the thirtieth year of his age. I am apt to think he did not: and hence I suppose it is said concerning him, "that he was in the deserts"; that is, he was amongst the rustics, and common rank of men, as a man of no note or quality himself, till he made himself public under the notion and authority of a prophet.

II. Whether he might not well know his kinsman Jesus in all this time, and admire his incomparable sanctity, and yet be ignorant that he was the Messiah. Yea, and when he modestly repulsed him from his baptism, was it that he acknowledged him for the Messiah? (which agrees not with [John 1:33](#)) or not rather that, by reason of his admirable holiness, he saw that he was above him?

[*Till the day of his shewing unto Israel.*] John was unquestionably *a priest by birth*; and being arrived at the thirtieth year of his age, according to the custom of that nation, he was, after examination of the great council, to have been admitted into the priestly office, but that God had commissioned him another way.

"In the room Gazith the great council of Israel sat, and judged concerning the priesthood. The priest in whom any blemish was found, being clothed and veiled in black, went out and was dismissed: but if he had no blemish, he was clothed and veiled in white, and going in ministered, and gave his attendance with the rest of the priests his brethren. And *they made a gaudy day*, when there was no blemish found in the seed of Aaron the priest."

1. And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

[*From Caesar Augustus.*] The New Testament mentions nothing of the Roman government, but as now reduced under a monarchical form. When that head, which had been mortally wounded in the expulsion of the Tarquins, was healed and restored again in the Caesars, "all the world wondered," saith St. John, [Revelation 13:3](#); and well they might, to see monarchy, that had for so many hundred years been antiquated and quite dead, should now flourish again more vigorously and splendidly than ever.

But whence the epoch or beginning of this government should take its date is something difficult to determine. The foundations of it, as they were laid by Julius Caesar, so did they seem overturned and erased again in the death he met with in the senate-house. It was again restored, and indeed perfected by Augustus; but to what year of Augustus should we reckon it? I would lay it in his one-and-thirtieth, the very year wherein our Saviour was born. Of this year Dion Cassius, lib. lv, speaks thus:

"The third decennium [or term of ten years] having now run out, and a fourth beginning, he, being forced to it, undertook the government." Observe the force of the word *forced to it*: then was Augustus *constrained* or *compelled* to take the empire upon him. The senate, the people, and (as it should seem) the whole republic, with one consent, submitting themselves entirely to a monarchical form of government, did even *constrain* the emperor Augustus, (who for some time stiffly refused it,) to take the reins into his hands.

I am not ignorant that the computation of Augustus' reign might reasonably enough commence from his battle and victory at Actium; nor do the Gemarists count amiss, when they tell us that "the Roman empire took its beginning in the days of Cleopatra." And you may, if you please, call that a monarchical government, in opposition to the triumvirate, which at that battle breathed its last. But that, certainly, was the pure and absolute monarchy, which the senate and the commonwealth did agree and consent together to set up.

[*Should be taxed.*] The Vulgar and other Latin copies read, *should be described*; which, according to the letter, might be understood of the setting out the whole bounds of the empire, according to its various and distinct provinces. Only that Aethicus tells us, this had been done before; whose words, since they concern so great and noble a monument of antiquity, may not prove tedious to the reader to be transcribed in this place:

"Julius Caesar, the first inventor of the Bissextil account, a man singularly instructed in all divine and human affairs, in the time of his consulship, by a decree of the senate, procured, that the whole Roman jurisdiction should be measured out by men of greatest skill, and most seen in all the attainments of philosophy. So that Julius Caesar and M. Antony being consuls, the world began to be measured.

"That is, from the consulship of Caesar above mentioned to the consulship of Augustus the third time, and Crassus, the space of one-and-twenty years, five months, and eight days, all the East was surveyed by Zenodorus.

"From the consulship likewise of Julius Caesar and M. Antony to the consulship of Saturninus and Cinna, the space of two-and-thirty years, one month, and ten days, the South was measured out by Polyclitus; so that in two-and-thirty years' time, the whole world was surveyed, and a report of it given in unto the senate."

Thus he: though something obscurely in the accounts of consuls, as also in his silence about the West; which things I must not stand to inquire into at this time. This only we may observe, that Julius Caesar was consul with Antony, AUC 710; and that the survey of the Roman empire, being two-and-thirty years in finishing, ended AUC 742; that is, twelve years before the nativity of our Saviour.

Let us in the meantime guess what course was taken in this survey: I. It is very probable they drew out some geographical tables, wherein all the countries were delineated, and laid down before them in one view. II. That these tables or maps were illustrated by commentaries, in which were set down the description of the countries, the names of places, the account of distances, and whatever might be necessary to a complete knowledge of the whole bounds of that empire. That some such thing was done by Augustus' own hand, so far as concerned Italy, seems hinted by a passage in Pliny; *In which thing, we must tell beforehand, that we intend to follow Augustus, and the description he made of all Italy, dividing it unto eleven countries.*

And now, after this survey of lands and regions, what could be wanting to the full knowledge of the empire, but a strict account of the people, their patrimony, and estates? and this was Augustus' care to do.

"He took upon him the government both of their manners and laws, and both perpetual: by which right, though without the title of censor, he laid a tax upon the people three times; the first and third with his colleague, the second alone." The first with his colleague, M. Agrippa; the third, with his colleague Tiberius; the second, by himself alone; and this was the tax our evangelist makes mention of in this place.

2. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

[*This taxing was first made, &c.*] Not the first taxing under Augustus, but the first that was made under Cyrenius: for there was another taxing under him, upon the occasion of which the sedition was raised by Judas the Gaulonite. Of this tax of ours, Dion Cassius seems to make mention, the times agreeing well enough, though the agreement in other things is more hardly reducible:--

"He began a tax upon those that dwelt in Italy, and were worth two hundred sesterces; sparing the poorer sort, and those that lived beyond the countries of Italy, to avoid tumults."

If those that lived out of Italy were not taxed, how does this agree with the tax which our evangelist speaks of? unless you will distinguish, that in one sense they were not taxed, that is, as to their estates they were not to pay any thing; but in another sense they were, that is, as to taking account of their names, that they might swear their allegiance and subjection to the Roman empire. As to this, let the more learned judge.

4. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Beth-lehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David):

[*Because he was of the house and lineage of David.*] We read in the evangelists of two families, that were of the stock and line of David; and the Talmudic authors mention a third. The family of Jacob the father of Joseph, the family of Eli the father of Mary, and the family of Hillel the president of the Sanhedrim, "*who was of the seed of David, of Shephatiah the son of Abital.*"

I do not say that all these met at this time in Bethlehem: [It is indeed remarked of Joseph, that he was "of the house of David"; partly because he was to be reputed, though he was not the real father of Christ; and partly also, that the occasion might be related that brought Mary to Bethlehem, where the Messiah was to be born.] But it may be considered whether Cyrenius, being now to take an estimate of the people, might not, on purpose and out of policy, summon together all that were of David's stock, from whence he might have heard the Jews' Messiah was to spring, to judge whether some danger might not arise from thence.

7. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

[*There was no room for them in the inn.*] From hence it appears, that neither Joseph nor his father Jacob had any house of their own here, no, nor Eli neither, wherein to entertain his daughter Mary ready to lie in. And yet we find that two years after the birth of Christ, Joseph and Mary his wife lived in a hired house till they fled into Egypt.

"A certain Arabian said to a certain Jew, 'The Redeemer of the Jews is born.' Saith the Jew to him, 'What is his name?' 'Menahem,' saith the other. 'And what the name of his father?' 'Hezekiah.' 'But where dwell they?' '*In Birath Arba in Bethlehem Judah.*" He shall deserve many thanks that will but tell us what this *Birath Arba* is. The Gloss tells us no other than that this "*Birath Arba* was a place in Bethlehem"; which any one knows from the words themselves. But what, or what kind of place was it? *Birah* indeed is a *palace* or *castle*: but what should *Arba* be? A man had better hold his tongue than conjecture vainly and to no purpose...

8. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

[*And there were shepherds keeping watch over their flock, &c.*] *These are the sheep of the wilderness; viz. those which go out to pasture about the time of the Passover, and are fed in the fields, and return home upon the first rain.*

"Which is the first rain? It begins on the third of the month Marchesvan. The middle rain is on the seventh: the last on the seventeenth. So R. Meier: but R. Judah saith, On the seventh, seventeenth, and one-and-twentieth."

The spring coming on, they drove their beasts into wildernesses or champaign grounds, where they fed them the whole summer, keeping watch over them night and day, that they might not be impaired either by thieves or ravenous beasts. They had for this purpose *their tower to watch in*, or else *certain small cottages* erected for this very end, as we have observed elsewhere. Now in the month Marchesvan, which is part of our October and part of November, the winter coming on, they betook themselves home again with the flocks and the herds.

13. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

[*A multitude of the heavenly host praising God.*] The Targumist upon [Ezekiel 1:24](#), *a host of angels from above*. So in [1 Kings 19:11,12](#), "*A host of the angels of the wind*. A host of the angels of commotion. A host of the angels of fire; and after the host of the angels of fire, *the voice of the silent singers.*"

14. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

[*Glory to God in the highest.*] We may very well understand this angelic hymn, if *good will towards men*, be taken for the subject, and the rest of the words for the predicate. *The good will of God towards men is glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth*. *And*, is put between *glory* and *peace*; not between them and *good will*.

But now this *good will* of God towards men, being so wonderfully made known in the birth of the Messiah, how highly it conduced to the *glory* of God, would be needless to shew; and how it introduced *peace on the earth* the apostle himself shews from the effect, [Ephesians 2:14](#); [Colossians 1:20](#); and several other places.

21. And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

[*And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcision of the child.*] "The disciples of R. Simeon Ben Jochai asked him, Why the law ordained circumcision on *the eighth day*? To wit, lest while all others were rejoicing, the parents of the infant should be sad. The cir-

cumcision therefore is deferred till the woman in childbed hath got over her uncleanness." For, as it is expressed a little before, "The woman that brings forth a man-child is prohibited her husband the space of seven days, but on the seventh day, at the coming in of the evening which begins the eighth day, *she washeth herself, and is allowed to go in unto her husband.*" If she came nigh him within the seven days she made him unclean. On the *eighth day*, therefore, Joseph addresseth himself to make provision for his wife, and to take care about the circumcision of the child.

22. And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present *him* to the Lord;

[*When the days of her purification were accomplished, &c.*] "R. Asai saith, the child *whose mother is unclean by childbearing* is circumcised the eighth day; but he whose mother is not unclean by childbearing is not circumcised the eighth day."

You will ask probably, what mother that is, that is not unclean by childbearing. Let the Gloss upon this place make the answer: "She whose child is cut out of her womb: as also a Gentile woman who is brought to bed today, and the next day becomes a proselyte; her child is not deferred till the eighth day, but is circumcised straightway." And the Rabbins a little after: "One takes a handmaid big with child, and while she is with him brings forth; her child is circumcised the eighth day. But if he takes a serving-maid, and with her a child newly born, that child is circumcised the first day."

They did not account a heathen woman unclean by child-bearing, because she was not yet under the law that concerned uncleanness. Hence, on the other side, Mary was unclean at her bearing a child, because she was under the law; so Christ was circumcised because born under the law.

II. After seven days the woman must continue for three and thirty days *in the blood of her purifying*, [Leviticus 12:4](#); where the Greek, *in her unclean blood*; far enough from the mind of Moses. And the Alexandrian MS much wider still: *She shall sit thirty and ten days in an unclean garment.*

Pesikta, as before, col. 4, it is written "*in the blood of her purifying: though she issue blood like a flood, yet is she clean.* Nor doth she defile any thing by touching it, but what is holy. For seven days, immediately after she is brought to bed, she lies *in the blood of her uncleanness*; but the three-and-thirty days following, *in the blood of her purifying.*"

[*To present him to the Lord.*] I. This was done to the first-born, but not to the children that were born afterward: nor was this done to the first-born unless *the first-born were fit for the priest*. For in *Becoroth* they distinguish betwixt *a first-born fit for inheritance*, and *a first-born fit for a priest*. That is, if the first-born should be any ways maimed, or defective in any of his parts, or had any kind of spot or blemish in him, this laid no bar for his inheriting, but yet made him unfit and incapable of being consecrated to God.

II. The first-born was to be redeemed immediately after the thirtieth day from his birth. "Every one is bound to redeem his first-born with five shekels after he is thirty days old; as it is said, 'From a month old shalt thou redeem,'" [Numbers 18:16](#). Not that the price of that redemption was always paid exactly upon the thirtieth day, but that then exactly it became due. Hence in that treatise newly quoted: "If the child die within the thirty days, and the father hath paid the price of his redemption beforehand, the priest must restore it: but if he die after the thirty days are past, and the father hath not paid the price of his redemption, let him pay it." Where we find the price of redemption supposed as paid either before or after the thirty days.

III. The women that were to be purified were placed in the east gate of the court called Nicanor's Gate, and were sprinkled with blood.

There stood Mary for her purifying; and there, probably, Christ was placed, that he might be presented before the Lord, presented to the priest.

**24. And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord,
A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.**

[*A pair of turtledoves, &c.*] I. "*The turtles were older, and of a larger size*": pigeons less, and younger. For it is said of pigeons, *two young pigeons*; but not so of turtles.

This was called *the offering of the poor*; which if a rich man offered, *he did not do his duty*. And when the doctors speak so often of *an offering rising or falling*, it hath respect to this. "For the offering of the richer sort was a lamb; but if his hand could not reach to a lamb, then he offered a pair of turtles, or pigeons. *But if he was poor*, he offered the tenth part of an ephah: therefore is the oblation said to be rising or falling."

"King Agrippa came one day to offer a thousand burnt offerings; but a certain poor man prevented him with two turtledoves. So, also, when one would have offered a bullock, there was a poor man prevented him with a handful of herbs."

II. Of the two *turtledoves or young pigeons*, one was to be offered as a burnt offering, the other as a sin offering. But as to the particular appointment of the one for the burnt offering, the other for the sin offering, that is, which should be which, it is disputed among the doctors whether it lay in the breast of him or her that offered it, or the priest, to determine it.

By the way, we may observe that the blessed Virgin offers a *sin offering* for herself. Now what the meaning and design of a *sin offering* was, is evident from [Leviticus 4](#) and 5.

25. And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

[*Simeon.--The same man was just and devout.*] I. *Simeon the Just*, of whom the Jewish histories tell so many and great things, hath nothing to do here. For, as it is certain that

Simeon died long before, so it is very uncertain whether he deserved the title of *Just* as well as our Simeon did. *He was called 'Just' both for his piety towards God, and his charity towards his countrymen.* Grant he was so; yet is it a far greater testimony that is given of our Simeon.

II. Rabban Simeon, the son of Hillel, was alive and at Jerusalem in those very times wherein our evangelist wrote, his father Hillel also still living; whom the son succeeded upon the decease of the father, as president of the council. But as to him, there is nothing famous concerning him amongst Jewish authors but his bare name: "Rabban Simeon, the son of old Hillel, a prince of Israel, as his father had been. As you may see in cap. 1. *Schabb.* *there is no mention of him in Misna.*" He was, therefore, no father of traditions, neither were there any things recited from him in the Misna: which, indeed, was very extraordinary; but how it should come to pass I cannot tell. Whether he had a sounder apprehension of things; or was not *well seen in* traditions; or was this very Simeon the evangelist mentions, and so looked higher than the mere traditions of men: this is all the hindrance, that Rabban Simeon lived a great while after the birth of our Saviour and had a son, Gamaliel, whom he bred up a Pharisee.

[*Waiting for the consolation of Israel.*] That is, believing *the consolation of Israel* was nigh at hand. The whole nation waited for *the consolation of Israel*, insomuch that there was nothing more common with them than to swear by the desire which they had of seeing it.

"R. Judah Ben Tabbai said, *So let me see the consolation [of Israel]*, if I have not put to death a false witness. Simeon Ben Shetah saith to him, 'So let me see the consolation, if thou hast not shed innocent blood.'"

"R. Eliezer Ben Zadok said, *So let me see the consolation*, if I did not see her gleaning barley under the horses' heels."

"R. Simeon Ben Shetah said, 'So let me see *the consolation*, I saw one pursuing another with a drawn sword.'"

"Those which desire *the years of consolation* that are to come."

35. (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

[*Yea, and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also.*] *Thy soul*, i.e. *thy life*. It is a prediction that the blessed Virgin should suffer martyrdom: "This child of thine shall be set for a sign, which shall be spoken against; neither shalt thou escape in the contradiction that shall be given him, for thou shalt die by the sword." Epiphanius gives some countenance to this exposition.

"Whether the holy Virgin died and was buried, her death was crowned with infinite honour; she made a most chaste end, and the crown of her virginity was given her: *or whether she was put to death (as is written, 'A sword shall pass through thine own soul')*, she is possessed of glory and a crown amongst the martyrs."

36. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

[*Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser.*] There were, therefore, prophets at this time among the people. It is not to be denied that *at this time* there were; that is, when the morning of the gospel began to dawn: but for four hundred years past there had not been even one that had deserved that name, however the Jews vainly enough had honoured the memories of some with that title; which we shall not meddle with at this present. But was this *Anna* accounted a prophetess by the Jews; if so, whence that proverbial expression, "out of Galilee ariseth no prophet"? [John 7:52](#). She was certainly a Galilean; and for that very reason, probably, it is here remarked that she was *of the tribe of Aser*.

What think we of that passage in *Vajicra Rabba*, fol. 174.4 and *Bemidbar Rabb*. fol. 250.4, *The king Messiah, who is placed on the north, shall come and build the house of the sanctuary, which is placed on the south*. Doth not this savour something of Christ's coming out of Galilee?

37. And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

[*Departed not from the Temple.*] I. It may be doubted whether any women ever discharged any office in the Temple: some think they did. But that which they allege out of [1 Samuel 2:22](#), concerning the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, is quite another thing from any public ministering, if we will admit the Targumist and the Rabbins for expositors. So [Exodus 38:8](#), *women assembling by troops* at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. The Targumists both here and in the place before quoted have it, *women that came to pray...*

It is apparent, that women were wont to come from other parts to the tabernacle for devotion's sake, not to perform any ministry. So this *Anna*, by birth *of the tribe of Aser*, had changed her native soil, and fixed her abode at Jerusalem, partly for devotion, that she might be the more at leisure for praying in the Temple, and partly as a prophetess, that she might utter her prophecies in the great metropolis.

II. *She departed not from the Temple*; that is, not in the stated times of prayer: according as it is commanded Aaron and his sons, [Leviticus 10:7](#); "Ye shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle." Where *Siphra*, fol. 24. 2, *not in the time of their ministry*.

42. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

[*And when he was twelve years old.*] "Let a man deal gently with his son till he come to be *twelve years old*: but from that time, let him descend with him into his way of living": that

is, let him diligently, and with severity (if need be), keep him close to that way, rule, or art, by which he may get his living.

At *twelve years old*, they were wont to inure children to fasting, *from time to time*, or *from hour to hour*; that they might be accustomed to it, and so be capable of fasting upon the day of atonement.

Christ being now twelve years old, *applies himself to his proper work, to be about his Father's business.*

Solomon, when 'twelve years old, '...judged between the two women.

"R. Chama saith, That Moses, when he was *twelve years old*, was taken from his father's house."

43. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

[*And when they had fulfilled the days.*] Here ariseth a question, Whether it was lawful to depart from Jerusalem before the seven days were ended? If not, why did Peter and Cleophas go away on the third day? If they might, how then is that precept to be understood about eating the unleavened bread throughout the whole seven days?

I. It is controverted amongst the doctors about that passage, [Deuteronomy 16:6,7](#), "Thou shalt sacrifice the Passover at the even, at the going down of the sun, and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go into thy tents," whether it be lawful, after they had eaten the lamb, to go every one to his own house. This is denied, and that not without reason. For as it is in the Gloss, "On the day of the feast," (that is, the first day of the seven,) "the sabbatical limits forbade it." For on the feast day no man ought to exceed the bounds of a sabbath day's journey. "That therefore, (say they) that is said, 'Thou shalt go into thy tents,' is to be thus understood, 'Thou shalt go into thy tents that are without the walls of Jerusalem; but by no means into thine own house.'"

II. Was it lawful then to return home on the second day of the feast? No, it was not. For on that day was the general appearance in the court, and presentment of their offerings. And this seems hinted by R. Elhanani in another Gloss upon the place newly cited: "There were two reasons (saith he) of their lodging in Jerusalem: the one because of the feast day; the other because of the *offering*."

III. It was not unlawful to depart on the third day, if necessity of affairs required it. But as in many other cases the doctors were wont to speak, so might it be said in this *it was much more commendable* for them to abide in Jerusalem till all the seven days were ended; and that especially because of the last day, which was a festival or holy day.

"R. Jose the Galilean saith, *There are three things commanded to be done in the feast*; 1. *the Chagigah*; 2. *the appearance* in the court; 3. *the rejoicing*." The *Chagigah* or the peace offerings were on the first day; the *appearance* in the court was on the second day; the *rejoicing* might be on any day.

IV. In *Moed Katon*, a treatise that discourseth on things lawful or not lawful to be done in the intermedials of the feast, or in those days of the feast that were not kept holy; in the very entrance of that discourse there are several things allowed, which plainly argue absence and distance from Jerusalem.

As to eating unleavened bread, the precept indeed was indispensable, *neither that any thing leavened should be eaten, nor that any leaven should be found* in their houses for seven days together: but no one would say that this command was restrained only to Jerusalem. It is said in *Jerusalem Kiddushin, the women's Passover is arbitrary*: that is, the women's appearance at Jerusalem at the Passover was at pleasure. But let them not say that eating unleavened bread was arbitrary, or at the women's pleasure: for although they sat at home, and did not go to Jerusalem to the Passover, yet did they abstain from leaven in their own houses: *the unleavened bread was eaten in every house*.

VI. It seems from the very phraseology that Joseph and Mary continued at Jerusalem all the seven days; which was indeed generally done by others for devotion's sake. And then think what numerous companies of people must be going away to this or that country, yea, particularly, how great a crowd might be journeying, together with Joseph and Mary, towards Galilee. So that it may be less strange, if Jesus had not been within his parents' sight, though he had been among the crowd; nor that though they did not see him, yet that they should not suspect his absence.

44. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance.

[They went a day's journey.] The first ordinary day's journey from Jerusalem towards Galilee, was to Neapolis, of old called Sychem, distant thirty miles. But was this the day's journey that Joseph and the company that travelled along with him made at this time? The place where Christ was first missed by his parents is commonly shewed at this day to travellers, much nearer Jerusalem, by the name of *Beere*, but ten miles from that city. You may believe those that shew it, as you think fit.

46. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

[*Sitting in the midst of the doctors.*] I. "There are three courts of judicature in the Temple: one in the gate of the Court of the Gentiles; another in the gate of the Court of Israel; a third in the room Gazith."

There was also a synagogue in the Temple, which must be observed. "The high priest came to read" [those places which were to be read on the day of atonement]. "The chazan of the synagogue takes the book, and gives it to the ruler of the synagogue; the ruler to the sagan; the sagan to the high priest," &c. Where the Gloss: "There was a synagogue near the court, in the Mountain of the Temple."

In which of these places Christ was found sitting amongst the doctors, let those tell us that undertake to shew the place where his parents first missed him.

II. It is not easy to say what place he could be admitted to amongst the doctors, especially when that custom obtained which is mentioned: "The Rabbins have a tradition: From the days of Moses to Rabban Gamaliel's, they were instructed in the law standing. But when Rabban Gamaliel died, the world languished, so that they learned the law sitting." Whence also that tradition, that, "since the death of Rabban Gamaliel, the glory of the law was eclipsed."

Now when it was come to that pass after Gamaliel's death, that the disciples sat while the master read, how did they sit? *On the ground*. Hence that passage; "Rab would not sit upon his bed, and read to his scholar, while he sat upon the ground." Gloss: "Either both should be on the bed, or both upon the ground."

"The disciples of R. Eleazar Ben Shammua asked him, 'How came you to this great age?' He answered them, 'I never made the synagogue *a common way*' [that is, I never took my passage through the synagogue for a shorter cut]. '*And I never walked upon the heads of the holy people.*'" The Gloss is, "upon the heads of his disciples, sitting upon the ground."

Whether on the naked floor, might be a question, if there were place for it; but we let that pass at this present. For this custom of sitting prevailed after the death of Gamaliel, who took the chair many years after this that we are now upon. The great Hillel possessed the seat at this time; or if he was newly dead, his son Simeon succeeded him: so that it was the disciples' part in this age to stand, not to sit in the presence of their doctors. How therefore should it be said of Christ, that he was "sitting among the doctors"? Let the following clause solve the difficulty:

[*And asking them questions.*] It was both lawful and customary for the disciples, or any that were present, publicly to inquire either of the doctor that was then reading, or indeed the whole consistory, about any doubtful matter wherein he was not well satisfied. Take but two stories out of many others that may illustrate this matter:--

"R. Judah ordained R. Levi Ben Susi for a doctor to the Simonians. They made him a great chair, and placed him in it. Then propounded questions to him [occasioned from [Deuteronomy 25:9](#)], *If thy brother's wife should have her hands cut off, how should she loose the shoe of her husband's brother? If she should spit blood; what then?*" Most profound questions certainly! such as require a most cunning sophister to unriddle them.

"There is a story of a certain disciple that came and interrogated R. Joshua, *Of what kind is evening prayer?* He answered him, *It is arbitrary*. He came to Rabban Gamaliel and asked him; he told him, *It is that we are in duty bound to*. 'How then,' saith he, 'did R. Joshua tell me it is voluntary?' Saith the other, 'Tomorrow, when I come into the Consistory, do thou come forth and question me about this matter.' The disciple stood forth and asked Rabban Gamaliel [then president of the Sanhedrim] 'Of what kind is evening prayer?' He answers,

It is a thing of duty. 'But behold,' saith the other, 'R. Joshua saith, It is a thing at pleasure.' Saith Gamaliel to Joshua, 'Dost thou affirm it to be a thing of pleasure?' He saith unto him, 'No.' 'Stand upon thy feet,' saith the other, 'that they may witness against thee.' Rabban Gamaliel was then sitting and expounding. [Probably this very article.] R. Joshua stood on his feet till all the people cried out to him. They say to R. Hospith the interpreter, 'Dismiss the people,' They say to R. Zenon the Chazan, 'Say, Begin ye'; and they said, 'Begin thou'; so all the people rose up and stood on their feet. They said unto him, 'Who is it thy wickedness hath not touched?' They went out straightway and made R. Eleazar Ben Azariah president of the council. *How many seats were there?* R. Jacob Ben Susi saith, fourscore seats for the disciples of the wise, beside those who stood behind the bars. R. Jose Ben R. Bon saith thirty, besides those that stood behind the bars." We have the same story in *Bab. Beracoth*, fol. 27. 2.

This we transcribed the largelier, not only for proof of what we said, of the disciples' asking the doctors questions in the court, but that the reader might have a little sight of the manner of that court, and how there were many, not only of the disciples of the Wise, but others, too, that flocked thither.

We may further add: "In a city where there are not two great wise men, one fit to teach and instruct in the whole law, the other who knows how to hear, and ask, and answer, they do not constitute a Sanhedrim, although there were a thousand Israelites there," &c. "In a city where there are not two that may speak, and one that may hear, they do not constitute a Sanhedrim. In Bitter, there were three: In Jabneh four; viz. R. Eliezer, R. Joshua, R. Akibah, and Simeon the Temanite. *He judged before them, sitting on the ground.*" By him *who hears* they mean one skilful in the traditions, that can propound questions, and answer every question propounded. Such a one was Simeon the Temanite; who though he was a man of that learning, yet, not being promoted to become one of the elders, he sat upon the ground; that is, not on any of the benches of the fathers of the Sanhedrim; but *on one of the seats* that were near the ground; for they speak these things as done in the times after the death of Gamaliel. There is nothing absurd therefore in it, if we should suppose Christ gotten into the very Sanhedrim itself. Thither Joseph and his mother might come, and seeking him, might find him on the benches of the fathers of the council for that time, they having found him so capable both to propound questions and answer them. For it is plain they did admit of others, for other reasons, to sit sometimes in their seats. And it is less wonder if they suffer him to sit amongst them, being but twelve years of age, when as they promoted R. Eleazar Ben Azariah to the presidency itself when he was but sixteen. But if it was in a lower court, it is still less wonder if he sat amongst them. But that which might be chiefly inquired is, whether Christ sat amongst them as one of their disciples? This indeed is hardly credible.

2. Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

[Annas and Caiaphas being high priests.] *They do constitute two high priests at one time.* True indeed: but they promoted a *sagan*, together with a high priest.

The 'sagan,' as to his degree, was the same to the high priest, as he that was next or second to the king.

They substituted, indeed, on the vespers of the day of expiation, another priest to the high priest, that should be in readiness to perform the office for the day, if any uncleanness should by chance have befallen the high priest.

"It is storied of Ben Elam of Zipporim, that when a gonorrhoea had seized the high priest on the day of expiation, he went in and performed the office for that day. And another story of Simeon Ben Kamith, that as he was walking with the king on the vespers of the day of expiation, his garments were touched with another's spittle, so that Judah his brother went in and ministered. On that day the mother of them saw her two sons high priests."

It is not without reason controverted, whether the *sagan* were the same with this deputed priest: the Jews themselves dispute it. I would be on the negative part: for the *sagan* was not so much the *vice high priest*, as (if I may so speak) one set over the priests. The same with *the ruler of the temple*; of whom we have such frequent mention among the doctors: upon him chiefly did the care and charge of the service of the temple lie.

"*The ruler of the temple saith to them, Go out and see if it be time to slay the sacrifice.*" "*The ruler saith, Come and cast your lots who shall slay the sacrifice, who shall sprinkle the blood,*" &c. The Gloss is, *the ruler is the 'sagan.'*

He is commonly called *the 'sagan' of the priests*: which argues his supremacy among the priests, rather than his vicegerency under the high priest.

"When the high priest stands in the circle of those that are to comfort the mourners, *the sagan and he that is anointed for the battle, stand on his right hand, and the head of the father's house, those that mourn, and all the people stand on his left hand.*"

Mark here the order of the *sagan*; he is below the high priest, but above the heads of all the courses.

2 Kings 23:4, *the priests of the second order*: Targum, *the 'sagan' of the priests*. And chapter 25:18, *Zephaniah the second priest*: Targum, *Zephaniah 'the sagan' of the priests*.

Caiaphas therefore was the high priest, and Annas *the sagan* or *ruler of the temple*; who, for his independent dignity, is called *high priest* as well as Caiaphas; and seems therefore to be named first, because he was the other's father-in-law.

There was a dissension between Hanan and the sons of the chief priests, &c. It was in a judicial cause, about a wife requiring her dower, &c. Where the scruple is, who should these *chief priests* be? whether the fathers and heads of the courses, or the high priest only and the *sagan*. It was a *council of priests*: which we have already spoken to at [Matthew 26:3](#). Now

the question is, whether by the "sons of the chief priests," be meant the sons of the fathers of courses, or the fathers of courses themselves, or the sons of the high priest and the *sagan*; where the high priest in that court was like *the prince in the Sanhedrim*, and *the sagan the father of the Sanhedrim*.

"Moses was made *a sagan* to Aaron. He put on his garments, and took them off [viz. on the day of his consecration]. And as he was his *sagan* in life, so he was in death too."

5. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth;

[*Every valley shall be filled.*] The Jews have a tradition, that some such thing was done by the cloud that led Israel in the wilderness. Instead of many instances, take the Targumist upon [Canticles 2:6](#): "There was a cloud went before them, three days' journey, *to take down the hills and raise the valleys*: it slew all fiery serpents in the wilderness, and all scorpions; and found out for them a fit place to lodge in."

What the meaning of the prophet in this passage was, Christians well enough understand. The Jews apply it to levelling and making the ways plain for Israel's return out of captivity: for this was the main thing they expected from the Messiah, viz. to bring back the captivity of Israel.

"R. Chanan saith, Israel shall have no need of the doctrine of Messiah the King in time to come; for it is said, To him shall the Gentiles seek ([Isa 11:10](#)), but not Israel. If so, why then is Messiah to come? and what is he to do when he doth come? He shall gather together the captivity of Israel," &c.

8. Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves. We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

[*Of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.*] We do not say the Baptist played with the sound of those two words *banaia* and *abanaia*: he does certainly, with great scorn, deride the vain confidence and glorying of that nation (amongst whom nothing was more ready and usual in their mouths than to boast that they were the children of Abraham), when he tells them, That they were such children of Abraham, that God could raise as good as they from those very stones.

11. He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

[*He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none.*] It would be no sense to say, He that hath two coats, let him give to him that hath not two; but to him that hath none: for it was esteemed for religion by some to wear but one single coat or garment: of which, more elsewhere.

13. And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

[*Exact no more than that which is appointed you.*] When the Rabbins saw that the publicans exacted too much, they rejected them, as not being fit to give their testimony in any case. Where the Gloss hath it, *too much*, that is *more than that which is appointed them*. And the father of R. Zeirah is commended in the same place, that he gently and honestly executed that trust: "He discharged the office of a publican for thirteen years: when the prince of the city came, and this publican saw the Rabbins, he was wont to say to them, *Go, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, Isaiah 26:20.*" The Gloss is, "Lest the prince of the city should see you; and, taking notice what numbers you are, should increase his tax yearly."

14. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

[*Neither accuse any falsely.*] "The manner of sycophants is, first to load a person with reproaches, and whisper some secret, that the other hearing it may, by telling something like it, become obnoxious himself."

[*With your wages.*] A word used also by the Rabbins: *The king distributeth wages to his legions.* "The king is not admitted to the intercalation of the year, *because of the 'opsonia'*": that is, lest he should favour himself in laying out the years with respect to the soldiers' pay.

22. And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

[*Like a dove.*] If you will believe the Jews, there sat a golden dove upon the top of Solomon's sceptre. "As Solomon sat in his throne, his sceptre was hung up behind him: *at the top of which there was a dove*, and a golden crown in the mouth of it."

23. And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,

[*Being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph.*] "A parable. There was a certain orphaness brought up by a certain *epitropus*, or foster-father, an honest good man. At length he would place her in marriage. A scribe is called to write a bill of her dower: saith he to the girl, 'What is thy name?' 'N.' saith she. 'What the name of thy father?' She held her peace. To whom her foster-father, 'Why dost thou not speak?' 'Because,' saith she, 'I know no other father but thee.' *He that educateth the child is called a father, not he that begets it.*" Note that: Joseph, having been taught by the angel, and well satisfied in Mary, whom he had espoused, had owned Jesus for his son from his first birth; he had redeemed him as his first-born, had cherished him in his childhood, educated him in his youth: and therefore, no wonder if Joseph be called his father, and he was *supposed to be his son*.

II. Let us consider what might have been the judgment of the Sanhedrim in this case only from this story: "There came a certain woman to Jerusalem with a child, brought thither upon shoulders. She brought this child up; and he afterward had the carnal knowledge of her. They are brought before the Sanhedrim, and the Sanhedrim judged them to be stoned to death: *not because he was undoubtedly her son, but because he had wholly adhered to her.*"

Now suppose we that the blessed Jesus had come to the Sanhedrim upon the decease of Joseph, requiring his stock and goods as his heir; had he not, in all equity, obtained them as his son? Not that he was, beyond all doubt and question, his son, but that he had adhered to him wholly from his cradle, was brought up by him as his son, and always so acknowledged.

III. The doctors speak of one Joseph a carpenter: "*Abnimus Gardieus* asked the Rabbins of blessed memory, whence the earth was first created: they answer him, "There is no one skilled in these matters; *but go thou to Joseph the architect.*" He went, and found him standing upon the rafters."

It is equally obscure, who this *Joseph the carpenter*, and who this *Abnimus* was; although, as to this last, he is very frequently mentioned in those authors. They say, that "*Abnimus* and *Balaam* were two the greatest philosophers in the whole world." Only this we read of him, That there was a very great familiarity betwixt him and R. Meir.

[*Which was the son of Heli.*] I. There is neither need nor reason, nor indeed any foundation at all, for us to frame I know not what marriages, and the taking of brothers' wives, to remove a scruple in this place, wherein there is really no scruple in the least. For,

1. Joseph is not here called *the son of Heli*, but Jesus is so: for the word *Jesus* must be understood, and must be always added in the reader's mind to every race in this genealogy, after this manner: "Jesus (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, and so the son of Heli, and of Matthat, yea and, at length, the son of Adam, and the Son of God." For it was very little the business of the evangelist either to draw Joseph's pedigree from Adam, or, indeed, to shew that Adam was the son of God: which not only sounds something harshly, but in this place very enormously, I may almost add, blasphemously too. For when St. Luke, verse 22, had made a voice from heaven, declaring that Jesus was the Son of God, do we think the same evangelist would, in the same breath, pronounce Adam 'the son of God' too? So that this very thing teacheth us what the evangelist propounded to himself in the framing of this genealogy; which was to shew that this Jesus, who had newly received that great testimony from heaven, "This is my Son," was the very same that had been promised to Adam by the seed of the woman. And for this reason hath he drawn his pedigree on the mother's side, who was the daughter of Heli, and this too as high as Adam, to whom this Jesus was promised. In the close of the genealogy, he teacheth in what sense the former part of it should be taken; viz. that Jesus, not Joseph, should be called the son of Heli, and consequently, that the same Jesus, not Adam, should be called the Son of God. Indeed, in every link of this chain this

still should be understood, "*Jesus the son of Matthat, Jesus the son of Levi, Jesus the son of Melchi*"; and so of the rest...

2. Suppose it could be granted that Joseph might be called the son of Heli (which yet ought not to be), yet would not this be any great solecism, that his son-in-law should become the husband of Mary, his own daughter. He was but his son by law, by the marriage of Joseph's mother, not by nature and generation.

There is a discourse of a certain person who in his sleep saw the punishment of the damned. Amongst the rest which I would render thus, but shall willingly stand corrected if under a mistake; *He saw Mary the daughter of Heli amongst the shades*. R. Lazar Ben Josah saith, *that she hung by the glandules of her breasts*. R. Josah Bar Haninah saith, *that the great bar of hell's gate hung at her ear*.

If this be the true rendering of the words, which I have reason to believe it is, then thus far, at least, it agrees with our evangelist, that Mary was the daughter of Heli: and questionless all the rest is added in reproach of the blessed Virgin, the mother of our Lord: whom they often vilify elsewhere under the name of *Sardah*.

27. Which was *the son of Joanna*, which was *the son of Rhesa*, which was *the son of Zorobabel*, which was *the son of Salathiel*, which was *the son of Neri*.

Please see Genealogies of the Bible: A Neglected Subject (111k) at the Arthur Custance Doorway Papers Library site for more info.]

[*The son of Rhesa, the son of Zorobabel, the son of Salathiel, the son of Neri*.] I. That Pedaiah, the father of Zorobabel, [1 Chronicles 3:19](#), is omitted here, is agreeable with [Ezra 5:2](#); [Haggai 1:1](#), &c.; but why it should be omitted, either here or there, is not so easy to guess.

II. As to the variation of the names both here and [1 Chronicles 3](#), this is not unworthy our observation: that Zorobabel and his sons were carried out of Babylon into Judea; and, possibly, they might change their names when they changed the place of their dwelling. It was not very safe for him to be known commonly in Babylon by the name of Zorobabel, when the import of that name was *the winnowing of Babel*; so that he was there more generally called *Sheshbazzar*. But he might securely resume the name in Judea, when Cyrus and Darius had now fanned and sifted Babylon. So his two sons, Meshullam and Hananiah, could not properly be called, one of them *Abiud, the glory of my father*, and the other *Rhesa, a prince*, while they were in Babylon; but in Judea they were names fit and suitable enough.

III. Of the variation of names here, and in [Matthew 1](#), I have already spoken in that place: to wit, that Neri was indeed the father of Salathiel; though St. Matthew saith Jechoniah (who died childless, [Jer 22:30](#)) begat him: not that he was his son by nature, but was his heir in succession.

36. Which was *the son of Cainan*, which was *the son of Arphaxad*, which was *the son of Sem*, which was *the son of Noe*, which was *the son of Lamech*,

[*The son of Cainan.*] I will not launch widely out into a controversy that hath been sufficiently bandied already. I shall despatch, as briefly as I may, what may seem most satisfactory in this matter:

I. There is no doubt, and indeed there are none but will grant that St. Luke hath herein followed the Greek version. This, in [Genesis 11:12,13](#), relates it in this manner: "*Arphaxad lived a hundred and five and thirty years, and begat Cainan; and Cainan lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat Salah: and Cainan lived after he had begot Salah three hundred and thirty years.*"

Consulting Theophilus about this matter, I cannot but observe of this author, that he partly follows the Greek version, in adding to Arphaxad a hundred years, and partly not, when he omits Cainan: for so he; *Arphaxad, when he was a hundred and thirty-five years of age, begat Salah.* Nor can I but wonder at him that translates him, that he should of his own head insert, "Arphaxad was a hundred and thirty-five years old, and begat a son named Cainan. Cainan was a hundred and thirty years old, and begat Salah": when there is not one syllable of Cainan in Theophilus. A very faithful interpreter indeed!

I. I cannot be persuaded by any arguments that this passage concerning Cainan was in Moses' text, or indeed in any Hebrew copies which the Seventy used; but that it was certainly added by the interpreters themselves, partly because no reason can be given how it should ever come to be left out of the Hebrew text, and partly because there may be a probable reason given why it should be added in the Greek; especially when nothing was more usual with them than to add of their own, according to their own will and pleasure.

I might, perhaps, acknowledge this one slip, and be apt to believe that Cainan had once a place in the original, but, by I know not what fate or misfortune, left now out; but that I find a hundred such kind of additions in the Greek version, which the Hebrew text will by no means own, nor any probable reason given to bear with it. Let us take our instances only from proper names, because our business at present is with a proper name.

[Genesis 10:2](#): *Elisa* is added among the sons of Japhet: and, verse 22, another *Cainan* among the sons of Shem.

[Genesis 46:20](#): Five grandchildren added to the sons of Joseph; [Malachi 4:5](#), *the Tishbite.*

[Exodus 1:11](#): the city *On*, is added to Pithom and Raamses.

[2 Samuel 20:18](#): the city *Dan* is added to *Abel*. Not to mention several other names of places in the Book of Joshua.

Now can I believe that these names ever were in the Hebrew copy, since some of them are put there *without* any reason, some of the *against* all reason (particularly *Dan* being joined with *Abel*, and the grandchildren of Joseph), and all of them with no foundation at all?

II. I question not but the interpreters, whoever they were, engaged themselves in this undertaking with something of a partial mind; and as they made no great conscience of imposing upon the Gentiles, so they made it their religion to favour their own side. And according to this ill temperament and disposition of mind, so did they manage their version; either adding or curtailng at pleasure, blindly, lazily, and audaciously enough: sometimes giving a very foreign sense, sometimes a contrary, oftentimes none: and this frequently to patronise their own traditions, or to avoid some offence they think might be in the original, or for the credit and safety of their own nation. The tokens of all which it would not be difficult to instance in very great numbers, would I apply myself to it, but it is the last only that is my business at this time.

III. It is a known story of the thirteen places which the Talmudists tell us were altered by the LXXII elders when they wrote out the law (I would suppose in Hebrew) for Ptolemy. They are reckoned up, and we have the mention of them sprinkled up and down; as also, where it is intimated as if eighteen places had been altered.

Now if we will consult the Glossers upon those places, they will tell us that these alterations were made, some of them, lest the sacred text should be cavilled at; others that the honour and peace of the nation might be secured. It is easy, therefore, to imagine that the same things were done by those that turned the whole Bible. The thing itself speaks it.

Let us add, for example's sake, those five souls which they add to the family of Jacob; numbering up five grandchildren of Joseph, who, as yet, were not in being,--nay, seven, according to their account, [Genesis 46:27](#). *Children that were born to Joseph in the land of Egypt, even nine souls.*

Now, which copy do we think it most reasonable to believe, the Greek or the Hebrew? and as to the question, whether these five added in the Greek were anciently in Moses' text, but either since lost by the carelessness of the transcribers or rased out by the bold hand of the Jews, let reason and the nature of the thing judge. For if Machir, Gilead, Shuthelah, Tahan, and Eran, were with Joseph when Jacob with his family went down into Egypt, (and if they were not, why are they numbered amongst those that went down?) then must Manasseh at the age of nine years, or ten at most, be a grandfather; and Ephraim at eight or nine. Can I believe that Moses would relate such things as these? I rather wonder with what kind of forehead the interpreters could impose such incredible stories upon the Gentiles, as if it were possible they should be believed.

IV. It is plain enough to any one that diligently considers the Greek version throughout, that it was composed by different hands, who greatly varied from one another, both in style and wit. So that this book was more learnedly rendered than that, the Greek reading more elegant in this book than in that, and the version in this book comes nearer the Hebrew than in that; and yet in the whole there is something of the Jewish craft, favouring and pat-

ronising the affairs of that nation. There is something of this nature in the matters now in hand, the addition of Cainan, and the five souls to the seventy that went down into Egypt.

How mighty the Jewish nation valued themselves beyond all the rest of mankind, esteeming those seventy souls that went down with Jacob into Egypt beyond the seventy nations of the world; he that is so great a stranger in the Jewish affairs and writings, that he is yet to learn, let him take these few instances; for it would be needless to add more:

"Seventy souls went down with Jacob into Egypt, that they might restore the seventy families dispersed by the confusion of tongues. For those seventy souls were equal to all the families of the whole world. And he that would be ruling over them, is as if he would usurp a tyranny over the whole world."

"How good is thy love towards me, O thou congregation of Israel! *It is more than that of the seventy nations.*"

"The holy blessed God created seventy nations; but he found no pleasure in any of them, save Israel only."

"Saith Abraham to God, 'Didst thou not raise up seventy nations unto Noah?' God saith unto him, 'I will raise up that nation unto thee of whom it is written, How great a nation is it!'" The Gloss is: "That peculiar people, *excelling all the seventy nations*, that holy nation, as the holy language excels all the seventy languages."

There are numberless passages of that kind. Now when this arrogant doctrine and vainglorying, if familiarly known amongst the Gentiles, could not but stir up a great deal of hatred, and consequently danger to the Jews, I should rather think the interpreters might make such additions as these, through the caution and cunning of avoiding the danger they apprehend, than that ever they were originally in the text of Moses. To wit, by adding another Cainan, and five souls to those seventy in Jacob's retinue, they took care that the Gentiles should not, in the Greek Bibles, find exactly the seventy nations in [Genesis 10](#), but seventy-two (or seventy-three if we reckon *Elisa* also;) as also not seventy, but seventy-five souls that went down into Egypt.

It was the same kind of craft they used in that version, [Deuteronomy 32:8](#); whence that comparison between the seventy souls and the seventy nations took its rise. Moses hath it thus; "When the Most High divided the nations, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people *according to the number of the children of Israel.*" But they render it thus; *He set the bounds of the nations, according to the number of the angels of God.* A sense indeed most foreign from that of Moses, yet which served to obscure his meaning, so far as might avoid any danger that might arise from the knowledge of it. Making the passage itself so unintelligible, that it needs an Oedipus to unriddle it; unless they should allude to the Jewish tradition (which I do a little suspect) concerning the seventy angels, set over the seventy nations of the world.

V. But now if this version be so uncertain, and differs so much from the original, how comes it to pass that the evangelists and apostles should follow it so exactly, and that even in some places where it does so widely differ from the Hebrew fountain?

Ans. I. It pleased God to allot the censers of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram to sacred use, because they were so ordained and designed by the first owners: so doth it please the Holy Ghost to determine that version to his own use, being so primarily ordained by the first authors. The minds, indeed, of the interpreters were not perhaps very sincere in the version they made, as who designed the defence and support of some odd things: so neither were the hearts of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram sincere at all, but very perverse in offering their incense: but so long as their incense had been dedicated to sacred use, it pleased God to make their censers holy. So the Greek version designed for sacred use, as designed for the Holy Bible, so it was kept and made use of by the Holy Ghost.

II. Whereas the New Testament was to be wrote in Greek, and come into the hands chiefly of the Gentiles, it was most agreeable, I may say most necessary for them, to follow the Greek copies, as being what the Gentiles were only capable of consulting; that so they, examining the histories and quotations that were brought out of the Old Testament, might find them agreeing with, and not contradicting them. For instance; they, consulting their Greek Bibles for the names from David backward to Adam, there find "Cainan, the son of Arphaxad." If St. Luke should not also have inserted it, how readily they might have called his veracity in question, as to the other part of the genealogy, which had been extracted out of tables and registers not so familiarly known!

III. If there be any credit to be given to that story of the Greek version, which we meet with in Aristeas and Josephus, then we may also believe that passage in it which we may find in Aristeas. "When the volumes of the law had been read through, the priests, and interpreters, and elders, and governors of the city, and all the princes of the people standing by, said 'Forasmuch as this interpretation is rightly, religiously, and in every thing so very accurately finished, it is fit that all things should continue as they are, and no alteration should be made.' When all had by acclamations given their approbation to these things, Demetrius commanded that, according to their custom, they should imprecate curses upon any that should, by addition, or alteration, or diminution, ever make any change in it. This they did well in, that all things might be kept entire and inviolate for ever."

If this passage be true, it might be no light matter to the Jew, when quoting any thing in Greek out of the Old Testament, to depart in the least from the Greek version; and indeed it is something a wonder, that after this they should ever dare to undertake any other. But supposing there were any credit to be had to this passage, were the sacred penmen any way concerned in these curses and imprecations? Who saith they were? But, however, who will not say that this was enough for them to stop the mouths of the cavilling Jews, that they,

following the Greek version, had often departed from the truth of the original to avoid that anathema; at least, if there were any truth in it.

Object. But the clause that is before us (to omit many others) is absolutely false: for there was neither any Cainan the son of Arphaxad; nor was Jesus the son of any Cainan that was born after the flood.

Ans. I. There could be nothing more false as to the thing itself than that of the apostle, when he calleth the preaching of the gospel *foolishness*, [1 Corinthians 1:21](#); and yet, according to the common conceptions of foolish men, nothing more true. So neither was this true in itself that is asserted here; but only so in the opinion of those for whose sake the evangelist writes. Nor yet is it the design of the Holy Ghost to indulge them in any thing that was not true; but only would not lay a stumblingblock at present before them: "I am made all things to all men, that I might gain some."

II. There is some parallel with this of St. Luke and that in the Old Testament, [1 Chronicles 1:36](#): "The sons of Eliphaz, Teman, and Omar, and Zephi, and Gatam, and Timnah, and Amalek." Where it is equally false, that Timnah was the son of Eliphaz, as it is that Cainan was the son of Arphaxad. But far, far be it from me to say, that the Holy Ghost was either deceived himself, or would deceive others. Timnah was not a man, but a woman; not the son of Eliphaz, but his concubine; not Amalek's brother, but his mother, [Genesis 36:12](#). Only the Holy Ghost teacheth us by this shortness of speech, to recur to the original story from whence these things are taken, and there consult the determinate explication of the whole matter: which is frequently done by the same Holy Spirit, speaking very briefly in stories well known before.

The Gentiles have no reason to cavil with the evangelist in this matter; for he agrees well enough with their Bibles. And if the Jews, or we ourselves, should find fault, he may defend himself from the common usage of the Holy Ghost, in whom it is no rare and unusual thing, in the recital of stories and passages well enough known before, to vary from the original and yet without any design of deceiving, or suspicion of being himself deceived; but, according to that majesty and authority that belongs to him, dictating and referring the reader to the primitive story, from whence he may settle and determine the state of the matter, and inquire into the reasons of the variation. St. Stephen imitates this very custom, while he is speaking about the burial of the patriarchs, [Acts 7:15,16](#); being well enough understood by his Jewish auditory, though giving but short hints in a story so well known.

III. It is one thing to dictate from himself, and another thing to quote what is dictated from others, as our evangelist in this place doth. And since he did, without all question, write in behalf of the Gentiles, being the companion of him who was the great apostle of the Gentiles, what should hinder his alleging according to what had been dictated in their Bibles?

When the apostle names the magicians of Egypt, Jannes and Jambres, [2 Timothy 3:9](#), he doth not deliver it for a certain thing, or upon his credit assure them that these were their very names, but allegeth only what had been delivered by others, what had been the common tradition amongst them, well enough known to Timothy, a thing about which neither he nor any other would start any controversy.

So when the apostle Jude speaks of "Michael contending with the devil about the body of Moses," he doth not deliver it for a certain and authentic thing; and yet is not to be charged with any falsehood, because he doth not dictate of his own, but only appeals to something that had been told by others, using an argument with the Jews fetched from their own books and traditions.

IV. As it is very proper and even necessary towards the understanding some sentences and schemes of speech in the New Testament, to inquire in what manner they were understood by those that heard them from the mouth of him that spoke them, or those to whom they were written; so let us make a little search here as to the matter now in hand. When this Gospel first appeared in public amongst the Jews and Gentiles, the Gentiles could not complain that the evangelist had followed their copies: and if the Jews found fault, they had wherewithal to answer and satisfy themselves. And that particularly as to this name of 'Cainan' being inserted, as also the five souls being added to the retinue of Jacob; the learned amongst them knew from whence he had it; for what reason this addition had been made in the Greek version, and that St. Luke had faithfully transcribed it thence: so that if there were any fault, let them lay the blame upon the first authors, and not upon the transcriber.

V. To conclude: Before the bible had been translated for Ptolemy (as it is supposed) into the Greek tongue, there were an infinite number of copies in the Hebrew in Palestine, Babylon, Egypt, even everywhere, in every synagogue: and it is a marvellous thing, that in all antiquity there should not be the least hint or mention of so much as one Hebrew copy amongst all these that agrees with the Greek version. We have various editions of that version which they call the Septuagint, and those pretty much disagreeing among themselves: but who hath ever heard or seen one Hebrew copy that hath in every thing agreed with any one of them? The interpreters have still abounded in their own sense, not very strictly obliging themselves to the Hebrew text.

1. And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.

[*Was led by the Spirit.*] In St. Matthew it is, *was led up of the Spirit*. By which I would suppose our Saviour caught up by the Holy Spirit into the air, and so carried into the wilderness. The reasons of this conjecture are, I. Because we read of the like thing done to Philip, [Acts 8:39,40](#). The same also is supposed concerning Elijah, [1 Kings 18:12](#); [2 Kings 2:16](#). II. It is probable the devil also might snatch Jesus up into the air, having this occasion to pretend himself no other than the Holy Ghost, who had caught him up and brought him already into the wilderness: and under this notion he might require that worship from him, as if he himself was indeed the Holy Ghost. III. We must not pass by the method which St. Luke takes in describing the order of the temptations, somewhat different from that of St. Matthew. The temptation upon the pinnacle of the Temple is mentioned by St. Matthew, and that most truly, the second in order: but in St. Luke it is reckoned the third; adding, that "when the devil had ended all his temptation, he departed from him for a season." But now, according to St. Luke, how did Christ get down from the pinnacle again? He tells us, that he was carried up thither by the devil, and there (according to his method in the story) the temptation was ended: how then did Christ get down again? Observe but what follows; *Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee*: and then join the stories as they are joined in St. Luke: the devil set him on the pinnacle of the Temple, and there urgeth him to cast himself down; but when he could not persuade him, he leaves him standing on the pinnacle, and all the temptation was ended; and Jesus, by the power of the Spirit returned into Galilee. May we not suppose that the evangelist would by this give us to understand, that Christ, after the temptation was ended, was carried through the air by the Holy Ghost into Galilee, as he had been caught up before by him, and been brought into the wilderness, yea, and under that pretence [or upon that occasion], had been snatched up by the devil himself to the pinnacle of the Temple, and to a very high mountain?

2. Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

[*Forty days, &c.*] Moses, in his dealings with God, fasted forty days three times, one after another. It was sufficient for Christ, having withal so great a conflict with the devil, to do it but once. Moses' first quadragesimal was [Exodus 24:18](#): his second time was after he had destroyed the golden calf, [Deuteronomy 10:10](#): the third was after the tables of the law had been made anew, [Exodus 34:28](#). About that very time of the year wherein Moses ended his last forty days' fast, Christ began his; viz. about the middle of the month Tisri; and how long he continued it on in the month Marchesvan, it is not difficult to apprehend.

5. And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

[*In a moment of time.*] *In momento.* So the Vulgar. Now what quantity of time a *moment* contains, if it be worth the while to inquire, the doctors tell us:

How much is a moment? It is the fifty-eight thousand, eight hundred, eighty-eighth part of an hour. Very accurately calculated truly!

13. And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

[*He departed from him for a season.*] The devil had now found by experience, how much in vain it was for him to tempt our Saviour by suggestions, or those kinds of allurements by which he inveigles mankind; and therefore he watches for an opportunity of trying his arts upon him some other way: which at last he doth, both by himself and by his instruments. And when that season drew near, and the devil returned to his proper business, we find there is mention made of Satan entering into Judas, and that "now the prince of this world cometh," [John 14:30](#).

16. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

[*He stood up to read.*] That we may frame the better judgment of this action of our Saviour's, let us a little look into the customs of the synagogue:--

I. They read *standing up*. *Piske*: and Rabbenu Asher; "They do not read in the law otherwise than *standing up*. Nay, it is unlawful for him that readeth to lean upon any thing. Whence comes it that he that readeth in the law is bound to *stand up*? Rabh Abhu saith, Because the Scripture saith, Do thou stand by me. Nor ought any one to lean any way, as it is in the *Jerusalem*. R. Samuel Bar Isaac going into a synagogue found one expounding and leaning against a pillar. He saith to him, This is not lawful: for as the law was given with reverence, so are we to handle it with reverence too."

They preferred the *Law* before the *Prophets*, and the *Law* and the *Prophets* above the *Hagiographa*, or *holy writings*: and yet they yielded that honour to the Prophets, that even they should not be read but standing up. Whence that is particular which they say concerning the Book of Esther, "A man may read out of the Book of Esther, either standing or sitting. But not so out of the law." Christ in this followed the custom of the synagogue, in that while he read the Law he stood up, while he taught it he sat down.

II. He that read in the Prophets was called *Maphtir*; and was appointed to that office by the ruler of the synagogue.

"Rabh Bibai was a great man *in taking care of the things of God*. And Mar was a great man *in taking care of the things of the town*." The Gloss is: "Of the things of God, that is,

about the collectors of the alms, and the distribution of it, *and the ordering those that were to expound and read the Prophets.*"

It is probable that Christ did at this time offer himself as a *Maphtir*, or as one that would read in the Prophets, and preach upon what he read; not before hand appointed to it by the ruler of the synagogue, but rather approved of when he had offered himself. For those of Nazareth had heard of some miracles which he had wrought at Capernaum, verse 23: and therefore no wonder if they were very desirous to hear something from him answerable to those great things he had done.

III. *Piske*: "He that reads in the Prophets ought not to read less than one-and-twenty verses." Here our Saviour doth not seem to have observed the custom of the synagogue, for he read but two verses: and yet he did nothing but what was both allowable and usual. And that is worth our taking notice of which we meet with, "*If there be an interpreter or preaching on the sabbath day*, they read out of the prophets, three, or five, or seven verses, and are not so careful to read just one-and-twenty."

"If there be an interpreter [or interpretation] on the sabbath day": was there not always one on every sabbath day? So that neither Moses nor the Prophets might be read unless one stood by that could expound: as seems abundantly evident both from the traditions and the rules that concerned such a one.

These words, therefore I would understand in such a sense; 'If either the interpreter should in his exposition enlarge himself into a sermon, or any other should preach,' &c. For the interpreter did sometimes comment and preach upon what they read. And probably Christ did at this time both read and properly interpreted.

"Jose the Maonite expounded in the synagogue of Maon. 'Hear, O ye priests; hearken, O house of Israel; and give y ear, O house of the king,' [Hosea 5](#). He said, The holy blessed God is about to snatch away the priests and set them in judgment, saying unto them, 'Why have ye not laboured in the law? Have you not had the use and enjoyment of four-and-twenty portions belonging to the priests?' They say unto him, 'They have not given us any thing.' 'Hearken, O ye house of Israel, why have you not given those four-and-twenty portions to the priests which I have commanded you in the law?' They answer him, 'Because of those who are of the house of the prince, who devour all themselves.' 'Give ear, O house of the king, for judgment is towards you; for to you I have said that this should be the rule concerning the priests: to you, therefore, and over you, is it turned a rule of judgment.' Rabbi [the prince] heard this, and was displeased with it."

"After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha."

"Rabh Joseph expounded it, *After these things the king promoted* Haman of Hammedatha the Agagite, the son of Cuza, the son of Aphlet, the son of Dio, the son of Diusot, the son of Paros, the son of Nidan, the son of Baalkan," &c. See the place, and compare it with the Targumist upon Esther, chapter 3:1.

"A reader in the Prophet *enlargeth upon 'Shemaa'*" [the manner and form of the thing we have in *Massech. Soph. cap. 14*]; "he passeth before the ark, and lifteth up his hands" (that is, in order to give him blessing); "but if he be a child, his father or his master doth these things in his stead," &c. But the Gloss tells us that these things are to be understood of *an ordinary reader of the prophets*. Now Christ was an extraordinary reader. However, he read here, which he did not do in any other synagogue; for this was the synagogue to which he belonged, and he read as a member of that synagogue.

17. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

[*And there was delivered unto him the book of Esaias.*] I. The minister of the church kept the sacred books in his custody, and brought them out to be read when they met together in the synagogue.

"The high priest came to read [on the day of expiation]; *the minister of the synagogue* takes the book of the law, and giveth it to the ruler of the synagogue," &c. Where the Gloss is, *The 'chazan' of the synagogue*, that is, *the minister*. From him did our Saviour receive the book, and to him he returned it again.

II. If it be asked whether he received the book of the Prophet Isaiah by itself or joined with the other prophets, it is not easy to determine it. We may gather something from what vulgarly obtained amongst them.

"The Rabbins deliver: 'Let a man frame the Law and the Prophets and the holy writings into one volume': they are the words of R. Meir. But R. Judah saith, 'Let the Law be apart by itself; the book of the Prophets by itself; and the book of the holy writings [Hagiographa] by itself.' And the wise men say, 'Every book by itself.'"

But we may ask if every prophet was by himself, Isaiah by himself, Jeremiah by himself, &c. It is probable they were: for so they sometimes divided the law into single quintanes [or fifth parts].

All know what title the books of the law do bear in the front of the Hebrew Bibles, viz. *The five quintanes of the law*. Genesis is *the first quintane*: Exodus is *the second quintane*: and so of the rest...

"*They fold up the book of the Law in the cloth of the quintanes*, and the quintanes in the cloth of the Prophets and Hagiographa: but they do not fold up the Prophets and Hagiographa in the cloth of the quintanes, nor the quintanes in the cloth of the Law." And a little after; "*They lay the Law upon the quintanes*, and the quintanes upon the Prophets and Hagiographa; but not the Prophets and Hagiographa upon the quintanes, nor the quintanes upon the Law": that is, not any one single quintane upon all the quintanes made up into one volume. So the Gloss hath it; "A quintane; that is, a book of the law, in which there is only one quintane."

Seeing, therefore, that the book of that Law was sometimes divided in this manner, into distinct books, we may judge as well that the greater prophets might be thus divided also, and the twelve lesser made up into one volume. Hence, perhaps, that passage: "The reader of the Prophet might skip from one text to another: *but he might not skip from prophet to prophet: but in the twelve prophets it was lawful.*" For they were all made up in one volume ready to his hand; and so were not the greater prophets.

Give me leave, therefore, to conjecture that on that sabbath wherein these things were transacted in the synagogue at Nazareth, that section which was to be read in the Prophets was, according to the rubric, in the prophet Isaiah; and upon that account the minister of the synagogue delivered that book to our Saviour when he stood up to read.

[*And when he had opened the book, he found the place, &c.*] In the Talmudic language I would render it thus, *unrolling the book...*

The high priest after the reading of the law, *rolling, or folding up the book*, puts it into his bosom. And yet

It is said...which we must not render *they do not fold up*, but *they do not unfold or unroll the book of the law in the synagogue.*

They unroll a prophet in the congregation, but they do not unroll the law in the congregation. That is, as the Gloss hath it, *They unroll from one place or passage to another passage in another place.* So they were wont to do in the Prophets, but not in the Law. And upon this account was it permitted for the reader to skip in the prophet from one place to another, because it was permitted them to unroll the prophet, either a single prophet, or the twelve lesser in the synagogue; but as to the Law, it was not allowed them so to do.

And they put the question *How far may he skip so that he that interprets do not break off?* The Gloss is, "Let him not skip from the place he reads, unless that he may *unroll the book*, and be ready to read the place to which he skips, when the interpreter ceaseth."

And because it was not lawful for him so to unroll the law in the synagogue, "on the kalends of the month Tebeth, if it proved to be the sabbath day, they brought three books of the law and read in one of them the place for the sabbath, in another, that for the kalends, in the third, that for the feast of dedication."

The words therefore of our evangelist to me seem not barely to mean that he *unfolded or opened the book*; but that being opened, he unrolled it from folio to folio, till he had found the place he designed to read and expound. Which though it was not the section appointed by the rubric for the day, yet did not Christ much recede from the custom of the synagogue, which allowed the reader to skip from one place to another.

25. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

[*When the heavens were shut up three years and six months.*] This number of *three years and six months* is much used both in the Holy Scriptures and in Jewish writings; concerning which we have more largely discoursed in another place. And although both in the one and the other it is not seldom used allusively only, yet in this place I can see no reason why it should not be taken according to the letter in its proper number, however indeed there will be no small difficulty to reduce it to its just account. That there was no rain for three years together, is evident enough from [1 Kings 17](#), &c.: but whence comes this addition of *six months*?

"Elijah said to Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word; *If there shall be these years.*" These words include three years at the least, because he saith, *years* in the *plural*, and not *years* in the *dual*.

And chapter 18, "The word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go shew thyself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth." In the *third year*; where then shall we find the *six months*?

I. Doubtless both our Saviour and his apostle St. James, chapter 5 verse 17, in adding six months do speak according to the known and received opinion of that nation; which is also done elsewhere sometimes in historical matters in the New Testament.

St. Stephen tells us, [Acts 7:16](#), that the bones of the twelve patriarchs were carried over from Egypt and buried in Sychem, when holy writ mentions only the bones and burial of Joseph: wherein he speaks according to the vulgar opinion of the nation.

Again, verse 30, he tells us that Moses was forty years old when he fled into the land of Midian, and that he tarried there forty years more, when Moses himself mentions nothing of the circumstance: this he speaks agreeably to the opinion of the people.

II. Neither our Saviour nor St. James says that Elijah shut up the heavens three years and six months; but Christ tells us, "That the heaven was shut up in the days of Elias three years and six months": and St. James, "That Elias prayed that it might not rain, and it rained not upon the earth by the space of three years and six months."

May I therefore have leave to distinguish in this manner? Elijah shut up the heaven for three years, that there might be no rain, as in the Book of Kings: and there was no rain for three years and a half, as our Saviour and St. James relate.

III. The words of Menander in Josephus may help a little towards the untying this knot: *Menander also makes mention of this drought in the acts of Ithobalus, king of Tyre, saying, There was no rain from the month of October to the month of October the year following.*

It is true he shortens the space of this drought by making it continue but *one year*; but however, having placed the beginning of it in the month of October, he gives us a key that opens us a way into things more inward and secret.

IV. Consider the distinction of *the former* and *the latter rain*, [Deuteronomy 11:14](#); [Jeremiah 5:24](#); [Joel 2:23](#).

"The Rabbins deliver: *the former is in the month Marchesvan; the latter in the month Nisan.*"

The Targumist in [Joel 2:23](#): "Who hath given you the first rain in season *and the latter in the month Nisan.*" See also our note upon chapter 2:8.

R. Solomon, upon [Deuteronomy 11](#), differs a little; but we are not solicitous about the order, which should be the first, either that in the month Marchesvan, or that in the month Nisan: that which makes to our purpose is, that rains were at those stated times; and for the rest of the year generally there was no rain.

V. Those six months mentioned by our Saviour and St. James must be accounted before the beginning of the three years, and not tacked to the end of them, as is very evident from this, that it is said, "The *third year* Elijah shewed himself to Ahab," &c.

In the beginning therefore of those three years we believe Elijah shut up heaven upon the approach of that time wherein the rains were wont to fall in the month of Marchesvan, and opened heaven again the same month at the end of three years. Nor is it nothing that Menander speaks of *the drought*, taking its beginning in the month October, which in part answers to the Jews' Marchesvan: for consult that passage, chapter 18; "Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land unto all the fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive." No one will say this search was made in the winter, but in the summer: not *before* or *in* the month Nisan, wherein the rains were wont to fall; for what hay or grass could be expected at that time? But when the year grew on to the summer, then was it a seasonable time to inquire after hay and grass. Reckon therefore the time of Ahab's and Obadiah's progress in this search: the time wherein Elijah and Obadiah meeting together, Ahab fell in with them: the time wherein the Israelites and the prophets of Baal were gathered together at mount Carmel; when Elijah sacrificed there, and the followers of Baal were killed: and certainly it will be more probable that the unlocking of the heavens and the fall of the rains happened in that usual and ordinary season, the month Marchesvan, than any other part of the year. Three years ago, in that month when the rains were expected, according to the common season of the year, Elijah shut heaven up that it should not rain; and now at the close of three years, when the season for those rains recurred, he unlocks the heavens and the rains fall abundantly.

VI. Now, go back from Marchesvan, the month wherein the prophet locked up heaven, to the month Nisan preceding, and those six months between, they were also without rain, according to the ordinary course of the year and climate. In the month Nisan it rained; the

rest of the year to Marchesvan it was fair and held up: when that month came the rains were expected; but Elijah had shut the heavens up, and they remained shut up for the space of three years ensuing. So that though he did not shut up heaven above the space of three years, yet there was no rain for three years and six months.

27. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

[*Naaman the Syrian.*] These instances galled those of Nazareth upon a twofold account:

I. That they looked upon themselves as vilified by these examples; especially if we consider the occasion upon which our Saviour brought them. 'Thou hast wrought miracles in Capernaum; do something also here in thine own city.' 'No, you are unworthy of it, as Israel of old was unworthy of the prophets Elijah and Elisha, who were therefore sent amongst the Gentiles.'

II. That by these instances he plainly intimated the calling of the Gentiles, than which nothing could be more grating in the ear of the Jews. Elijah was sent to a heathen woman, and a heathen man was sent to Elisha: and both of them were turned from heathenism to the true religion. Those words therefore of Naaman, [2 Kings 5:17,18](#), I would thus render; "Thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice to strange gods, but unto Jehovah. And concerning this thing the Lord pardon thy servant [viz. concerning my former idolatry], that when my master *went* into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and leaned upon my hand, I also bowed myself in the house of Rimmon; for that I bowed myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant concerning this thing."

29. And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

[*That they might cast him down headlong.*] By what authority, or by what legal process could those of Nazareth do this? There was, indeed, a court of judicature consisting of three men, because a synagogue was there; but it was not in the power of that court to decree any thing in capital matters. It may be asked, whether that license that was permitted *the zealots* extended thus far: "He that steals the consecrated dishes and curseth by a conjurer" (that is, curseth God in the name of an idol), "and goes in to a heathen woman (that is, openly, as Zimri, [Num 25:6](#)), *the zealots slay him*. And the priest that ministers in his uncleanness, his brethren the priests beat out his brains with clubs." But doth this license of the zealot belong to all persons upon all occasions? When Nathanael said, [[John 1:46](#)] "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" he does not seem there to reflect so much upon the smallness and insignificancy of the town, as the looseness and depravity of its manners.

33. And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice,

[*Who had a spirit of an unclean devil.*] An expression something unusual. Perhaps it points towards the pythonic or necromantic spirit: how these are distinguished amongst the doctors we may see in Ramban in *Sanhedrin*, cap. 7. hal. 4. Both of them (though in a different manner) invited and desired the inspirations of the devil. But of this thing I shall treat more largely at chapter 13:11.

Chapter 5

1. And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,

[*To hear the word of God, he stood by the lake, &c.*] For they were wont to teach also without the synagogue and *Beth Midrash*, in the highways and in the streets. "Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai taught in the street before the Mountain of the Temple the whole day." See the Gloss upon it: "Ben Azzai taught in the streets of Tiberias."

This custom R. Judah forbade in this canon: "Let not the doctors teach their disciples in the streets." And accordingly he severely rebuked R. Chaijam, because he taught his brothers' sons in the street.

And yet it is related of the same R. Judah, *R. Judah sat labouring in the law* [*labouring in the word and doctrine*, as the expression is [1 Timothy 5:17](#)], "before the Babylonish synagogue in Zippor: there was a bullock passed by him to the slaughter, and it lowed." This bullock because he did not deliver from the slaughter, he was struck with the toothache for the space of thirteen years.

5. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

[*We have toiled all night.*] In the Talmud's way of expressing it *laborious all night. Labouring all the day.*

12. And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

[*When he was in a certain city, behold, a man full of leprosy.*] "The walled cities are more holy than the land of Israel in general, *because they cast out the leprous from them.*" Which must be understood (if we allow of the Rabbins for interpreters) of cities that had been walled from the days of Joshua. If this city which the evangelist here mentions were of that number, no leper would have been suffered in it, unless absolved from his uncleanness by the priest. For the leprosy remained after that absolution; and the sick man was not healed

but restored to the church. That the man is here said to be *full of leprosy*; the passage may not impertinently be compared with [Leviticus 13:12,13](#).

Whether he had been purified by the priest before or no, however, Christ sends him to the priest, to offer what was required from the leper that was *cleansed*. The law of Moses hardly supposeth the leper *healed* when he was made *clean*. It is a question, indeed, whether the disease was ever curable but by a miracle. And therefore is this man sent to the Temple to shew himself to the priest, and offer *for a testimony unto them*, verse 14: that is, that he might bear witness, that the leprosy, an incurable disease, was now healed by miracle, as formerly it had been in Miriam and Naaman: and so there was now a great prophet arisen in Israel.

17. And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

[*On a certain day.*] In Talmudic writing it is *on a certain time*.

27. And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

[*At the receipt of custom.*] *The house of tribute*. "This thing is like a king of flesh and blood passing by *the house of tribute*. He saith to his servants, Pay the tax to the publicans."

39. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.

[*The old is better.*] *Is not the old better?* The Gloss is, *Old wine: that is, of three years old. Wine of three leaves*. The Gloss is, "Of three years: because from the time that the vine had produced that wine, it had put forth its leaves three times."

Chapter 6

1. And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.

[*On the second sabbath after the first.*] I have spoken to this already in notes upon [Matthew 12](#): let me add a few things in this place.

It is a controversy amongst the Jewish doctors and the Baithuseans, about the exposition of those words that concern the offering of the sheaf of the first-fruits; *On the morrow of the sabbath*, [Leviticus 23:10,11](#).

Gloss: "The Baithuseans desired that the first day of the Passover should be on the sabbath, that the offering of the sheaf might fall on the first day of the week: and that the feast

of Pentecost might also fall on the first day of the week. For they interpreted those words, *The priest shall wave the sheaf on the morrow of the sabbath*, as if the sense of them were, *On the morrow of the sabbath of the creation.*"

Against this the Rabbins dispute with one consent, and indeed truly enough, affirming, that by the *morrow after the sabbath* must be understood the *morrow after a sabbatical day*, or after the first day of the feast. So the Targumist, *Siphra*, Solomon, Menahem, &c. So also the Greek version. We may see their arguments in *Siphra*, and *Pesikta*, and *Menacoth*, fol. 65. 1. The principal argument is that of Rabban Jochanan disputing with a Baithusean in the place last quoted: "One scripture (saith he) saith, You shall number fifty days" (that is, from the day wherein you offer your sheaf unto Pentecost), [Leviticus 23:16](#). "Another scripture saith, Ye shall count seven sabbaths, [Leviticus 23:14](#); [Deuteronomy 16:9](#). *This, if the first day of the feast happen on the sabbath: that, if the first day of the feast happen in the middle of the week.*

His meaning is this: If the first day of the seven-day's feast of the Passover happen on the sabbath, then the sheaf being offered the next day after, the feast of Pentecost will fall on the next day after the seventh sabbath. But if that first day happen in the middle of the week, then, from the offering of the sheaf the next day, we must not count seven sabbaths but fifty days.

For instance, suppose we the lamb eaten on the third day of the Jewish week, which with us is Tuesday, Wednesday was the first day of the feast; and on Thursday the sheaf was offered; then on Thursday again, accounting fifty days, is the feast of Pentecost. Here seven sabbaths come between, and four days after the last sabbath, before the Pentecost. Where numbering by sabbaths shortens the space of time; but numbering by fifty days fixes the matter beyond scruple. And at once it concludes these two things: I. That the offering of the sheaf was not restrained to the next day after the sabbath, but to the day after the sabbatical day, viz. the first day of the feast. II. That the day of Pentecost was not restrained to the first day of the week, as the Baithuseans would have it, but might fall on any day of the week.

What should be the Baithuseans' reason why they so earnestly contended to reduce the day of Pentecost always to the morrow after the sabbath, or the first day of the week, is not easy to comprehend. Perhaps he that disputes the matter with Rabban Jochanan gives some hint of it, when he tells us, "Our master Moses loved Israel, and knowing *that the feast of Pentecost should be but for one day*, did therefore appoint it on the morrow after the sabbath, that Israel might rejoice two days together."

Whatever the reason was, it is certain they misunderstood that phrase as to the offering the sheaf *the morrow after the sabbath*, when it was to be understood of the *morrow after a sabbatical day*. And so the Greek version, *and he shall offer the sheaf before the Lord to be accepted for you, on the morrow after the first day of the feast.*

Let us take an instance of this in the last Passover our Saviour kept.

The paschal lamb was eaten on the fifth day of the week, our Thursday; the first day of the feast was the sixth day of the week, our Friday, the day on which our Lord was crucified. The day declining towards night (about the time that our Lord was buried), they went out that were deputed by the Sanhedrim to reap the sheaf: and on the morrow, that was their sabbath, while our Saviour slept in the grave, they offered that sheaf. That day therefore was the second day, and from thence they counted the weeks to Pentecost. And the sabbaths that came between took their name from *that second day*. The first sabbath after that was *the first sabbath after the second day*; and the next sabbath after that was *the second sabbath after the second day*; and so of the rest.

"The first day of the Passover is called the sabbath; and they counted after that *seven sabbaths that had relation to that*." Note that, *that had relation or alliance*.

[For more info on Pentecost, please see "The Temple: Its Ministry and Services, [Chapter 13: The Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Day of Pentecost](#)" by Alfred Edersheim.]

12. And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

[*In prayer to God: or In the prayer of God.*] Compare this kind of phrase with what is said, *Beracoth*, fol. 7. 1: "R. Jochanan in the name of R. Jose saith, *How doth it appear that the holy blessed God doth pray?* From thence, that it is said, I will bring them to my holy mountain and make them joyful *in the house of 'my' prayer*. *It is not said of their prayer*, but *of 'my' prayer*. Whence it follows that the holy blessed God doth pray. But how doth he pray? saith Rabh Zutra Bar Tobijah; Rabh saith, Let it be my good pleasure that my mercy overcome my wrath."

"*The holy blessed God made him a tabernacle and prayed in it*: as it is said, His tabernacle is in Salem, and his dwellingplace in Zion. Now what doth he say when he prayeth? *Let it be my good pleasure that I may see my dwellingplace built*."

I cannot but laugh at their triflings, and yet withal observe the opinion that nation had, and compare it with this phrase, *the prayer of God*. They will have it that God prays, not by way of supplication, but authority: "So let it be." Thus our blessed Lord sometimes, *Father, I will*, [John 17:24](#). Whether the phrase in this place should be thus interpreted, I do not determine.

38. Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

[*Good measure, pressed down, &c.*] I. Concerning *measures heaped up and stricken off*, see *Menacoth*, fol. 87: "R. Meir saith, It is said, *a tenth, a tenth to every lamb*. Whence is

hinted, that there were *decimaries* [or *tithing measures*] in the Temple: *one heaped up, the other stricken off*. *The heaped up* was that by which they measured all their bread-corn for holy uses. *That which was stricken off* was that whereby they measured the cakes or the high priest's loaves." "All the measures in the Temple were *heaped up*, besides that of the high priests." Now the Gloss, giving the reason why this was not *heaped up* as well as the other, tells us, "It was because he was to divide the flour into two tenths; if therefore the measure was *heaped up*, some of the fine flour would spill upon the ground as he moved it this way and that way in dividing it."

"Rabh Papa asked, *the filling of the priest's hand* whereof we have mention, *was it by the measure stricken off or heaped up?* R. Aba saith to Rabh Ishai, The filling of the priest's hand, of which we have mention, was neither by *the measures stricken off* nor *heaped up*, but by *measures floating over*."

II. Every one may observe that our evangelist in his repetition of this sermon upon the mount doth omit many things that are set down in St. Matthew; those especially that have relation to the dictates and glosses of the scribes and Pharisees about manslaughter, oaths, divorces, &c.; or their customs in their prayers, fasts, and alms, &c. Writing for the service of the Gentiles, he passeth over what respecteth the Jews.

Chapter 7

2. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

[*Who was dear unto him.*] So was Tabi to his master Rabban Gamaliel: of whom we meet with several things up and down, particularly that in *Beracoth*, fol. 16. 2: "When his servant Tabi was dead, he received consolations for him. His disciples say unto him, 'Master, thou hast taught us that they do not use to receive consolations for their servants.' He answered them saying, 'My servant Tabi was not as other servants, he was most upright.'"

5. For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

[*He hath built us a synagogue.*] I. It was no unusual thing for one single man to build a synagogue at his own charge: "If any man build a house, and afterward consecrated it to a synagogue, it is of the nature of a synagogue." Gloss: "Any one that builds a synagogue and gives it to his fellow citizens," &c.

And the doctors in that treatise dispute much upon this question, Whether it be lawful to sell a synagogue or to alienate it to any civil use: and amongst the rest, they suppose some one building a synagogue, but would at last reserve it to his own proper use.

II. They had no scruple as to a Gentile's building it, since the holiness of the place consisted not so much in the building as in its being set apart and dedicated to holy use; of which we have some instances in Herod's building the Temple. Such a one had this centur-

ion approved himself towards the Jewish nation, that concerning his liberality and devotion in being at the charges of building, they found no reason to move any scruple.

12. Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

[*There was a dead man carried out.*] Amongst the Talmudists, *a dead corpse going out*, is commonly a phrase which is first understood of carrying the corpse out of the court-gate.

"At what time do they take their beds lower? From the time that the person deceased is carried out of the court-gate of his own house."

Secondly, It is taken also for carrying the corpse out of the city: for *the burying-places were not near the city*.

"The infant dying before it be thirty days old, *is carried out in the bosom*: and is buried by one woman and two men."

"*An infant of thirty days old is carried out in a little coffin*. R. Judah saith, Not in a coffin that is carried on men's shoulders, but in their arms."

A child of three years old is carried out in a bed: and so onward from that age.

[*Much people was with her.*] R. Simeon Ben Eliezer saith, *for the dead that is carried out on his bed there are many mourners*: but if he be not carried out on his bed [but in a coffin], there are not many mourners.

If the deceased person be known to many, then many accompany him.

There were ordinarily at such funerals *those that carried the bier, and some to take their turns, and some also to take their turns again*. For as the Gloss hath it, *every one desired that office*.

There were also *those that stood in order* about the mourners to comfort them.

14. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

[*Touched the bier.*] In Syriac, *he approached to the bier*. The Talmudist would say, *he came to the bed of the dead*: which indeed is the same, [2 Samuel 3:31](#), *David followed after the bed*. The Targumist, *after the bier*.

"Jacob said to his sons, Beware ye, *that no uncircumcised person touch my bed*, lest he drive away thence the Divine presence."

37. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

[*A woman which was a sinner.*] I. Women of an ill name amongst the Jews were such as these:

"She who transgresseth the law of Moses, and the Jewish law." The Gloss is, "The Jewish law, that is, what the daughters of Israel follow, though it be not written."

"Who is she that transgresseth the law of Moses? She that gives her husband to eat of what is not yet tithed: she that suffers his embraces while her menstrua are upon her: she that doth not set apart a loaf of bread for herself: she that voweth and doth not perform her vow."

"How doth she transgress the Jewish law? If she appears abroad with her head uncovered: if she spin in the streets: if she talk with every one she meets. Abba Saul saith, If she curse her children. R. Tarphon saith, If she be loud and clamorous." The Gloss is, "If she desire coition with her husband within doors, so very loud that her neighbours may hear her."

Maimonides upon the place: "If when she is spinning in the street, she makes her arms so naked that men may see them: if she hang either roses or myrtle, or pomegranate, or any such thing either at her eyes or cheeks: if she play with young men: if she curse her husband's father in the presence of her husband," &c.

II. However, I presume the word *sinner*, sounds something worse than all this, which also is commonly conjectured of this woman; viz. that she was actually an adulteress, and every way a lewd woman. It is well known what the word *sinneth* signifies in the Old Testament, and what *sinneth*, in the New.

38. And stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment.

[*And stood at his feet behind him.*] She washed his feet as they lay stretched out behind him: of which posture we treat more largely in our notes upon [John 12](#).

47. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same loveth little.*

[*For she loved much.*] If we consider these two or three things, we shall quickly understand the force and design of the word *for*, &c.

I. That this was not the first time when this woman betook herself to our Saviour; nor is this the first of her receiving remission of her sins. It is supposed, and that not without good reason, that this was Mary Magdalene. If so, then had her 'seven devils' been cast out of her before; and at that time her sins had been forgiven her, our Lord at once indulging to her the cure both of her body and her mind. She therefore, having been obliged by so great a mercy, now throws herself in gratitude and devotion at the feet of Christ. She had obtained remission of her sins before this action: and from thence came this action, not from this action her forgiveness.

II. Otherwise the similitude which our Saviour propounds about forgiving the debt, would not be to the purpose at all. The debt is not released because the debtor loves his

creditor, but the debtor loves because his debt is forgiven him. Remission goes before, and love follows.

III. Christ doth not say, She hath washed my feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, and anointed me with ointment, *therefore her sins are forgiven*; but *for this cause I say unto thee, Her sins are forgiven her*. He tells Simon this, that he might satisfy the murmuring Pharisee. "Perhaps, Simon, thou wonderest within thyself, that since this hath been so lewd a woman, I should so much as suffer her to touch me: but I must tell thee that it is very evident, even from this obsequiousness of hers, and the good offices she hath done to me, that her sins are forgiven her: she could never have given these testimonies and fruits of her gratitude and devotion, if she had still remained in her guilt, and not been loosed from her sins."

Chapter 8

2. And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils.

[*Mary called Magdalene.*] Whence should she have this name?

I. We have observed above, in our notes upon [Matthew 27:56](#), that there is mention made in the Talmudic authors of *Maria Magdila* the daughter of Maria, *a plaiter of women's hair*; who they say was the wife of *Papus* Ben Juda, but an adulteress. They make this *Papus* contemporary with Rabban Gamaliel (of Jafneh) and R. Joshua, and with R. Akibah: who all lived both before and after the destruction of Jerusalem: so that the times do not very much disagree. And probable it is, that the Gemarists retained some memory of our Mary Magdalene, in the word *Magdila*.

II. We further observe in our notes upon [John 12](#), that there was a certain town near Jerusalem called *Magdala*, of a very ill fame, which perhaps was Bethany itself; or be it some other, yet might our Mary (if she was the sister of Lazarus) not unfitly be called Magdalene, either as she might have lived there some time, being there married, or have imitated the whorish customs of that place. But I am apt to think that Bethany itself might go under the name of *Magdala*.

[*Out of whom went seven devils.*] As to the number *seven*, we contend not, when there is hardly any thing more useful than to put this certain number for an uncertain. Our difficulty is, whether these words are to be taken according to their letter, or according to the Jewish sense, who were wont to call vices by the name of devils: as "An evil affection is Satan": "Drunkenness by new wine is a devil." If this Mary be the same with the woman that was a sinner in the foregoing chapter, as is believed, then by *devils* seems to be understood the *vices* to which she was addicted: especially when both the Pharisee and evangelist call her a *sinner*, rather than *demoniac*. But this we leave at the choice of the reader.

3. And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

[*The wife of Chusa.*] We meet with such a name in Haman's genealogy: "The king promoted Haman the Hammedathite, the Agathite, *the son of Cusa,*" &c. The Targumist, [Esther 5](#), reckoning up the same genealogy, mentions not this name, and differs in others. Only this let us take notice of by the way, that *Chusa* is a name in the family of Haman the Edomite, and this *Cusa* here was in the family of Herod, who himself was of the blood of the Edomites.

18. Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

[*For whosoever hath, to him shall be given.*] God's measure is not like the measure of flesh and blood. The measure of flesh and blood is this: An empty vessel is receptive, but a full one can take in no more. But God's measure is this, The full vessel is receptive of more, but the empty vessel receives nothing; according as it is said, *If hearing thou wilt hear*; that is, If thou hearest thou shalt hear; if thou dost not hear, thou shalt not hear. The Gloss is, "If thou accustom thyself to hear, then thou shalt hear, and learn and add." That is not much unlike *Beracoth*, fol. 55. 1: "God doth not give wisdom but to him with whom is wisdom already."

3. And he said unto them, Take nothing for *your* journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.

[Neither have two coats apiece.] Either my computation of times very much deceives me, or the winter was now coming on when the apostles were sent forth; and yet Christ forbids that they should be clothed with a double garment. It was not much that they should be forbid to take money or provision for their journey, because they were to have their food administered to them as the reward of their preaching the gospel: but to strive with the cold and winter without sufficient clothing seems something hard.

I. It was not an unusual thing in that nation, that some out of a more religious severity, did clothe themselves but with a single garment; of which thing we have already spoken in notes upon [Mark 14:51](#), to which probably this passage may have some reference: "R. Jose saith, 'Let my portion be *with those who die of the disease in their bowels*: for, saith Mar, Very many righteous men die of the disease in their bowels,'" viz. a disease contracted by the austerities of their life, both as to food and clothing. And so it is said particularly of the priests.

"The priests walked barefoot upon the pavement, and used water, and were not clad *but with a single garment*. And from this custom their natural vigour languished, and their bowels grew infirm."

For this very reason was there a physician appointed in the Temple, upon whom the charge lay of remedying this evil: whom we might not unfitly call the *bowel-doctor*.

Now, it may be inquired whether our Lord from this example prescribed this severity to his apostles, not allowing them more than a single garment, when this journeying of theirs, to preach the gospel, was a winter's work: for they returned from this journey a little before the Passover. Compare the tenth verse of this chapter, and so on, with [John 6:4](#), and so on. But let us a little enlarge upon this subject.

In both the Talmuds there are reckoned up eighteen several garments, wherewith the Jew is clothed from head to foot. Amongst the rest, two shoes, two buskins, &c.: but those which are more properly called garments, and which are put upon the body, are reckoned these:

1. *Mactoren*: which word is variously rendered by several men. By the Gloss I suppose a *mantle*: by Aruch a *cloak*; by others a *hood*. In the Gloss upon *Bava Bathra* it is made the same with *talith*.

"Resh Lachish went to Bozrah; and, seeing some Israelites eating of fruits that had not been tithed, forbade them. Coming from R. Jochanan, he saith to him, *Even while thy 'mactoren' [or cloak] is upon thee, go and recall thy prohibition.*"

2. *'Kolbin' of thread*. Which the Babylonians call *kolbos*. The ordinary Jewish garment was *talith*, the outward garment, and *chaluk*, the inward. But in the place quoted is no

mention of *talith* in so many syllables at all; but instead of it a Greek word for a Hebrew one, *a coat*.

Epiphanius, speaking of the scribes, "Moreover, they wore garments distinguished by the phylacteries, which were certain borders of purple." *They used long robes, or a certain sort of garment which we may call 'dalmatics,' or 'kolobia,' which were wove in with large borders of purple.*

That he means the *talith*, the thing itself declares; for those borders of purple were no other than the *zuzith*, certain skirts hung and sewed on to the *talith*.

3. A *woolen shirt*, the inward garment. Whence the Gloss, *the 'chaluk' was the shirt upon his skin*. Hence that boast of R. Jose, "that throughout his whole life the roof of his house had not seen what was within that shirt of his."

II. And now the question returns; viz. whether by those *two coats* in the place before us should be meant those two kinds of garments, the *talith* and the *chaluk*, that is, that they should take but one of them: or those two kinds doubled; that is, that they should take but one of each? Whether our Saviour bound them to take but one of those garments, or whether he forbade them taking two of each?

I conceive, he might bind them to take but one of those garments...When our Lord commands them *not to put on two coats*, the foregoing words may best explain what he means by it: for when he cuts them short of other parts of garments and necessaries, such as a scrip, a staff, and sandals, we may reasonably suppose he would cut them short of one of the ordinary garments, either the *talith* or the *chaluk*.

This may seem something severe, that he should send them out in the winter time half naked; but, 1. This well enough became that providence which he was determined to exert towards them in a more peculiar manner, as may be gathered from [Luke 22:35](#), and to the charge of which he would commit them. Of such a kind and nature was his providence in preserving them, as was shewn towards the Israelites in the wilderness, which suffered not their garments to wax old, which kept their bodies from decay and diseases, and their feet unhurt by all their travel. 2. It suited well enough with the mean and low estate of that kingdom of heaven, and of the Messiah, which the apostles were to preach up and propagate; so that, from the view of the first publishers, the Jews might learn to frame a right judgment concerning both the Messiah and his kingdom; viz. they might learn to believe in the Messiah when they should observe him capable so wondrously to protect his messengers, though surrounded with such numberless inconveniences of life: and might further be taught not to expect a pompous kingdom when they see the propagators of it, of so mean a degree and quality.

The words of the Baptist, *He that hath two coats, let him impart, &c.*, may be also understood in this sense, that he that hath both the *talith* and the *chaluk* may give to him that is naked and hath neither, either the one or the other.

8. And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

[*That one of the old prophets was risen again.*] So is the expression again, verse 19; in which sense *that prophet* must be taken, [John 1:21,25](#), that is *one of the old prophets that is risen again*.

Although they looked for no other prophet (excepting Elias only) before the appearing of the Messiah, yet doth it seem that they had an opinion that some of the ancient prophets should rise again, and that the time was now at hand wherein they should so do; and that because they made such frequent mention of it in their common talk, that "some one of the old prophets had risen again."

30. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:

[*Moses and Elias.*] The Jews have a fiction that Moses shall come with Elias when Elias himself comes. "The holy blessed God said to Moses, 'As thou hast given thy life for Israel in this world, so in the ages to come, when I shall bring Elias the prophet amongst them, *you two shall come together*'..."

They also feign that Moses was raised up at the same time with Samuel by the witch of Endor:

"Samuel thought that day had been the day of judgment, and therefore he raised Moses along with himself."

"Moses did not die [for the just die not]; but went up into the highest, to minister before God."

31. Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

[*They spake of his decease.*] The French and Italian translation do render this word *decease* too loosely. And I wish the English have not done it too narrowly; *They spake of his decease*. It were better, *They spake of his departure*. For the ascent of Christ into heaven was his *exodus*, as well as his death: nay, I may say more, if, at least, in the word *exodus* there be any allusion to the Israelites' going out of Egypt. For that was in victory and triumph, as also the ascent of Christ into heaven was.

There is no question but they did indeed discourse with him about his death and the manner of it; viz. his crucifixion: whereas, Moses and Elias themselves did depart without any pain or anguish. But I should think, however, there is more contained in that word; and that the expression *the time of his receiving up*, verse 51, hath some reference to *his departure*...

51. And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

[*When the time was come that he should be received up*] It is a difficulty amongst some, why there should be any mention of *his receiving up*, when there is no mention of his death. But let it be only granted that under that expression *his decease* is included the ascension of Christ, and then the difficulty is solved. The evangelist seems from thence to calculate. Moses and Elias had spoken of his departure out of this world, that is, of his final departure, when he took leave of it at his ascension into heaven: and from thenceforward, till the time should come wherein he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face towards Jerusalem, resolving with himself to be present at all the feasts that should precede his *receiving up*.

He goes therefore to the feast of Tabernacles; and what he did there, we have it told us, [John 7](#). After ten weeks, or thereabout, he went up to the feast of Dedication, chapter 13:22; [John 10:22](#); and at length to the last feast of all, his own Passover, chapter 17:11.

52. And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

[*Into a village of the Samaritans.*] It may be a question, whether the Jews, in their journeying to and from Jerusalem, would ordinarily deign to lodge in any of the Samaritan towns. But if necessity should at any time compel them to betake themselves into any of their inns, we must know that nothing but their mere hatred to the nation could forbid them: for "their land was clean, their waters were clean, their dwellings were clean, and their roads were clean." So that there could be no offence or danger of uncleanness in their dwelling; and so long as the Samaritans, in most things, came the nearest the Jewish religion of all others, there was less danger of being defiled either in their meats or beds or tables, &c.

55. But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

[*Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.*] What Elias once did to those of Samaria, the sons of Zebedee had an ambition to imitate in this place; dreaming (as it should seem) that there were those thunders and lightnings in their very name *Boanerges*, that should break out at pleasure for the death and destruction of those that provoked them. But could you not see, O ye sons of Zebedee, how careful and tender your Master was, from the very bottom of his soul, about the lives and well-being of mankind; how he healed the sick, cured those that were possessed with devils, and raised the dead? and will you be breathing slaughter and fire, and no less destruction to the town than what had happened to Sodom? Alas! you do not know, or have not considered, what kind of spirit and temper becomes the apostles of the Messiah.

60. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

[*Let the dead bury their dead.*] The Jews accounted of the Gentiles as no other than dead. *The people of the earth*, [that is, *the Gentiles*] *do not live*. And as the Gentiles, so even amongst themselves, these four sorts are so esteemed: "*These four are accounted as dead*, the blind, the leprous, the poor, and the childless."

Chapter 10

1. After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

[*Seventy.*] Why the Vulgar should have *seventy-and-two*, they themselves, I suppose, are able to give no very good reason: much less the interpreter of Titus Bostrensis, when in the Greek copy before him he saw only *seventy*, why he should render it *seventy-two*.

Aben Ezra upon the story of Eldad and Medad hath this passage: "The wise men say, That Moses took six out of every tribe, and the whole number amounted to seventy-and-two: but whereas the Lord had commanded only seventy, the odd two were laid aside." Now if God laid aside two of those who had been enrolled, and endowed with the Holy Spirit, that so there might be the just number of seventy only, we can hardly imagine why our Saviour should add two, to make it seventy-two and not seventy. "It was said to Moses at Mount Sinai, Go up, thou and Aaron, and Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: so will the holy blessed God ordain to himself in the world to come *a council of elders of his own people*." Now the number of this consistory, the doctors determine to be no other than seventy. A council of *seventy-two* was never heard of amongst the Jews, but once only at Jabneh.

"R. Simeon Ben Azzai saith, *I received it from the mouths of the seventy-two elders*, on the day when they made R. Eliezer Ben Azariah one of the Sanhedrim." Nor did they then remove Rabban Gamaliel, although he had displeased them.

3. Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

[*As lambs among wolves.*] It is added in another evangelist, "Be ye wise as serpents," &c.: with which we may compare that in *Midrash Schir*; "The holy blessed God saith concerning Israel *those that belong to me are simple as doves, but amongst the nations of the world, they are subtle as serpents.*"

4. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.

[*Salute no man by the way.*] I. We have a passage something like this elsewhere; "If thou meet any man, salute him not"; that is (as is commonly expounded), do not hinder thy journey by discoursing with any in the way. But the same reason doth not hold in this place;

the business of these disciples not requiring such mighty expedition. They were commanded out *two by two*, to this or the other place or city where Christ himself was to come in person; nor was it necessary they should run in so great haste, that they should make no stay in the way. Only having appointed them to such and such places, their business indeed lay nowhere but in those very places to which they had been particularly sent, to proclaim the coming of Christ there, and not to be telling it in the way. The twelve apostles that were sent, their business was to declare the coming of the 'kingdom of heaven'; these the coming of the 'King himself.' No wonder, therefore, if the apostles were not forbidden to *salute* any in the way; for their province was, wherever they came, to tell the world that the kingdom of heaven was come: but these were only to give notice that the Messiah was coming: and that in those places only to which he was to come, and not to any whom they should meet cursorily in the way.

II. It was a very usual thing in that nation, upon some accounts, not to *salute* any in the way, no, not any person at all. "He that is mourning for the dead, let him not *salute* any person for the first seven days of his mourning." If thirteen fasts had been celebrated by order of the Sanhedrim for the imploring of rain, and yet no rain had fallen, then they "diminish from their business, and from building, and from planting, and from espousals and marriage, and from *saluting each other* as men under the rebukes of Heaven": that is, they abstained from all these things. "*The religious do not use to salute one another*; but if any of the common people do at any time *salute* them, they return it *in a very low voice with all gravity*, veiling themselves, and sitting in the posture of mourners or excommunicate persons."

Whether that of the apostle, "*Salute one another with a holy kiss*," might not have some reference to this usage, might be a matter for our inquiry, if there were place for it; but I forbear.

What therefore doth our Saviour intend by this prohibition, *Salute no man by the way*? would he imitate this Jewish custom, that he would have them taken for mourners everywhere?

I. He would have all that belonged to him conformable to himself, that every one from the quality of the messengers might, in some measure, judge what he was that sent them; as we have already hinted concerning the twelve apostles, He himself was "a man of sorrows"; and if his messengers do represent some such thing, either in their looks or behaviour, the people might the more easily guess what kind of person he was that commissioned them.

II. Christ had a twofold end in designing them to the places to which he in his own person had determined to come; namely, that thither all persons should assemble themselves to his doctrine for the healing of their souls: and that those that were diseased might be gathered thither in order to a cure. Now it was very fit and convenient that the behaviour of those that were to assemble the people to these ends should be mournful and solemn, to testify the fellow-feeling they had with the afflicted and miserable.

8. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:

[*Eat such things as are set before you.*] The traditional canons were so very precise and curious about not eating unless what were clean, what had been duly tithed, and from which the *Trumah* had been duly separated, that it might be almost a wonder the strict traditionists should not be famished if they lived and fed only by canon. "Let not *the religious* serve at the table of a laic, unless all things be rightly prepared and decimated."

From the irksomeness and perplexity of this niceness doth our Saviour acquit and absolve his followers; partly that he might introduce the gospel liberty; partly also consulting the necessity of his disciples, who if they had been bound up to that strictness in meats, what could they do when their converse was to lie chiefly amongst persons perfectly unknown to them?

18. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

[*I beheld Satan, &c.*] "Lucifer falling from heaven," [Isaiah 14:12](#), is the king of Babylon divested of his throne and dominion. So is Satan in this place. The word *I beheld*, I would refer to this very time: "When I sent you forth I saw Satan's fall at hand, that he should be immediately despoiled of his power and tyranny." For when the Messiah had determined to exhibit himself, and, in order thereunto, to send out so numerous a multitude of persons that should publish his appearance, it was absolutely necessary, and it could not otherwise be, but that the power of Satan should sink, and his government be shaken.

It is probable these seventy disciples were sent out upon the approach of the feast of Tabernacles, and when there now remained about half a year to the death of Christ. In which interval of time Christ shewed himself more openly, both by the preaching of these persons, and also in his own personal exhibition of himself, than before he had done. All which things determining in his death, whose death was also the death of Satan, might give him a very just occasion of saying, *I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven*, thrown out of his throne and kingdom. Compare [Revelation 12:8](#), where 'heaven' is to be interpreted 'the church.'

25. And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

[*Behold, a certain lawyer stood up.*]

Some few Notes concerning the Jewish Doctors.

The word *lawyer* we meet with in [Matthew 22:35](#), where the Syriac hath it *a scribe*. So [Luke 7:30](#); as also in this place, and chapter 11:45. Nor without reason, when he in St. Matthew, *one of them which was a lawyer*, is said to be, [Mark 12:28](#), *one of the scribes*.

However there seems some difficulty from a passage in our evangelist, where *woe unto you scribes*, and *Then answered one of the lawyers*, seems to make some distinction betwixt them. As to this, we shall make some remarks in its proper place. In the mean time let it not

seem tedious to the reader, if we discourse some things concerning the doctors of the law, with the various classes and orders of them, that we may the better judge of that sort of men of which we have so frequent mention in the holy Scriptures. And,

I. It is not unknown how the name *scribe* was a general title given to all the learned part of that nation, as it is opposed to the *rude* and illiterate person. "If two persons eat together, *and are both scribes*, they each of them say grace singly for themselves: *but if one of them be a scribe, and the other an illiterate person*, the scribe saith grace, and it sufficeth for the other that is unlearned."

Indeed, the first original of the word *scribes* did more peculiarly signify the *numberers*. "*The ancients were called numberers*, because they numbered all the letters of the law..." The Gloss gives another reason out of the Jerusalem Talmud; namely, "because they numbered all the points and contents of the law, as the forty principal servile works save one," &c.

Should we indeed grant that the first original of the word had such narrow bounds as this, yet does not this hinder but that it afterward enlarged itself so far as to denote any person learned in the law, and every doctor of it; nay, that it extended itself even to *the schoolmasters that taught children*: if not to the very *libellarii*, those whose business it was to write out bills of divorce and forms of contracts, &c. Of which two there is mention made amongst the ten sorts, whereof if none should happen to be in a city, it was not fit for any disciple of the wise to abide in it.

II. That the fathers of the Sanhedrim were more emphatically called the *scribes* is so well known that it needs no confirmation. That passage in the evangelist sufficiently shews it; "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat": that is, on the legislative bench, or in the Sanhedrim: where also the Sadducees that were of that council are called *scribes*: and the *scribes* are distinguished there from the *Pharisees*, not that they were not *scribes*, but because all the *scribes* there were not *Pharisees*.

III. There was a certain degree of doctors or *scribes* that were in the Sanhedrim, but were not members of it: these are commonly called *those who gave judgment in the presence of the wise men, fit for the office of legislators*, but not yet admitted. Such were Simeon Ben Azzai, and Simeon Ben Zumah. Such also was Simeon the Temanite, of whom we have made mention elsewhere, (out of *Sanhedrin*, fol. 17. 2) *He judged in the presence of the Sanhderim, sitting upon the ground*. He did not sit on the bench with the fathers, as not being one of their number, but on the seats below, nearer the ground: him the fathers consulted in difficult matters. A shadow of which we have in England of the judges, men learned in the laws, who have their seats in our house of lords.

Whether he that was particularly called *the wise man* was of the number of the fathers, or only of this kind of judges, I shall not at present dispute, but leave the reader to judge from this story: "Rabban Simeon Ben Gamliel was *the president* of the Sanhedrim: R. Meir was *chacam*, or *the wise man*; and R. Nathan, *the vice-governor*." Now when Rabban Simeon

had decreed something that disparaged R. Meir and R. Nathan, "Saith R. Meir to R. Nathan, *I am the chacam* [or *the wise man*], and thou art the vice-president. Let us remove Rabban Simeon from the presidency, then thou wilt be the president, and I the vice-president."

There is nothing more common, and yet nothing more difficult than that saying, "The school of Hillel saith so and so, and the school of Shammai so: *but the wise men say otherwise*." It is very obscure who these *wise men* should be. If we should say the Sanhedrim, it is plain that one part of it consisted of the Shammaeans, and another part of the Hillelites. If so, then it should seem that these *wise men* are those judges of whom we have spoken: unless you will assign a third part to the Sadducees, to whom you will hardly attribute the determination of the thing, and much less the emphatical title of *the wise men*. But this we leave undecided.

IV. Let us a little inquire out of the Sanhedrim; we shall find variety of scribes and doctors of the law, according to the variety of the law itself, and the variety of teaching it. Hence those various treatises amongst the Rabbins; the *Micra*, *Misna*, *Midras*, *Talmud*, *Agadah*, &c.

1. *Micra*, is the text of the Bible itself: its reading and literal explication.

2. *Misna*, the doctrine of traditions and their explication.

3. *Midras*, the mystic and allegorical doctrine and exposition of the Scriptures: "For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day." Now these were the ways and methods of preaching him:

I. As to the written law (for every one knows they had a twofold law, *written* and *oral*, as they call it), they had a twofold way of declaring it, viz., explaining and applying it according to the literal sense of it, *for edification, exhortation, and comfort*, as the apostle hath it; or else by drawing allegories, mysteries, and far-fetched notions out of it. As to the former way, the rulers of the synagogue seem to have respect to it in what they said to Paul and Barnabas: *If ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on*. As to the latter, the instances are endless in the Jewish writings every where; so far, that they have even melted down the whole volume of the Scriptures into tradition and allegory.

It is not easily determined whether those preachers were so of a different order, that one should wholly addict himself to the plain and literal exposition and application of the Scriptures, the other only to the mystical and more abstruse way of teaching. There is no question but both these did frequently meet both in one preacher, and that in one and the same sermon: and indeed I cannot tell but that the word *Agadah* may sometimes denote both these ways of expounding and interpreting the law. When a certain person, being interrogated about certain traditions, could give no answer, the standers by said, *Perhaps he is not skilled in the* [traditional] *doctrine: but he may be able to expound*. And so they propound to him [Daniel 10:21](#) to explain. To which that also agrees well enough, "*The masters of the Agada or expositions, because they are 'Darshanin'* [or *profound searchers of the*

Scriptures], are honoured of all men, for they draw away the hearts of their auditors." Nor does that sound very differently as to the thing itself: *On the sabbath day they discussed discussions* [i.e. in the Scriptures, *searching the Scriptures*] "to the masters of families, who had been employed in their occasions all the week; and while they were expounding, they taught them the articles about things forbidden and things permitted them," &c.

To these kind of mystic and allegorical expositions of Scripture (if at least it be proper to call them *expositions*) they were so strangely bewitched, that they valued nothing more than a skill in tickling or rubbing the itching ears of their auditors with such trifles. Hence that passage, "R. Joshua said to R. Jochanan Ben Bruchah, and to R. Eleazar the blind, *What new thing have you met with today in 'Beth Midras'?* They answered and said, 'We are all thy disciples, and drink wholly at thy waters.' To whom he; 'It is impossible but you should meet with something novel every day in *Beth Midras*.'"

II. As to the oral law, there was also a twofold way of explaining it, as they had for the written law:

1. The former way we have intimated to us in these words: "The book of the Law, when it grows old, they lay up with one of the disciples of the wise men, *even although he teach the traditions*." The passage seems very obscure, but it is thus explained by the Gloss: "Albeit it doth not any way help the disciples of the wise men *in Talmud and Gemara, but in Misnaioth and Beriathoth*," that is, he that would only read the body of the traditional law, and render the literal sense of it,--and not he that would dispute scholastically, and comment upon it. For,

2. There were doctors that would inquire more deeply into the traditions, would give some accounts (such as they were), of them, would discuss difficulties, solve doubts, &c.; a specimen of which is the Talmudic Gemara throughout.

Lastly, amongst the learned, and doctors of that nation, there were the *Agadici*, who would expound the written law in a more profound way than ordinary, even to what was cabalistical. These were more rare, and (as it should seem) not so acceptable amongst the people. Whether these are concerned in what follows, let the reader judge: "R. Joshua Ben Levi saith, *So and so let it happen to me*, if in all my life I ever saw *the book Agada* above once; and then I found a hundred seventy-and-five sections of the law, where it is written, 'The Lord hath said, hath spoken, hath commanded.' They are according to the number of the years of our father Abraham, as it is said, *To receive gifts for men*, &c. A hundred forty-and-seven Psalms, which are in the Book of Psalms [mark the number] are according to the number of the years of our father Jacob; as it is written, 'Thou art holy, and inhabitest the praises of Israel.' A hundred twenty-and-three turns, wherein Israel answereth Hallelujah [to him that repeats the *Hallel*], are according to the number of the years of Aaron," &c. And as a *coronis*, let me add that passage in *Sanhedrim*, "If they be masters of the textual reading, they shall be conversant in the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa. *If they be*

masters of the Misna, they shall be conversant in Misna Halacoth and Haggadoth. And if they be masters of the Talmud, they shall be conversant in the traditions of the Passover, in the Passover: in the traditions of Pentecost, in Pentecost: in the traditions of the feast of Tabernacles, in the feast of Tabernacles."

These all, whom we have mentioned, were scribes and doctors and expounders of the law; but which of these may properly and peculiarly challenge to themselves the title of *lawyers*, whether all, or any particular class of them? The latter is most probable: but then, what class will you choose? or will you distinguish betwixt *the lawyer* and *the teacher of the law*? I had rather the reader would frame his own judgment here. And yet, that I might not dismiss this question wholly untouched, and at the same time not weary the reader with too long a digression, I have referred what is to be alleged in this matter to my notes upon chapter 11:45.

26. He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

[*How readest thou?*] An expression very common in the schools, *What readest thou?* when any person brought a text of Scripture for the proof of any thing. The Rabbins have a tradition, that *the disease of the squinancy came into the world upon the account of tithes*. (The Gloss hath it: "For eating of fruits that had not been tithed.") "R. Eliezer Ben R. Jose saith, 'It was for an evil tongue.' Rabba saith, and it is the saying also of R. Joshua Ben Levi, *What readest thou?* The king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by himself shall glory: *for the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.*" And a little after, upon another subject: "R. Simeon Ben Gezirah saith, *What or how readest thou?* If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock": [Canticles 1:8](#).

We will not be very curious in inquiring whether our Saviour used the very same form of speech, or any other. In this only he departs from their common use of speech, in that he calls to another to allege some text of Scripture; whereas it was usual in the schools that he that spoke that would allege some place himself.

27. And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

[*And with all thy mind.*] In this answer of the man there are these two things observable:

I. That our Saviour brings in this clause, which in so many terms is not in Moses, where the rest are: where the Greek both of the Roman and Alexandrian edition render *with all thy might*. But wherein is *mind*? I pass by other copies, wherein though there is some varying, yet there is not this which is now before us.

Our Saviour hath the same clause elsewhere, but not in the same order; *with all thy mind, and with all thy strength*: here it is, *with all thy strength, and with all thy mind*. What shall we say therefore? shall we suppose it writ to this sense in the Hebrew in their phylac-

teries? This we can hardly think. Was it added by the Greek interpreters, and so the evangelists take it from thence? we see it is not so. What then? doth *might* signify both *strength* and *mind*? Here, indeed, the hinge of the question turns. That it denotes *strength*, no one doubts; yea, and the Rabbins suppose it denotes *Mammon* too, with whom the Syriac and Targumist agree: but still, where doth it signify *the mind*?

1. Take such a Gloss as is frequently in use amongst the allegorizing doctors: *With what measure he shall mete to thee, do thou praise him exceedingly*. Where we see they play with the sound of words, which is a very common thing with them to do...

2. To this we may add, if we think fit, what they commonly require in all religious services; viz. *the preparation and the intention of the mind*...Moses' words, therefore, are rendered by the evangelists not strictly and according to the letter, as they are in him, or were in the parchments in the phylacteries; but both according to their full sense and tenour, as also according to the common and received interpretation of that nation.

"R. Levi Bar Chajothah went to Caesarea, and heard them *reciting their 'Shemaa'* [or *their phylacteries*] *Hellenistically* [i.e. *in Greek*]" &c. Now, whether the clause we are now handling was inserted there, it would be in vain to inquire, because not possible to find...

The second thing observable in this man's answer, is, that he adds, "And thy neighbour as thyself": which indeed was not written in the schedules of their phylacteries: otherwise I should have thought the man had understood those words of our Saviour, *How readest thou?* as if he had said, "How dost thou repeat the sentences of the phylacteries?" for he reciteth the sentence as it was in their phylacteries, only adding this clause, "And thy neighbour," &c. Now the usual expression for the recitation of their phylacteries was *They read the 'Shemaa'*; which also is so rendered by some when indeed they commonly repeat them without book. *He that read the Book* [of Esther] *orally*: i.e. as the Gemara explains it, "Without book," or "by heart." It is queried, "Why they repeat those two sections every day? R. Levi saith, Because the ten commandments [of the decalogue] are comprehended therein." And he shews further how they are comprehended, saving only (which is very observable) the second commandment. Afterward indeed they confess, "It was very fitting they should every day repeat the very decalogue itself; but they did not repeat it, lest the heretics should say, that only those commandments were given to Moses on Mount Sinai." However, they did repeat those passages wherein they supposed the decalogue was summed up.

Whether, therefore, this lawyer of ours understood the words of our Saviour as having respect to that usage of repeating their phylacteries; or whether he of his own accord, and according to his own opinion, would be giving the whole sum of the decalogue, he shews himself rather a *textual* than a *traditional* doctor, although the word *lawyer*, seems to point out the latter rather.

29. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

[*And who is my neighbour?*] This doubt and form of questioning he had learned out of the common school, where it is thus taught in *Aruch*. *He excepts all Gentiles when he saith, His neighbour.*

"An Israelite killing a *stranger inhabitant*, he doth not die for it by the Sanhedrim; because it is said, *If any one lift up himself against his neighbour*. And it is not necessary to say, He does not die upon the account of a Gentile: for they are not esteemed by them for their *neighbour*."

"The Gentiles, amongst whom and us there is no war, and so those that are keepers of sheep amongst the Israelites, and the like, we are not to contrive their death: but if they be in any danger of death, we are not bound to deliver them: e.g. If any of them fall into the sea, you shall not need to take him out: for it is said, *Thou shalt not rise up against the blood of thy neighbour; but such a one is not thy neighbour.*"

30. And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

[*A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho.*] This was the most beaten and frequented road in the whole land of Israel, and that, not only as it led to Perea, but also upon the account of that great traffic that was between these two cities, especially because of the *courses* that were as well in Jericho as Jerusalem. Of which we have discoursed elsewhere. To which I shall superadd this passage out of Jerusalem *Taanith*: "The former prophets instituted four-and-twenty *courses*, and for every *course* there was a *stationary class* of priests, Levites, and Israelites *in Jerusalem*. It is a tradition: Four-and-twenty thousand was the stationary number out of Jerusalem, and half that station out of Jericho. Jericho could indeed have produced an entire station; but that it would give the preference to Jerusalem; and therefore it produced but half."

Here, therefore, you may see in this historical parable why there is such particular mention made of a priest and Levite travelling that way, because there was very frequent intercourse of this sort of men between these towns; and that upon the account of the stations above mentioned.

[*He fell among thieves.*] It is with great confidence I see, but upon what foundation I cannot see, that the commentators generally make *Adummim* the scene of this robbery above all other places. It is true, the road betwixt Jerusalem and Jericho was dangerous enough; and for that reason (as is commonly believed) there was placed a band of soldiers "betwixt Aelia and Jericho," for the safeguard of passengers: but whereas it is said that the place is called *Adummim*, i.e. *a place of redness*, from the blood that was spilt by robbers there, this seems to have very little force in it: because the place had that name of *Adummim* even in Joshua's days, when we can hardly suppose the times to have been so pestered with robberies as they were when our Saviour uttered this parable: see [Joshua 15:7](#), where if we

consider the situation of 'the going up to *Adummim*,' it will appear it was not very distant from Jericho.

[*Half dead.*] The Rabbins term it *next to death*; beyond which condition, on this side death, was only *one just expiring*.

31. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

[*When he saw him, he passed by on the other side.*] And why, I pray, priest and Levite, do ye thus pass by a man in such a miserable condition? Was he not an Israelite? It is true, ye had learned out of your own schools not to succour a Gentile, no, nor a keeper of sheep, though he was an Israelite: now was this wounded man such a one? or did ye think ye should have contracted some pollution by touching one half dead? The word *passed by on the other side*, seems to hint as if they passed by him, keeping their distance from him: let them tell the reason themselves. For my part, I would impute it wholly to the mere want of charity.

33. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him.

[*But a certain Samaritan.*] *The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans*: that is, so as to be obliged by them for any courtesy done to them. But would this Jew, half dead, reject the kindness of the Samaritan at this time? This person being of a nation than which the Jews hated nothing more, is brought in shewing this kindness to the Jew, on purpose to give the plainer instance, *who is our neighbour*. It might seem more proper to have said, that the Samaritan acknowledged the wounded man for his *neighbour* in being so kind to him: but our Saviour intimates that he was the wounded man's *neighbour*; thereby teaching us that even a stranger, yea, an enemy (against the doctrine of their own schools), is no other than our *neighbour*.

34. And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

[*Pouring in oil and wine.*] It is a tradition. "*They spread a plaster for the sick on the sabbath day*: that is, upon condition they had mingled it with wine and oil on the evening of the sabbath. But if they have not mixed it on the sabbath, it is forbidden. A tradition. R. Simeon Ben Eliezer saith, That it is allowed by R. Meir, both to mingle the oil and the wine, and also to anoint the sick on the sabbath day."

35. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

[*He took out two pence.*] Aruch: "A shekel of the law is *sela*, and is of the value of four pence." So that *the half shekel* is *two pence*: a price that was to be paid yearly by every one

as a ransom for his soul or life. Whence, not unfitly, we see *two pence* are paid down for the recovery of this man's life that had been wounded and half dead.

[*And gave them to the host.*] The Rabbins retain this *Greek* word, however the author of *Aruch* calls it *Ismaelitic*, or *Arabic*. A *tavern* or *inn* (saith he), *in the Ismaelitish language, is called 'pondak.'* It is true, indeed, the Arabic version useth this word in this place; but it is well known whence it takes its original. "Two men went into *an inn*; one a just, the other a wicked man. They sat down apart. The wicked man saith *to the host*, 'Let me have *one pheasant*, and let me have *conditum* or *hippocras*.' The just man said to the host, 'Let me have a piece of bread and a dish of lentils.' The wicked man laughed the just man to scorn, 'See how this fool calls for lentils when he may have dainties.' On the contrary, the just man, 'See how this fool eateth, when his teeth are to be immediately dashed out.' The just man saith *to the host*, 'Give me two cups of wine, that I may bless them': he gave them him, and he blessed them, and rising up gave to the host a piece of money for the portion that he had eaten, and departed in peace. But there was a falling out betwixt the wicked man and his host about the reckoning, and the host dashed out his teeth."

38. Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

[*Martha received him, &c.*] Our Saviour is now at the feast of Tabernacles: and visits Bethany, where there had grown a friendship betwixt himself and Lazarus' family, upon his having cast out so many devils out of Mary his sister. For it is no foreign thing to suppose she was that Mary that was called *Magdalene*, because Bethany itself was called *Magdala*. As to the name *Martha*, see notes upon [John 11](#): and as to the name *Magdala*, see notes upon [John 12](#).

1. And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

[*Teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.*] What kind of request is this, that this disciple, whoever he is, doth here make? Was he ignorant of, or had he forgot, that form of prayer which the Lord had delivered to them in his sermon upon the mount? If he had not forgot it, why then doth he require any other? Doth he mean, 'Lord, teach us to pray, for John hath taught his disciples?' or thus, 'Teach us a form and rule of prayer like that which John had taught his?' This latter is the most probable; but then it is something uncertain what kind of form that might be which the disciples of John were taught. As to this inquiry, we may consider these things:

I. It is said of the disciples of John, *They fast often, and make prayers*, [Luke 5:33](#): where, upon many accounts, I could persuade myself that *prayers* ought to be taken here in its most proper sense for *supplications*. To let other things pass, let us weigh these two:

1. That the Jews' daily and common prayers, ordinary and occasional, consisted chiefly of benedictions and doxologies, which the title of that Talmudic tract, which treats of their prayers, sufficiently testifies, being called [*Beracoth*] *benedictions*, as also that *tephillah*, the general nomenclature for *prayer*, signifies no other than *praising*, i.e. *benediction* or *doxology*. To illustrate this matter, we have a passage or two not unworthy our transcribing:

"*Perhaps, a man begs for necessities for himself, and afterward prayeth.* This is that which is spoken by Solomon, when he saith, *To the prayer, and to the supplication.*" I omit the version, because the Gemarists interpret it themselves; *rinna* is *tephillah*, and *tephillah* is *bakkashah*. Their meaning is this: The first word of Solomon's *rinnah*, signifies *prayer* (as the Gloss hath it, i.e. *prayer with praise*, or *doxology*) the latter word, *tephillah*, signifies *petition*, or *supplication*; Gloss, *begging for things necessary*.

It cannot be denied but that they had their petitionary or supplicatory prayers; but then, the benedictory or doxological prayers were more in number, and more large and copious: especially those which were poured out occasionally or upon present emergency. Read the last chapter of the treatise I newly quoted, and judge as to this particular: read the whole treatise, and then judge of the whole matter.

2. It may be reasonably supposed that the Baptist taught his disciples a form of prayer different from what the Jewish forms were. It stands with reason, that he that was to bring in a new doctrine, (I mean *new* in respect to that of the Jewish) should bring in a new way of prayer too; that is, a form of prayer that consisted more in petition and supplication than the Jewish forms had done; nay, and another sort of petitions than what those forms which were petitionary had hitherto contained. For the disciples of John had been instructed in the points of regeneration, justifying faith, particular adoption, and sanctification by the Spirit, and other doctrines of the gospel, which were altogether unknown in the schools or

synagogues of the Jews. And who would imagine, therefore, that John Baptist should not teach his disciples to pray for these things?

II. It is probable, therefore, that when this disciple requested our Saviour that he would teach his disciples *as John* had done, he had respect to such kind of prayers as these; because we find Christ so far condescending to him, that he delivers him a form of prayer merely petitionary, as may appear both from the whole structure of the prayer, as also in that the last close of all the doxology, "For thine is the kingdom," &c. is here left wholly out; he took care to deliver [a form] that was merely supplicatory. This is confirmed by what follows concerning the man requesting some loaves of his neighbour, adding withal this exhortation, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find." Which two things seem to answer those two things by which supplicatory prayer is defined; these are *sheelah*, *asking*, and *bakkashah*, *seeking*: for if there may be any difference in the meaning of these two words, I would suppose it thus, *bakkashah*, or *seeking*, may respect the things of God; so, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," &c.: and *sheelah*, or *asking*, may respect those things which are necessary for ourselves: which texture we find very equally divided in this present form of prayer, where the three first petitions are in behalf of God's honour, and the three last in behalf of our own necessities.

It was in use amongst the Jews, when they fasted, to use a peculiar sort of prayer, joined with what were daily, terming it *the prayer of the fast*. This we have mentioned in *Taanith*, where it is disputed whether *those that fasted for certain hours* only, and not for the whole day, ought to repeat that prayer of the fast: as also, in what order and place that prayers is to be inserted amongst the daily ones. Now if it should be granted that John had taught his disciples any such form, that might be particularly adapted to their fastings, it is not very likely this disciple had any particular reference to that, because the disciples of Christ did not fast as the disciples of John did. It rather respected the whole frame of their prayers which he had instructed them in, which consisted chiefly *of petitions and supplications*.

Object. But probably this disciple was not ignorant that Christ had already delivered to them a petitionary form in that Sermon of his upon the Mount: and therefore what need had he to desire, and for what reason did he importune another?

Answer. It is likely he did know it; and as likely he did not expect the repetition of the same again: but being very intent upon what John had done for his disciples, did hope for a form more full and copious, that might more largely and particularly express what they were to ask for, according to what he had observed probably in the form that had been prescribed by John: but the divine wisdom of our Saviour knew, however, that all was sufficiently comprehended in what he had given them. And as the Jews had their *short summary* of those eighteen prayers epitomized, so would he have this form of his a short summary of all that we ought to ask for.

**4. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.**

[*And lead us not into temptation.*] I am much deceived if this petition is not amongst other things, and indeed principally, and in the first place, directed against the visible apparitions of the devil, *the evil one*: as also his actual obsessions: by which the phrase of God's 'leading us into temptation' is very much softened.

The doxology, 'For thine is the kingdom,' &c., is left out, because it was our Saviour's intention in this place to deliver to them a form of prayer merely petitionary; for which very same reason also, *Amen* is omitted too. For *he shall say Amen at thy giving of thanks*: and indeed they commonly ended all their prayers, even those that consisted most of petition, with thanksgiving and benediction; concluding in this manner, "Blessed be thou, O Lord, who hast thus done, or thus commanded," or the like; and then was it answered by all, *Amen*. This we may observe in those Psalms that conclude any portion of that book, and end with *Amen*: upon what subject soever the Psalmist is engaged, either throughout the whole psalm, or immediately before the bringing forth of *Amen*, still he never doth mention *Amen* without some foregoing doxology and benediction, "Blessed be the Lord God, &c., *Amen* and *Amen*." In St. Matthew, therefore, we find *Amen*, because there is the doxology: in St. Luke it is wanting, because the doxology is so too. You may see more of this in notes upon [Matthew 6](#).

15. But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.

[*Through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.*] I. As to this name of Beelzebub I have elsewhere discoursed, and do still assert the reading of it with the letter *l* in the end of it, viz. Beelzebub, against the Syriac, Persian, Vulgar, and other translations, which read it Beelzebub. The Italian, cautiously indeed, but not purely, *Beelzebu*, that he might not strike upon either the one or the other reading: but in the mean time I will not answer for the faithfulness and candour of the interpreter.

II. Amongst the Jews we may observe three devils called the *chief*, or *prince of the devils*: 1. 'The angel of death'; who is called *Prince of all the Satans*. 2. *The devil Asmodeus*: of him afterward. 3. *Beelzebub*, in this place. Now as to vindicating the writing of it by *l* in the end of the word, and not *b*:

III. It is a question whether there were such a thing as *Beelzebub* in *rerum natura*. Why should not the deity of the place take his farewell, when Ekron, the place of this deity, was wholly obliterated? When there was no more an idol nor oracle at Ekron, did not the demon cease to be *Beelzebub* any longer, although it did not cease to be a demon? Wherever, therefore, Ekron was under the second Temple, or the place where it had been under the first; you can hardly persuade me there was any idol or oracle of *Beelzebub*, and so not *Beelzebub* himself. I will not here dispute whether Achor, the Cyrenians' tutelary god against

flies, hath any relation or affinity with the name of Ekron. Let it be granted that *Beelzebub* might change his soil upon some occasion, and remove from Ekron to Cyrene: but then how should he come to be the *prince of the devils*, when all his business and power was only among *flies*?

It may not be improbable, perhaps, that he might be first or chief of those demons, or *Baalim*, that Ahab brought among the Israelites; and so Ahaziah his son, in the midst of his affliction and danger, might fly for refuge to that idol as what had been the god of his father: but what is it could move the ages following at so long distance of time from this, that they should esteem this demon *Beelzebub* the *prince of the devils*? Here I confess myself not well satisfied: but as to *Beelzebub*, something may be said.

IV. I have already shewn, in notes upon [Matthew 12](#), that the Jewish doctors (and such were these who contended with our Saviour) did give idolatrous worship the denomination of *zebul*, or *dung*, for the ignominy of the thing; and so was the nation generally taught by these Rabbins. I gave some instances for the proof of it, which I shall not here repeat, but add one more: "It is said of Joseph" [when his mistress would have tempted him to adultery], "that he came into the house to do his business. R. Judah saith, *It was a day of fooling and of dunging*, it was a day of theatres." Where the Gloss upon the word *zebul*, *stercoration*, saith thus: "It is a word of contempt, and so it is expounded by R. Solomon in the treatise *Avodah Zarah*, and *Tosaphoth*; viz. that *fooling* signifies to *sacrifice* [that is, to idols]; and they prove it out of *Jerusalem Beracoth*, where it is said, 'He that seeth a place *where they dung* [that is, *offer sacrifice*] *to an idol*, let him say, Whoso offereth sacrifice to strange gods, let him be accursed.'" Which words we have also alleged out of the *Jerusalem Talmud*.

V. Now therefore, when idolatry was denominated *zebul* amongst the Jews, and indeed reckoned amongst the most grievous of sins they could be guilty of, that devil whom they supposed to preside over this piece of wickedness they named him *Beelzebub*, and esteemed him the *prince of the devils*; or (if you will pardon the expression) the *most devilized of all devils*.

VI. They give the like title to the devil Asmodeus. *Asmodeus the king of the devils. The devil, the prince of the spirits*. Which elsewhere is expounded, *the devil Asmodeus*. For in both places we have this ridiculous tale: "There was a certain woman brought forth a son in the night-time, and said to her son [a child newly born you must know], 'go and light me a candle, that I may cut thy navel.' As he was going, the devil Asmodeus meeting him, said to him, 'Go and tell thy mother that if the cock had not crowed I would have killed thee,'" &c.

The very name points at 'apostasy,' not so much that the devil was an apostate, as that this devil provoked and enticed people to apostatize: *Beelzebub* amongst the Gentiles, and Asmodeus amongst the Jews, the first authors of their apostasy. Whether both the name and demon were not found out by the Jews to affright the Samaritans, see the place above quoted: "When as Noah went to plant a vineyard, *the demon Asmodeus met him* and said,

Let me partake with thee," &c. So that it seems they suppose Asmodeus had a hand in Noah's drunkenness. "*When he [that is, Solomon] sinned, Asmodeus drove him to it,*" &c. They call the *angel of death* by the name of *prince of all Satans*, because he destroys all mankind by death, none excepted.

31. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

[*The queen of the south, &c.*] I. I cannot but wonder what should be the meaning of that passage in *Bava Bathra*; *Whoever saith that the queen of Sheba was a woman, doth no other than mistake. What then is the queen of Sheba? The kingdom of Sheba.* Would he have the whole kingdom of the Sabeans to have come to Solomon? Perhaps what is said, that *the queen of Sheba came with an exceeding great army* (for so is that clause rendered by some), might seem to sound something of this nature in his ears. But if there was any kind of ambiguity in the word *queen*, as indeed there is none, or if interpreters doubted at all about it, as indeed none had done, the great oracle of truth hath here taught us that the queen did come to Solomon: but why doth he term her *the queen of 'the south,'* and not *the queen of 'Sheba'?*

II. There are plausible things upon this occasion spoken concerning *Sheba of the Arabians*, which we have no leisure to discuss at present. I am apt rather to apprehend that our Saviour may call her *the queen of the south* in much a like sense as the king of Egypt is called in Daniel 'the king of the south.' The countries in that quarter of the world were very well known amongst the Jews by that title: but I question whether the *Arabian Saba* were so or no. Grant that some of the Arabian countries be in later ages called *Aliemin*, or *southern parts*, yet I doubt whether so called by antiquity, or in the days of our Saviour.

Whereas it is said that *the queen of the south* came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, is it worth the patience of the reader to hear a little the folly of the Jews about this matter? Because it is said that she came to make a proof of his wisdom by dark sayings and hard questions, these doctors will be telling us what kind of riddles and hard questions she put to him. "She saith unto him, 'If I ask thee any thing, wilt thou answer me?' He said, 'It is the Lord that giveth wisdom.' She saith, 'What is this then? *There are seven things go out and nine enter. Two mingle [or prepare] the cup, and one drinks of it.*' He saith, 'There are seven days for a woman's separation, that go out; and nine months for her bringing forth, that come in. Two breasts do [mingle, or] prepare the cup, and one sucks it.' Again saith she, 'I will ask thee one thing more: What is this? A woman saith unto her son, Thy father was my father; thy grandfather was my husband; thou art my son, and I am thy sister.' To whom he answered, '*Surely they were Lot's daughters.*'" There is much more of this kind, but thus much may suffice for riddles.

33. No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

[*No man, when he hath lighted a candle, &c.*] The coherence of this passage with what went before seems a little difficult, but the connection probably is this: there were some that had reviled him as if he had cast out devils by the prince of the devils, others that had required a sign from heaven, verses 15,16. To the former of these he gives an answer, verse 17,18: and, indeed, to both of them, verse 19, and so on. This passage we are upon respects both, but the latter more principally: q.d. "You require a sign of me: would you have me light a candle, and put it under a bushel? would you have me work miracles, when I am assured beforehand you will not believe these miracles? Which, however of themselves they may shine like a candle lighted up, yet, in respect to you that believe them not, it is no other than a candle under a bushel, or in a secret place."

36. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

[*The whole shall be full of light.*] This clause seems so much the same with the former, as if there were something of tautology; *If thy whole body therefore be full of light, &c.* Our Saviour speaketh of the eye, after the manner of the schools, where the *evil eye*, or the *eye not single*, signified the covetous, envious, and malicious mind: "Do not bring such a mind along with thee, but a candid, benign, gentle mind; then thou wilt be all bright and clear thyself, and all things will be bright and clear to thee. If you had but such a mind, O ye carping, blasphemous Jews, you would not frame so sordid and infamous a judgment of my miracles; but you would have a clear and candid opinion concerning them."

38. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

[*That he had not first washed before dinner.*] Had the Pharisee himself *washed before dinner*, in that sense wherein *washed* signifies the washing of the whole body? It is hardly credible, when there was neither need, nor was it the custom, to wash the whole body before meat, but the hands only. This we have spoken largelier upon elsewhere [Matt 15; Mark 7]; from whence it will be necessary for us to repeat these things; that there is *a washing of the hands*, and there is *a dipping of the hands*. This clause we are upon refers to this latter. The Pharisee wonders that Christ had not washed his hands; nay, that he had not dipped them all over in the water when he was newly come *from the people that were gathered thick together*.

Of how great esteem this *washing their hands* before meat was amongst them, besides what I have alleged elsewhere, take this one instance more: "It is storied of R. Akibah, that he was bound in prison, and R. Joshua ministered unto him as his *reader*. He daily brought him water by measure. One day the keeper of the prison met him, and said unto him, 'Thou hast too much water today.' He poured out half, and gave him half. When he came to R.

Akibah, he told him the whole matter. R. Akibah saith unto him, 'Give me some water to wash my hands': the other saith unto him, 'There is not enough for thee to drink; and how then shouldest thou have any to wash thine hands?' To whom he, 'What shall I do in a matter wherein there is the guilt of death? It is better I should die [that is, by thirst] than that I should transgress the mind of my colleagues': who had thus prescribed about washing of hands.

And a little after; Samuel saith, "*At that time wherein Solomon instituted the 'Erubhin' and washing of the hands*, there came forth '*Bath Kol*,' and said, 'My son, if thy heart be wise, even mine shall rejoice.'" Observe here, (at least if you will believe it) that Solomon was the first author of this washing of hands. "Whosoever blesseth immediately after the washing of hands, *Satan doth not accuse him for that time of his repast.*"

39. And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

[*Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, &c.*] This our Saviour speaks of the *persons*, and not of the *vessels*; which is plain, in that,

I. He saith, *your inward parts, &c.*; so that the sense is to this purpose: You cleanse yourselves outwardly indeed by these kinds of washings; but that which is within you is full of rapine, &c.

II. Whereas he saith, *he that made that which is without*, he doth not speak it of the *artificer* that made the cup or the platter, but of *God*. Else what kind of argument is this? 'He that made the cups and the platters, made both the outside and the inside of them': what then? 'Therefore do ye make yourselves clean both outside and inside too.' But if we refer it to God, then the argument holds forcibly enough: 'Did not God, that made you without, make you within too? he expects, therefore, that you should keep yourselves clean, not only as to your outside, but as to your inside too.'

III. It is hardly probable that the Pharisees should wash the outside of the cup or platter, and not the inside too. Take but these two passages out of this kind of authors themselves: "Those dishes which any person eats out of over night, they wash them, that he may eat in them in the morning. In the morning they wash them, that he may eat in them at noon. At noon, that he may eat in them at the mincha. After the mincha, he doth not wash them again; but the cups, and jugs, and bottles, he doth wash, *and so it goes throughout the whole day,*" &c. I will not give myself nor reader the trouble to examine the meaning of the words: it suffices that here is mention only of washing, and that the whole vessel, not of this or that part only: and the washing of such vessels was *by dipping them in water*.

"All vessels *that have an outside and an inside*, if the inside be defiled, the outside is also; but *if the outside be defiled, the inside is not defiled.*" One would think this was to our purpose, and asserted the very literal sense of the words we have in hand, viz. that the cups and the platters, although they were unclean on the outside, yet in the inside they might be clean;

and it was sufficient to the Pharisee, if he cleansed them on the outside only. But the vessels here mentioned (if the Gloss may be our interpreter) are such *as they might use both the outside and the inside* indifferently. Some of them are recited by the Gemarists, viz. sacks, wallets, nightcaps, pillowcases, &c.

Our Saviour, therefore, does not here speak according to the letter, neither here nor in [Matthew 23:25](#), when he saith, "Ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter"; but by way of parable and similitude. 'You, while you are so very nice and officious in your external washings, you do nothing more than if you only washed the outside of the cup or dish, while there was nothing but filth and nastiness within.'

40. Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also?

[*Ye fools.*] A word very common to the nation. "Rabban Jochanan Ben Zacchai said to the Baithuseans, *Ye fools*, how prove you this?" "Esau said, *Cain was a fool*. Pharaoh said, *Esau was a fool*. Haman said, *Pharaoh was a fool*. Gog and Magog will say, *They were all fools that are gone before us.*" Hence that common phrase, *O thou most foolish thing in all the world.*

41. But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.

[*But rather give alms of such things as ye have.*] This seems ironically spoken, and in derision to the opinion they had concerning alms.

I. As to the version of the word *of such things*, may we not suppose it signifies not only, *that which is over and above*, as the Vulgar, but also *all that you have*, as Beza: or not only something that may have respect to the riches of this world, but something also that may have respect to the doctrines and tenets of the Pharisees. As if the meaning was this, "'Those things which are amongst you,' i.e. which obtain commonly amongst you, are to this purpose, 'Give but alms, and all things are clean unto you.'" ...

II. However, *that which is over and above*, or *that which you have*, (for I will not be very tenacious in this) yet it is hardly probable that our Saviour utters this as his own, but rather as the words and opinion of the Pharisees. Nor do I think that he speaks these things directly, or by way of directions *to them*, but that he cites their tenets in mere scoff and displeasure. For indeed, this principle was the spawn of their own schools, that giving of alms had a value in it that served for atonement, justification, salvation, every thing. Hence that common term that reached so comprehensively, *righteousness*. And hence is it that, in those numberless places in the Holy Scriptures, where the praises of *justice* and *righteousness* are celebrated, and all the blessings of it pronounced, they apply it all to *the giving of alms*. Take on instance for all: "Rabh Asai saith, *Alms is equivalent to all the other commandments.*" "R. Judah saith, Giving of alms is a great thing; for it hastens our redemption. It is written, *righteousness*,

[i.e., *giving of alms*], *delivers from death*. Almsgiving, delivereth from sudden death, and from the judgment of hell. R. Meir saith, If any wicked man should make this objection, that if your God love the poor, why doth he not feed them? do thou make this answer; it is, that we by them might be delivered from the judgment of hell."

I fear, indeed, that the Greek interpreters have a touch of this, when they so oftentimes render *justice* by *giving of alms*. So that the reader may judge whether our Saviour either would teach, that rapine, injustice, and unrighteousness might be cleansed by giving of alms; or that he would give them any counsel of this nature, when he knew they were sufficiently tintured with this kind of doctrine already.

45. Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also.

[*Then answered one of the lawyers.*] Here seems a little difficulty, that whereas, in the foregoing verse it is said, "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees," it is not subjoined *then answered one of the scribes*, but *one of the lawyers*; which scruple perhaps the Vulgar observing, made him leave *scribes and Pharisees* wholly out. Our Saviour inveighs more peculiarly, and by name, against the Pharisees, verses 37,42,43; and at length joins the scribes with them, verse 44. Hence that lawyer cavils and complains, either that he had named the scribes in terms, or that he had accused the Pharisees of nothing but what the scribes might be equally accused of. As to this very scribe, did not he wash his hands before dinner as the Pharisees did? for it is said of all the Jews, "*except they wash their hands oft, eat not.*" Did not the scribe tithing mint and rue as well as the Pharisee? when we find that *the tithing of herbs was instituted by the Rabbins*. In a word, the scribes and the Pharisees go hand in hand in that discourse of our Saviour's, [Matthew 23](#); where he blameth both the one and the other for the same things. So that it is plain enough why this man complains; but it is not so plain why he should be termed "one of the *lawyers*," and not "one of the *scribes*."

I. It is not very easy distinguishing betwixt *the scribe* and the Pharisee, unless that Pharisaism was a kind of tumour and excrescence as to superstition and austerities of religion beyond the common and stated practice of that nation, even of the scribes themselves. Whether that distinction betwixt *singular*, and *a disciple*, hints any difference as to the austerity of religion, I cannot affirm; I will only lay a passage or two in the reader's eye for him to consider.

"The Rabbins have a tradition, Let no one say, *I am a Disciple, I am not fit to be made a Singular.*" The Gloss hath it, "I am not fit to begin the fasts with the Singulars." And the Gemara a little after; "The Rabbins have a tradition: Every one that would make himself a *Singular*, let him not make himself so: but if any one would make himself a *Disciple*, let him." And at length; *It is not lawful for a Disciple of the Wise to continue in fastings, because he diminisheth from the work of God*: that is, he ceaseth from learning and teaching.

One would here think, that it is plainly distinguished betwixt a Pharisee and any other; and yet the Gemarists, in the very same place, say thus, *All the Disciples of the Wise are Singulars*. At length they query, "Who is a Singular, and who is a Disciple? A Singular is he that is worthy to be preferred to be a pastor of a synagogue. A Disciple is he, who if they ask him any thing concerning a tradition in his doctrine, he hath wherewithal to answer." So that by a *Disciple* they mean not him that is now learning, but him who hath already learned and now teacheth; but, in other places, they apply both these to the *Disciple*.

"R. Jochanan saith, Who is a Disciple of the Wise? he whom they prefer to be pastor of a synagogue: he who, if they ask him about any tradition in any place, hath wherewithal to answer." The difference between these, however confounded in this place, was this: that the *Disciple* could answer doubts and questions fetched out of that place or from that subject upon which he had taught or read; but the *Singular*, could answer all doubts raised from any place, even out of the treatise concerning marriages. That mention of the pastor and the teacher, [Ephesians 4:11](#), we seem to have some shadow of it here: the *Disciple* is the teacher, and the *Singular* is the pastor of the synagogue: and perhaps if these things were observed, it might give some light into that place of the apostle.

II. As the *Disciple* and the *Singular* are sometimes confounded, sometimes distinguished, so also is the scribe and the Pharisee. They are sometimes confounded; for many of the Pharisees were scribes: and they are sometimes distinguished; for many of them were of the common people, and not scribes. Perhaps it may not be improperly said, that there were Pharisees that were of the clergy, and Pharisees that were of the laity. He whom we have now before us was a scribe, but not a Pharisee; but it is not easy to give the reason why he is termed a *lawyer* and not a *scribe*. Here is some place for conjecture, but not for demonstration. As to conjecture, therefore, let us make a little essay in this matter.

I. I conceive that the *lawyer* and *teacher of the law*, may be opposed to the Sadducees to whom the Pharisee is diametrically opposite; for they were contrary to them in their practice of the traditional rites as much as they could; and these again abundantly contrary to them in traditional doctrines. The Sadducees had, indeed, their scribes or their teachers, as well as any other party: and there is frequent mention of the *scribes of the Sadducees*. And from this antithesis, probably, is Rabban Gamaliel termed a *doctor of law*. For there was then an assembly of the 'sect of the Sadducees,' verse 17: and when Gamaliel, who was of the other sect, made his speech amongst them, it is easy to conceive why he is there termed a *doctor of law*. For the same reason we may suppose the person here before us might be called *one of the lawyers*, and not a *scribe*, because there were scribes even amongst the Sadducees.

II. I conceive, therefore, that the *lawyers* and *teachers of the law* were the traditionary doctors of the law. As to Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, the thing is without dispute: and if there were any difference between the lawyers and doctors of the law, yet as to this matter, I suppose there was none. Let us consider this following passage: "It is a tradition: R. Simeon

Ben Jochai saith, He that is conversant, *in the textual exposition of the law*, hath a measure, which is not a measure. He that is conversant in Misna, hath a measure, from whence they receive a reward: but if he be conversant in the Talmud, there is not a greater measure than this. Always betake yourself to the Misna rather than the Talmud. But R. Jose Ben R. Bon saith, This which thou sayest, obtained before the Rabbi had mixed with it manifold traditions: but from the time that he mixed with it manifold traditions, always have recourse to the Talmud rather than to the Misna."

Now, I pray, who is he that, according to this tradition, merits most the title of *a doctor of law*? He that is conversant *in the exposition and interpretation of the written law*, and the context of it, alas! he doth but little; and for all the oil and labour he hath spent, hath only a measure, which is not a measure. But he that is conversant in the Misna and Talmud, in the traditional doctrine or exposition of the traditional law, he bears away the bell; he hath some reward for his pains, and is dignified with the title of doctor.

III. If there were any distinction betwixt *doctors of tradition* and *doctors of law* (which I hardly believe), we may suppose it might be this; either that the *doctor of law* had his school and his disciples, and the *doctor of tradition* had none; or that the *doctor of tradition* was conversant in the Misna, or the plain and literal exposition of traditions, and the *doctor of law*, in the Talmud, or a more profound and scholastic way of teaching.

However, be there this distinction betwixt them, or some other, or indeed none at all, yet I presume they were both doctors of traditions, and expounders of that which they called the oral law, in opposition to the scribes, whether amongst the Jews or the Sadducees, who employed themselves in the textual exposition of the law.

46. And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

[*And ye yourselves touch not (the burdens) with one of your fingers.*] That the *lawyers* (as we have already said) were the *doctors of traditions*, is a little confirmed by this, that what our Saviour reproacheth them for were merely traditionals: this particularly, that they laded men with such 'yokes of traditions,' and yet they themselves would not touch or move them with one of their fingers.

This exposition indeed vulgarly obtains, 'You lay grievous burdens upon others, which in the meantime you indulge yourselves in, and will not undergo them by any means.' This interpretation I cannot but admit; but yet must inquire whether there be not something more included it. For whereas 'he that would prescribe light things to himself, and burdensome to others,' was commonly accounted and called *a wicked cunning fellow*: and whereas there is frequent mention of this or that Rabbin, *who would lay this or that burden upon himself*, which he would acquit others of; it may be a question, whether this exposition, so commonly received, doth indeed speak out the whole sense and meaning of these words.

I apprehend, therefore, our Saviour might not only rebuke the remissness and indulgence they gave themselves, but further their strictness and tenaciousness about their own decrees. They made light of the commandments of God, at their own pleasure; but would never diminish the least tittle of their own. That they might remove or take away any part of the divine law, they employ both hands; but as to their own constitutions, they will not move one finger.

49. Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute:

[*Therefore also said the wisdom of God.*] This form of speaking agreeth well enough with that so much in use, *the rule of judgment saith*. Amongst numberless instances, take that of the Targumist; "Is it fitting that the daughters of Israel should eat the fruit of their own womb? *The rule of judgment [retributive justice] answered* and said, *Was it also fitting to kill a priest and a prophet in the sanctuary of the Lord, as ye killed Zacharias,*" &c.

51. From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

[*Unto the blood of Zacharias.*] If our Saviour had not in the evangelist St. Matthew added "the son of Barachias," no one could have doubted that it referred to any other than Zacharias the son of Jehoiada, whose slaughter is recorded [2 Chronicles 24](#). It is certain the Jews own no other Zacharias slain in the Temple but himself: and what they say of his slaughter, I have already taken notice upon that place in St. Matthew out of both the Talmuds. We meet with the same things in Midras Echah, and Midras Coheleth: out of which last give me leave briefly to transcribe these passages:

"The blood of Zachary boiled up two hundred and fifty-two years, from the days of Joash to the days of Zedekiah. What did they do? They swept into it all the dust [*of the court*] and made a heap; yet it ceased not, but still boiled and bubbled up. The Holy Blessed God said to the blood, *Behold the time is come that thou exact* [that was, Let the Lord behold, and require it at your hands]. When Nebuzaradan came and inquired, what this matter was; they answered, That it was the blood of heifers, and rams, and lambs, which they had sacrificed. Afterward, when he came to understand what the matter was, he slew eighty thousand priests, and yet the blood would not stanch, but broke out and flowed as far as the tomb of Zachary. He brought together, therefore, the Sanhedrim, both the Great and Less, and slew them over that blood, and yet it did not cease," &c.

I hardly indeed think that those that relate this matter did really believe it to have been actually so; but only would by such flowers of rhetoric and strained hyperboles, paint out the horrible guilt of the murder of Zacharias; which by how much the more horrible it was, by so much the more did it agree with the guilt of the murder of our blessed Lord.

And however a great part of it in these relations of theirs may be mere flourish, yet by the whole framing of the thing, it must needs be observed, that the slaughter of this Zacharias was so famous and rooted in the minds of that people generally, that when our Saviour speaks of one Zacharias, slain between the Temple and the altar, it cannot be imagined that they could understand him pointing at any other than this very man. As for his father being here called Barachias, and not Jehoiada, we have spoken to that matter elsewhere.

If any one hesitate about the changing of the name, let him say by what name he finds Jehoiada recited in that catalogue of priests set down in [1 Chronicles 6](#). It must be either some other name, or else we must suppose him wholly left out of that number. If by another name, you will say (supposing he be also called Barachias) he was then a man of three names. This indeed is no unusual thing with that nation for some to have more names than one: nay, if you will believe the Jewish doctors, even Moses himself had no less than ten.

52. Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

[*Ye have taken away the key of knowledge.*] Should we render it, *Ye have taken the key of knowledge*, (that is, to yourselves) or, *Ye have taken it away*; there is not much difference. They *took the key of knowledge to themselves*, when they arrogated to themselves only all profoundness of wisdom and learning, hereby indeed *taking it away* from the people, because they taught them nothing but trifling and idle stuff.

The word for *key* in their language brings to mind the word which was so very much in use amongst them for one that was *teaching*. Instances of this were endless: there are enough of it in that long preface prefixed to that *Midras Threnorum*, that hath for its title, *The opening of the wise*; where (as indeed almost everywhere else), it is so frequently said, *R. such a one 'opened'*; for I cannot tell how better to render it...

1. In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

[*When there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people.*] There is no one would understand this in the very letter of it; as if the number of the people here present were at least twenty thousand, but a very great number. So [Acts 21:20](#): *How many myriads of Jews which believe.*

This probably denotes the mighty success of the seventy disciples preaching the gospel, who had so clearly and effectually taught concerning Christ, and told them of the place that he had determined to come to, that the people had flocked together in those vast numbers, ready upon all occasions to meet him, when they heard the Messiah was making his approaches to this or that town.

3. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.

[*That which ye have spoken in the ear.*] I have elsewhere spoken of a doctor whispering in the ear of his interpreter. The reason of this usage is given us in *Chagigah*, because the law is delivered silently; and the reason of this is, *it is delivered silently, because of Satan.*

However, these words are not to be understood of any such kind of whispering into the ears of the interpreter, but concerning any matter that may have been spoken in never so much secrecy and design not to have been known again. The doctor whispered into the ear of the interpreter to that end, that his disciples might publish what he had said. But here is meant, whatever any had the greatest purpose to conceal, yet God will reveal it; not much unlike that passage in [Ecclesiastes 10:20](#). Our Saviour intimates the folly as well as the wickedness of dissimulation, because in time the visor shall be taken off, and the most dissembled hypocrisy exposed to naked view.

6. Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

[*Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings?*] Two sparrows were sold for one farthing, and five for two. We find that doves were sold in the Temple upon the account of women in childbed, and their issues of blood, by whom a pair of turtles and young pigeons were to be offered, if they had not wherewithal to present a more costly sacrifice. So probably the sparrows were likely to be sold upon the account of lepers, in the cleansing of whom they were made use of, [Leviticus 14:4](#). I confess the Greek version in this place hath not *two sparrows*, but *two little birds*. And yet if you will believe the far-fetched reason that R. Solomon gives, you will easily imagine that they are sparrows that are pointed at: "The leprosy (saith he) came upon mankind for an evil tongue, that is, *for too much garrulity of words*: and therefore in the cleansing of it they used *sparrows* that are always chirping and chattering with their voice."

[*And not one of them is forgotten before God.*] "R. Simeon Ben Jochai standing at the mouth of his cave [wherein he lay hid for the space of thirteen years], he saw a certain man catching of birds. And when he heard *Bath Kol* out of heaven, saying, 'Mercy, mercy,' the birds escaped: but when he heard *Bath Kol* saying, 'The pain of death,' then was the bird taken. He saith, therefore, *A bird is not taken without God*, much less the life of a man." This passage is also recited in *Midras Tillin*, but the circumstances vary.

9. But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.

[*But he that denieth me, &c.*] consider whether in these words and in the following verse, our blessed Saviour do not point at those two unpardonable sins, apostasy, or denying and renouncing of Christ, and blasphemy, or the sin against the Holy Ghost. The first is called "a sin unto death." And so, in truth and in the event, is the latter too. I find them, indeed, confounded by some, who discourse upon the sin against the Holy Ghost, when yet this difference may be observed, viz., that apostasy cannot properly be charged on any but who have already professed Christianity: but blasphemy against the Holy Ghost was uttered by the scribes and Pharisees at that time that they disowned and rejected Christ.

13. And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

[*That he divide the inheritance with me.*] I. In the titles of brethren this obtained amongst them, that as the eldest was called *the firstborn* so the younger was called *simple*, because without the title of *firstborn*. It seems to be only two brethren here betwixt whom the complaint is made, but which of them is the complainant it is not so easy to determine. You will say the younger most probably, because it is more likely that the firstborn should wrong the younger, than the younger the firstborn. And yet in that court of judicature which they called "*the court of Thou draw and I'll draw*," the younger might be troublesome to the firstborn as well as the firstborn to the younger. That matter was thus:

"When a father had bequeathed to his firstborn and younger son a servant and an unclean beast," which could not be parted in two, then saith the one to the other, "Do thou draw, or I'll draw"; that is, Do thou redeem thy share, or I will redeem mine. Now here the younger brother may be perverse, and as well hinder the redemption as the firstborn.

II. In the division of inheritances how many vexations and quarrels may arise, both reason and common experience do abundantly teach us. The Rabbins are very large upon this head; and suppose that great controversies may arise either from the testament of the father, or the nature of the inheritance, or the quality of the sons; as if the younger son be a disciple of the wise men, and the elder not; if the younger be made a proselyte, the elder a Gentile, &c. But in the instance now before us, the complaint or controversy is not about dividing but about not dividing; because the firstborn most probably would not gratify the younger in that thing.

The judges in that case was the bench of the Triumviri. These were the *judges*, in the controversy, and decreed concerning the right or equity of dividing: and either some were appointed by them, or some chosen by those between whom the cause depended, as arbiters in the case, and these were the *dividers*, those that took care as to the equality of the division. Now we cannot easily suppose what should move this man to appeal to our Saviour as judge in this matter, unless either himself or brother, or both, were of the number of his disciples.

19. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

[*Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, &c.*] "When the church is in distress, let not any man then say, 'I will go into mine house, and will eat and drink, *and peace be to thee, O my soul.*' For if any one shall so do, it is written of him, 'Behold joy, and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die.' But what follows? 'It was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged away from you till you die.'" And what if he should so say and do when the church is not in distress?

20. But God said unto him, *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?*

[*This night thy soul shall be required of thee.*] However this following story hath something in it that may be laughed at, yet hath it something in it that is serious enough: "The Rabbins say, It fell out in the days of R. Simeon Ben Chalaphta, that he went to a certain circumcision, and there feasted. The father of the infant gave them old wine, wine of seven years old, to drink, and said unto them, 'With this wine will I grow old in the joy of my son.' They feasted together till midnight. R. Simeon Ben Chalaphta trusting to his own virtue, went out at midnight to go into the city: in the way he finds the angel of death, and observes him very sad: saith he to him, 'Who art thou?' He saith, 'I am the messenger of the Lord': 'And why then (saith he) art thou so sad?' He saith unto him, 'I am sad for the speeches of those who say, I will do this or that ere long, though they know not how quickly they may be called away by death. That man with whom thou hast been feasting, and that boasted amongst you, With this wine I will grow old in the joy of my son; behold the time draws nigh, that within thirty days he must be snatched away.' He saith unto him, 'Do thou let me know my time.' To whom he answered, 'Over thee, and such as thou art, we have no power; for God, being delighted with good works, prolongeth your lives.'"

24. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

[*Neither storehouse nor barn.*] The *storehouse* is where they laid up their fruits, and the *barn* where they laid up their grain. It is commonly rendered the *floor*, but there it is meant the *barn-floor*. Our Saviour takes an instance from God feeding the ravens, [Job 38:41](#); [Psalm](#)

147:9, where it is R. Solomon's remark: "Our Rabbins observe, that the raven is cruel towards its young; but God pitieth them, and provides them flies, that breed out of their own dung." Now the reason they give why the old ones are so unmerciful to their own young is in *Chetubboth*, where the Gloss thus explains the minds of the Gemarists speaking of the young ones both *white and black*: "When they grow black the old ones begin to love their young, but while they are all white they loathe them."

In that very place there occurs this passage, not unworthy our transcribing: "There was a certain man brought before Rabh Judah because he refused to provide for his children. Saith he to those that brought him, *The dragon brings forth, and lays her young in the town to be nourished up*. When he was brought to Rabh Chasda, he saith unto them, 'Compel him to the door of the synagogue, and there let him stand, and say, *The raven seeks her young ones*, but this man doth not seek [or own] his children.' But doth the raven seek her young ones? Behold it is written, God feedeth the ravens which cry unto him. *This hath no difficulty in it. This is said of them while they are white*, that 'God feeds them': *but that is said of them when they are become black*, that 'the raven owneth her young.'" But the Gloss hath it thus: "It seems as if he with his own voice should cry out against himself, and say, 'The raven owneth her young.' But there are those that expound it as if the minister of the synagogue should set him forth and proclaim upon him, The raven acknowledgeth her young, but this man rejects his own children." "Tell it to the church," [Matthew 18:17](#).

30. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

[*The nations of the world, &c.*] *The nations of the world* is a very common form of speech amongst the Jews, by which they express *the Gentiles*, or *all other nations beside themselves...*

37. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

[*He will come forth and serve them.*] *He that serves at the table goes about while the guests sit. He will come forth* seems to denote the same thing here; unless it may refer to some such thing as this, viz. that the master will *pass by* his dignity, and *condescend* to minister to his own servants.

38. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

[*In the second watch, and in the third.*] In the very dead *watches* of all, at least, if there be not a solecism in speech. At the first *watch* they went to bed; and at the fourth *watch*, the time of getting up again came on: so that the second and the third *watch* was the very dead time of sleep.

47. And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*.

[*Shall be beaten with many stripes.*] There was a stated number of stripes, and that twas forty, beyond which no malefactor, condemned by the judges to that punishment, ought to receive. Whence that passage seems a little strange: "He that kills a heifer, and afterward two of that heifer's calves, *let him be beaten with fourscore stripes.*" How so? *fourscore*, when they ought not to exceed above forty? They might not exceed that number for one single crime: but if the crime was doubled, they might double the punishment. And it may be a question, whether they did not double their accusations upon St. Paul, when they multiplied their stripes, he himself telling us, that five times he had received forty stripes save one.

But did every one that was adjudged by the court to stripes, did they always receive that number exactly, of thirty-nine? no doubt the number was more or less, according to the nature of the crime. Which seems to be hinted in *Pesachin; He that eateth the 'potitha'* [some creeping thing of the sea], "*let him be beaten with four stripes: He that eateth a pismire, let him be beaten with five: He that eateth a hornet, let him have six.*" If this be the sense of the words, then here may arise a question, with what kind of scourge they were beaten? If with that scourge of three cords that was used when they gave nine-and-thirty stripes, repeating their strokes by a scourge of three cords thirteen times, how then could they inflict four or five stripes with such a scourge as that was?

But as to the number of stripes which the master might inflict upon his slave, that was not stated, but left to the pleasure of the master, according to the nature of the crime: which seems hinted at in these words of our Saviour, and in the following rule amongst the Jews, some kind of measure still being attended to:

"*It is allowed to deal with a Canaanite [that is, a Gentile] slave with severity.* But though this is *de jure*, yet there is a law of mercy, and rule of wisdom, that a man should be gentle, pursuing righteousness, not making the yoke heavy upon his servant, lest he afflict him."

49. I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?

[*And what will I, if it be already kindled?*] *What will I*, seems to be used after the manner of the schools, where *What do I say?* is the same with *I do say this*: and so *What do I decree or approve?* is the same with *This I do decree or approve*. So *What will I?* is the same with *This I will*. Thus, in these words of our Saviour, *What will I, if it be already kindled*, the meaning is, *This I will, that it be already kindled*. Now what kind of *fire* this was which he would have already kindled, he himself explains verse 51, and so on.

Chapter 13

1. There were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

[*Of the Galileans.*] If this report concerning *the Galileans* was brought to our Saviour immediately after the deed was done, then was this tragedy acted by Pilate, a little before the feast of Dedication; for we find Christ going towards that feast, verse 22. But the time of this slaughter is uncertain: for it is a question, whether they that tell him this passage, relate it as news which he had not heard before, or only to draw from him his opinion concerning that affair, &c.

It is hotly disputed amongst some, as to the persons whom Pilate slew. And,

I. Some would have them to have been of the sect of Judas the Gaulonite; and that they were therefore slain, because they denied to give tribute to Caesar. He is called, indeed, "Judas of Galilee"; and there is little doubt, but that he might draw some Galileans into his opinion and practice. But I question then, whether Christ would have made any kind of defence for such, and have placed them in the same level with these, upon whom the tower of Siloam fell; when it so plainly appears, that he taught directly contrary to that perverse sect and opinion. However, if these were of that sect (for I will not contend it), then do these, who tell this to our Saviour, seem to lay a snare for him, not much unlike that question they put to him, "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or no?"

II. There is one that confounds this story with that of Josephus, which he relates from him thus abbreviated; "In Galilee there were certain Samaritans, who, being seduced by a notorious impostor, moved sedition at mount Gerizim, where this cheat promised them to shew them the sacred vessels which, he falsely told them, had been hid by Moses in that place. Pilate, sending his forces upon them, suppressed them; the greater of them were taken and adjudged to death." I admire how this learned man should deliver these things with so much confidence, as even to chastise Josephus himself for his mistake in his computation of the time for this story, concluding thus; "When, indeed, this slaughter, made upon the Samaritans by Pilate, seems to be that very slaughter of the Galileans mentioned by St. Chapter 13:1."

Whereas, in truth, Josephus mentions not one syllable either of Galilee or sacrifice, or the Galileans, but *Samaritans*: and it is a somewhat bold thing to substitute *rebellious Samaritans* in the place of *sacrificing Galileans*. Nor is it probable that those that tell this matter to our Saviour would put this gloss and colour upon the thing while they related it.

III. The feud and enmity that was between Pilate and Herod might be enough to incense Pilate to make this havock of the subjects of Herod.

[*Whose blood Pilate mingled.*] "David swore to Abishai, As the Lord liveth, if thou touch the blood of this righteous man [Saul], *I will mingle thy blood with his blood.*" So Pilate

mingled the blood of these sacrificers with the blood of those sacrifices they had slain. It is remarkable that in *Siphra*, "the killing of the sacrifices *may be well enough done by strangers, by women, by servants, by the unclean*; even those sacrifices that are most holy, provided that the unclean touch not the flesh of them." And a little after; "At the sprinkling of the blood, the work of the priest begins; and the slaying of them may be done by any hand whatever."

Hence was it a very usual thing for those that brought the sacrifice to kill it themselves; and so, probably, these miserable Galileans were slaughtered, while they themselves were slaying their own sacrifices. For it is more likely that they were slain in the Temple while they were offering their sacrifices, than in the way, while they were bringing them thither.

4. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

[*Upon whom the tower in Siloam fell.*] *The poor of Bethesda was the pool of Siloam*; and from thence all that adjacent part of the city is denominated *Siloam*. And therefore it is left doubtful, whether this *tower* were built over the pool, that is, over the porches of the pool, or stood something remote from it in those parts that yet bore the name of *Siloam*. And if the article *in* does not determine the matter, we must continue still in doubt. Will grammar permit that that article should be prefixed to that part of the city? It is certain, that the very pool is called *the pool of Siloam*. So that I conceive this *tower* might be built over the porticoes of the pool, and might overwhelm those eighteen men, while they were busied about purifying themselves (and so this event falls in the more agreeably with that of the Galileans), or as they were expecting to be healed at the troubling of the waters: for it is very uncertain at what time this tower fell.

7. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

Behold, these three years I come, &c.] There was no tree that was of a kind to bear fruit might lightly and upon every small occasion be cut down, that law providing against it in [Deuteronomy 20:19,20](#); where the *Pesikta* observes that there is both an affirmative and also a negative command, by which it is the more forbidden that any tree of that kind should be cut down, unless upon a very indispensable occasion. "Rabh saith, 'Cut not down the palm that bears a cab of dates.' They urge, 'And what of the olive, that that should not be cut down?' 'If it bear but the fourth part of a cab.' R. Chaninah said, *My son Shibchah had not died, had he not cut down a fig-tree before its time.*"

[For more info, please see *The Barren Fig-Tree* by John Bunyan.]

8. And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it:

[*I will dig about it, and dung it.*] *They dung it and dig it* &c. The Gloss is; "They lay dung in their gardens to moisten the earth. They dig about the roots of their trees, they pluck up the suckers, they take off the leaves, they sprinkle ashes, and they smoke under the trees to kill worms."

11. And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

[*Having a spirit of infirmity.*] I. The Jews distinguish between spirits, and devils, and good angels. "All things do subserve to the glory of the King of kings, the holy blessed One, *even spirits, also devils also ministering angels.*"

The difficulty is in what sense they take *spirits*, as they are distinguished from *angels* and *devils*: when it is probable they did not mean human souls. But these things are not the business of this place.

II. Therefore, as to this phrase in St. Luke, *a spirit of infirmity*, let us begin our inquiry from this passage: "It is written, 'If I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your inheritance.' R. Judah saith, 'This foretells such plagues to come upon them.' R. Simeon saith, '*He excepts those violent plagues* that do not render a man unclean.'" Where the Gloss is, *If those plagues come by the insufflation of the devil, which do not defile the man.* And the Gemara a little after; "Rabba saith, *He excepts the plagues of spirits.* Rabh Papa saith, 'He excepts the plagues of enchantments.'" Where the Gloss again hath it; "Those plagues which are inflicted by the insufflation of the devil, not by the hands of men."

I. You see, therefore, first, that it was a most received opinion amongst the Jews, that diseases or plagues might be inflicted by the devil. Which is plain also from the evangelists; because our Saviour, in this very place, tells us, that the *bowing together* of this woman was inflicted upon her by Satan.

II. They conceived further, that some diseases were inflicted that were unclean, and some that were not unclean. The unclean were the leprosy, issues, &c.; not unclean, were such as this woman's infirmity, &c.

III. They distinguish betwixt *an evil spirit*, and *an unclean spirit*. Not but they accounted *an unclean spirit* ill enough, and *an evil spirit* to be unclean enough; but that they might distinguish the various operations of the devil, as also concerning the various persons possessed and afflicted by him.

1. They acknowledged that evil spirits might inflict diseases. "Whomsoever either the Gentiles, or *evil spirit* drive," i.e. beyond the bounds of the sabbath. Where the Gloss is; "The evil spirit is the devil that hath entered into him, disturbs his intellectuals, so that he is carried beyond the bounds." But Rambam saith, "They call all kind of melancholy an evil spirit." And elsewhere: *an evil spirit, i.e. a disease.*

2. *The unclean spirit* amongst them was chiefly and more peculiarly that devil that haunted places of burial, and such-like, that were most unclean. *The unclean spirit*, i.e. *the devil that haunts burying-places*. "Thither the necromancer betook himself" (as the Gemara hath it, which I have also quoted in another place); "and when he had macerated himself with fasting, he lodgeth amongst the tombs, to the end that he might be the more inspired by the unclean spirit." Nor is it much otherwise (as they themselves relate it) with the *python* or *prophesying spirit*. "For the Rabbins deliver: *the python is he that speaks within the parts*." The Gloss is, "He that raiseth a dead person, and sits between the parts of the bones," &c.

Hence that reason of our conjecture concerning that demoniac, [Luke 4:33](#); that he was either a necromancer or pythonist, taken from that unusual way of expressing it which is there observable, not *having an unclean spirit*, nor *having an unclean devil*, but *having a spirit of an unclean devil*.

There were therefore two sorts of men whom they accounted under the possession of an *unclean spirit*, in their proper sense so called: those especially who sought and were ambitious to be inspired of the devil amongst tombs and unclean places; and those also, who, being involuntarily possessed by the devils, betook themselves amongst tombs and such places of uncleanness. And whether they upon whom the devil inflicted unclean diseases should be ranked in the same degree, I do not determine. There were others who were not acted by such diabolical furies, but afflicted with other kind of diseases, whom they accounted under the operation of *an evil spirit of disease* or *infirmity*. Not of *uncleanness*; but of *infirmity*. And perhaps the evangelist speaks according to this antithesis, that this woman had neither a spirit of *uncleanness*, according to what they judged of a spirit of uncleanness; nor a *disease of uncleanness*; but a *spirit of infirmity*.

15. The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?*

[*Doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox?*] That disceptation doth attest this, *How far a beast going forth*. Where it is very much cautioned that the beast be not brought out on the sabbath day carrying any thing upon him that might be a burden not permitted to be borne on that day. They allow that *a camel be led out with a halter, a horse with a collar, &c.*; that is, when they are led out either to pasture or watering. Nay, the Gloss upon the place adds, "that they may lead out the horse to the water, that he may dip the collar in the water if the water be unclean."

To this may be referred that abstruse and obscure rule concerning the building of mounds about a spring that belongs to a private man, with that art that the beast, being led thither to watering on the sabbath day, shall not go out of the place that is of common right.

It is not only permitted to lead the beast out to watering on the sabbath day, but they might draw water for him, and pour it into troughs, provided only that they do not carry

the water, and set it before the beast to drink; but the beast come and drink it of his own accord.

23. Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

[*Are there few that be saved?*] This question, *Lord, are there few that be saved?* when it was a received opinion amongst the Jews, 'that all Israel should have their part in the world to come,' makes it doubtful whether it was propounded captiously, or merely for satisfaction.

This very matter is disputed amongst the Masters. "Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth *beyond the statute* [*without measure, AV*]. Resh Lachish saith, 'This is for him who forsaketh one statute.' (The Gloss is, 'He that leaves one statute unobserved shall be condemned in hell.') But R. Jochanan saith, 'Their Lord will not have it so as thou sayest concerning them.' (The Gloss is, 'He will not have thee judge so concerning Israel.') For the sense is, Although a man have learned but one statute only, he shall escape hell. It is said, 'It shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts of it shall be cut off and die, and the third part shall be left.' Resh Lachish saith, 'The third part of Shem.' R. Jochanan saith unto him, 'Their Lord will not have it so as thou sayest concerning them, for it is the third part of Noah.' It is said, 'I will take you one of a city and two of a tribe.' Resh Lachish saith, 'These words are to be understood in the very letter.' R. Jochanan saith unto him, 'Their Lord will not have it so as thou sayest concerning them, but one of a city shall expiate for the whole city, and two of a family for the whole family. It is said, 'I will take them for my people'; and it is said, 'I will bring you into the land.' He compares their going out of the land of Egypt with their coming in to their own land: now how was their coming in into the land of Canaan? There were only two persons of threescore myriads that entered it. Rabba saith, So also shall it be in the days of the Messiah." A man would hardly have expected such ingenuity from a Jew as we here meet with in Resh Lachish and Rabba.

32. And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

[*Tell that fox.*] I conceive our Saviour may allude here to the common proverb: "The brethren of Joseph fell down before his face and worshipped him, saith R. Benjamin Bar Japheth. Saith R. Eliezer *This is what is commonly said amongst men, Worship the fox in his time.*" The Gloss is, 'In the time of his prosperity.' But go you, and *say to that fox*, however he may wallow in his present prosperity, that I will never flatter him, or for any fear of him desist from my work; but "behold, I cast out devils," &c.

33. Nevertheless I must walk today, and tomorrow, and the *day* following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

[*It cannot be that a prophet perish, &c.*] "A tribe, nor false prophet, [such a one they accounted the holy Jesus,] nor a high priest, can be judged but by the bench of seventy-one." Rambam upon the place, as also the Gemara; "We know that a false prophet must be judged by the Sanhedrim, from the parity of the thing: for so is judged *a rebellious judge.*"

Now as to the judgment itself, these things are said: "They do not judge him to death in the court of judicature, that is, in his own city, nor in that that is at Jabneh; but they bring him to the great Consistory that is at Jerusalem, and reserve him to one of their feasts; and at their feast they execute him, as it is said, 'All Israel shall hear, and shall fear, and do no more so.'"

35. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until *the time* come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

[*Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he, &c.*] There was a time (I confess) when I apprehended no difficulty at all in these words; but now (which may seem a paradox) my old eyes see better than my younger ones did; and by how much the more I look into this passage, by so much the more obscure it appears to me.

I. What sense must that be taken in, *Ye shall not see me?* when as after he had said this, (at least as the words are placed in our evangelist), they saw him conversant amongst them for the space of three months and more: particularly and in a singular manner, in that august triumph, when riding upon an ass he had the acclamations of the people in these very words, "Blessed is he that cometh," &c. One might therefore think, that the words have some respect to this very time and action; but that in St. Matthew these words are repeated by our Saviour after this triumph was over.

Christ is now at Jerusalem, at the feast of Dedication; at least that feast was not far off; for we find him going to it, verse 22: so that this exposition of the words looks fair enough; "Ye see me now, but henceforward ye shall see me no more, until ye shall say, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord';" which very thing was said in that triumph of his. But what shall we say then to that of St. Matthew, that these very words are recited sometime after he had received these acclamations from the people? I would hardly believe with the learned Heinsius, that the words in St. Matthew are not set in their proper place, but the series of the history is transposed: I would rather think our Saviour meant not an ocular seeing him, but spoke it in a spiritual and borrowed sense; viz. in the sense wherein the Jews were wont to use the word *seeing*, when they spake of "seeing the Messiah, the days of the Messiah, and the consolation of Israel"; that is, of partaking and enjoying the comforts and advantages of the Messiah, and of those days of his. So that our Saviour's meaning may seem to be this; "Ye shall, from henceforward, enjoy no benefit from me the Messiah, till ye shall

say, 'Blessed is he that cometh,' &c.: for it is worthy our inquiry, whether Christ ever after these words of his, did endeavour so to gather the children of Jerusalem together, that the city might not be destroyed, and the whole nation cast off. He did indeed endeavour to gather *the remnant according to the election of grace*, but did he ever after this labour that the place and nation might be preserved? As to these, it is argument enough that he had given them wholly over in his own mind, in that here, and in St. Matthew, he did in such precise terms denounce the ruin of Jerusalem, immediately before he uttered these words. I had rather, therefore, than admit any immethodicalness in St. Matthew, expound the passage to this sense; "From henceforward, ye shall never see the consolations of Messiah, nor have me any ways propitious amongst you, endeavouring at all the preservation of your city or nation from ruin, till ye shall say, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.'"

II. But then here ariseth as great a difficulty about the word *till*; that is, whether it concludes that in time they will say and acknowledge it; or whether it excludes and denies that they ever shall. For who knows not how different and even contrary a force there is in this word *until*? "Occupy *till* I come": here it concludes that he will come again. "This iniquity shall not be forgiven you *till* you die": there their forgiveness is excluded for ever. And indeed the expression in this place looks so perfectly two ways, that he that believes the conversion of the Jewish nation as a thing must come to pass, may turn it to his side; he that believes the contrary, to his.

[*Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*] Although a more intimate weighing of these words will not very much help in determining the force of this word *until* in this place, yet will it probably afford us some light into the whole clause.

The words are taken out of [Psalm 118:26](#), and were sung in the *Great Hallel*. So that I will beg the reader's leave to digress a little in search of this usage, especially as to those words that are now in hand.

I. The *Great Hallel* was the recitation of [Psalms 113-118](#) upon every feast, in every *family* or *brotherhood*. The *hymn* that our Saviour with his apostles sung at the close of the Passover was the latter part of this *Hallel*.

II. Every one, indeed, was of right bound to repeat it entirely in his own person. But seeing it was not every one's lot to be so learned or expedite as that came to, there was one to recite it in the stead of all the rest, and they after him made some responsals. This went for a maxim amongst them, *if he hear, it is as if he responded. If he hear, though he do not answer, he performs his duty*: the meaning is, if any be so unskillful that he can neither recite himself, nor answer after another that doth recite, let him but hear attentively, and he doth as much as is required from him.

III. There was a twofold way of responding according to the difference of persons reciting. If an elder, or master of a family, or one that could fitly represent the whole congregation, should recite or lead in singing; then the rest repeat no other words after him except *the*

first clause of every Psalm; and as to all the remainder, they answered verse by verse *Hallelujah*. For the action of him that represented them, and led up in singing, availed for those that were represented, especially they having testified their consent by answering *Hallelujah*. He was a dunce, indeed, that could not answer so far amongst the rest.

IV. But if there wanted such an elder so well skilled in reading or reciting, that it became necessary for a servant or woman, or some more skilful boy, to lead, then let us hear what they did in that case: "If a servant, or woman, or boy should lead in singing, *every one in the congregation recites those very words which he had said: if a more ancient person or one of greater note, do sing or read, they answer after him 'Hallelujah.'* Now the reason why the words recited by a servant, woman, or boy should be repeated after him *verbatim*, was this, because such a one was unfit to represent a congregation, and his action could not avail for the rest: so that it behoved every person to recite singly for himself, that he might perform his duty."

V. When they came to the words now in hand, *blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord*, if it be a boy or a servant that is the praecentor, *he saith, Blessed be he that cometh; and the rest answer, In the name of the Lord*. And this is that for which I have so long ventured upon the reader's patience, that he may observe what is done differently from the rest when this clause is recited. It is cut in two, which is not done in others. And the first words are not repeated after the praecentor, as they are in other clauses. And whether this custom obtained only in families where servants or boys led in singing, we may judge from this following passage:

"They asked R. Chajjam Bar Ba, 'How doth it appear, that he who heareth and doth not answer performs his duty?' 'From this, saith he, *That we see the greatest Rabbins standing in the synagogue, and they say, Blessed be he that cometh, and they answer, In the name of the Lord: and they both perform their duty.*" Midras Tillin leaves these last words wholly out. For so that hath it: "The men of Jerusalem say from within, *Save us now, O Lord, we beseech thee*. The men of Judea say from without, *Prosper us now, Lord, we beseech thee*. The men of Jerusalem say from within, *Blessed be he that cometh*: and the men of Judea say from without, *We have blessed you out of the house of the Lord.*"

I will not confidently assert that these men had any ill design when they thus mangled this famous clause; but surely there is at least some ground of suspicion that they hardly refer the words to the right object. R. Solomon assuredly doth not. For, "So it ought to be said (saith he) to those that bring their firstfruits, and go up to the feasts."

1. To *come* is oftentimes the same with them as to *teach*; "If any one shall *come* in his own name, him ye will receive": i.e. If any one shall teach. And so it is frequently in the Jerusalem Talmud, concerning this or the other Rabbins, he *came*, and *when he cometh*. Which if it be not to be understood of such a one teaching, I confess I am at a loss what it should mean else.

2. Those doctors did not come and teach in the name of the Lord, but either in their own name, or in the name of some father of the traditions. Hence nothing more familiar with them, than "R. N. in the name of R. N. saith": as every *leaf*, I may say almost every *line* of their writings witnesses. If, therefore, by cutting short this clause, they would be appropriating to themselves the blessing of the people, whom they had taught to say, *Blessed be he that cometh*, letting that slip, or omitting what follows, *In the name of the Lord*; they do indeed like themselves, cunningly lying at catch, and hunting after fame and vainglory.

Let the reader judge, whether Christ might not look this way in these words. However, I shall not scruple to determine, that they shall never see the Messiah, as to any advantage to themselves, till they have renounced the doctrines of coming in their own name, or in the name of the Fathers of the Traditions, embracing his doctrine, who is come in the name of the Lord.

1. And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.

[*To eat bread on the sabbath day.*] The Jews' tables were generally better spread on that day than on any others: and that, as they themselves reckoned, upon the account of religion and piety. I have spoken to this elsewhere: take here a demonstration. "Rabba Bar Rabh Houna went to the house of Rabba Bar Rabh Nachman. He set before him three measures of rich cake: to whom he, 'How did you know of my coming?' The other answered, 'Is there any thing more valuable to us than the sabbath?'" The Gloss is; 'We do by no means prefer thee before the sabbath: we got these things ready in honour of the sabbath, not knowing any thing of thy coming.'

"Rabba Abba bought flesh of thirteen butchers for thirteen staters, *and paid them at the very hinge of the door.*" The Gloss tells us, "That he bought of thirteen butchers, that he might be sure to taste the best: and before they could come that should bring the flesh, he had gotten his money ready for them, and paid them at the very gate, that he might hasten dinner: and all this in honour of the sabbath-day.'

R. Abhu *sat upon an ivory throne, and yet blew the fire:* that was towards the cooking of his dinner in honour of the sabbath. It ought not to be passed by without observation, that Christ was at such a dinner, and that in the house of a Pharisee, who doubtless was observant enough of all ceremonies of this kind.

3. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?

[*Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?*] A Jew will be ready to cavil against the truth of the evangelists upon the occasion of this and such like questions they report from our Saviour. What need had he (will such a one say) to ask this question, when he could not but know that, in danger of life, it was permitted them to do any thing towards the preservation of it. Nay, where there was no imminent danger, they were allowed to apply medicines, plasters, &c.; especially, which I must not omit, *to apply leaven even in the time of Passover to a 'Gumretha,'* some very burning distemper.

This is all true indeed; and this no doubt our Saviour understood well enough: but withal he could not but observe with how ill an eye they looked at him, and would not allow that in him which was lawful in another man. He was always accused for healing on the sabbath day, which whiles he did with a word speaking, he could not violate the sabbath so much as even their own canons permitted him: and wherefore then should they accuse him? In mere hatred to his person and actions. There are two little stories we meet with in places quoted before, which perhaps may serve in some measure to illustrate this matter.

"The grandchild of R. Joshua Ben Levi had some disease in his throat, *There came one and mumbled to him in the name of Jesus the son of Pandira, and he was restored.*" Here we see the virtue and operation of Jesus not so utterly exploded, but they did allow of it.

"When R. Eliezer Ben Damah had been bitten with a serpent, and Jacobus Capharsamensis came in the name of Jesus the son of Pandira to heal him, R. Ismael forbade it." And so the sick man died.

5. And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

[Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, &c.] It being an undoubted maxim, "That they must deal mercifully with an Israelite's goods," the doctors in many things dispensed with the sabbath for the preservation of a beast. "*They do not play the midwives with a beast that is bringing forth its young on a feast day, but they help it. How do they help it?* They bear up the young one, that it doth not fall upon the ground: they bring wine, spirt it into the nostrils: they rub the paunch of the dam, so that it will suckle its young."

"A firstling if it fall into a ditch [on a fast day, or the sabbath], let the *Mumcheh* look into it; and if there be any blemish in it, let him take it out and kill it: if not, let him not kill it." He draws it out however, that it might not be lost. And so they deal with other beasts; only the *Mumcheh* is not made use of.

8. When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

[Sit not down in the highest room.] They were ambitious of the 'highest room' in honour of their wisdom. "There were three persons invited to a feast, a prince, a wise man, and an ordinary person: the wise man sat next to the prince. Being asked by the king why he did so; he answered, 'Because I am a wise man.'" "Janneus the king sitting at table with some of the nobles of Persia, Simeon Ben Shetah, that had been invited, placed himself betwixt the king and queen. Being asked, why so; he answered, 'In the book of *Ben Sirah* it was written, *Exalt Wisdom, and she shall exalt thee, and make thee to sit among princes.*'"

It is much such advice as this of our Saviour's that is given us in [Proverbs 25:7](#): upon which place we have this passage: "R. Aquila, in the name of R. Simeon Ben Azzai, thus expounds it: 'Go back from thy place two or three seats, and there sit, that they may say unto thee, Go up higher,'" &c.

18. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs to and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

[With one consent to make excuse.] A very ridiculous, as well as clownish and unmannerly excuse this, if it grew towards night; for it was supper-time. A very unseasonable time to go and see a piece of ground new bought, or to try a yoke of oxen. The substantive, therefore, that should answer to the adjective, I would not seek any otherwhere than as it is included

in the word *make excuse*; so that the sense of it may be *they began all for one cause to make excuse*, i.e. for one and the same aversation they had to it.

23. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.

[*Go out into the highways and hedges.*] *Into the highways*, that he might bring in the *travellers*: but who were those that were among the *hedges*? We have a parallel place, [1 Chronicles 4:23](#): "These were the potters," in Greek, *Those that dwell in Ataim and Gadir*. But the Vulgar, *dwelling in plantations and hedges*. To the same purpose R. Solomon and Kimchi; "They employed themselves in making pots, in planting, in setting hedges, and making mud walls." The Targumist here is very extravagant: "These are those disciples of the law, for whose sake the world was made; who sit in judgment and stablish the world; and their daughters build up the waste places of the house of Israel with the presence of the Eternal King, in the service of the law, and the intercalation of months," &c.

34. Salt is good;: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

[*But if the salt have lost his savour.*] This hath a very good connection with what went before. Our Saviour had before taught how necessary it was for him that would apply himself to Christ and his religion, to weigh and consider things beforehand, how great and difficult things he must undergo, lest when he hath begun in the undertaking he faint and go back; he apostatize, and become unsavoury salt.

Savour suits very well with the Hebrew word which both signifies *unsavoury* and a *fool*; *Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt?* Thy prophets have seen for thee *vanity and that which is unsavoury*. [*Vain and foolish things*, AV] The Greek, *vain things and folly*. *He gave not that which is unsavoury to God*. The Greek, *he did not give folly to God*, [*nor charged God foolishly*, AV].

Chapter 15

4. What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

[*Ninety-and-nine.*] This was a very familiar way of numbering and dividing amongst the Jews, viz. betwixt *one* and *ninety*. I have given instances elsewhere, let me in this place add one more: "Of those hundred cries that a woman in travail uttereth, *ninety-and-nine* of them are to death, and only one of them to life."

7. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

[Which need no repentance.] Here we are to consider the distinction commonly used in the Jewish schools:--

I. All the good, and those that were to be saved at last, they called *just persons*. [It is opposed to the word *wicked persons*, as we may observe more than once in the first Psalm.] Hence this and the like passage very frequently, *Paradise is for the just: good things laid up for the just*.

Let us by the way play a little with the Gemarists, as they themselves also play with the letters of the alphabet, and amongst the rest especially the letter Tsadi, *there is Tsadi that begins a word [or the crooked Tsadi] and Tsadi that ends a word [or the straight Tsadi]*. What follows from hence? *There is the just person that is crooked [or bowed down], and there is the just person that is erect or straight*. Where the Gloss hath it, "It is necessary that the man that is right and straight should be bowed or humble, and he shall be erect in the world to come." Aruch acknowledgeth the same Gloss; but he also brings another which seems of his own making; That "there is a just person who is *mild* or *humble*; but there is also a just person who is not so." Let him tell, if he can, what kind of *just person* that should be that is not mild or humble. But to return to our business.

II. They divide the just into those that are *just and no more*: and those that are *perfectly just*. Under the first rank they place those that were not always upright; but having lived a wicked and irreligious life, have at length betaken themselves to repentance and reformation. These they call *penitents*. Under the latter rank are they placed who have been always upright and never declined from the right way: these they call *perfectly just*, and *just from their first original*: as also, *holy* or *good men*, and *men of good works*. Such a one did he account himself, and probably was so esteemed by others, that saith, "All these have I kept from my youth." And such a one might *that holy man* be thought, *who never committed one trespass all the days of his life*: excepting this one misfortune that befel him, *that once he put on the phylacteries for his forehead before the phylacteries for his arms*. A wondrous fault indeed! And what pity is it that for this one trespass of his life he should lose the title of *one perfectly holy*. Yet for this dreadful crime is the poor wretch deprived of a solemn interment, and by this was his atonement made.

We meet with this distinction of just persons in *Beracoth*: "R. Abhu saith, In the place where stand *the penitents*, there do not stand *the perfectly just*." This distinction also appeared both in the tongues and persons of those that were dancing in the Temple at the feast of Tabernacles. "Some of them said, 'Blessed be our youth that have not made our old men ashamed.' *These were the holy and men of good works*. Others said, 'Blessed be our old men who have expiated for our youth.' *These were they who became penitents*."

This phrase of *perfectly just persons*, puts me in mind of that of the apostle, *the spirits of just men made perfect*. Where (if I understand aright the scope of the apostle in the argument he is upon) he speaks of *just men* who are still in this life, and shews that the souls and spirits of believers are made perfectly righteous by faith, contrary to what the Jews held, that men were complete in their righteousness by works, even bodily works.

Seeing those whom they accounted *perfectly just* are termed *men of works*; so that *perfectly just* and *men of works* were convertible terms, it may not be improbable that the Essenes or Essaei may have their name from *of works*; so that they might be called *workers*, and by that be distinguished from the *penitents*. But of that matter I will raise no dispute.

III. Now which of these had the preference, whether perfect righteousness to repentance, or repentance to perfect righteousness, it is not easy to discern at first view, because even amongst themselves there are different opinions about it. We have a disputation in Beracoth, in the place newly cited, in these words: "R. Chaiah Bar Abba saith, R. Jochanan saith, All the prophets did not prophesy, *unless for those that repent. As for those that are perfectly just, eye hath not seen besides thee, O God.* But R. Abhu contradicts this: for R. Abhu saith, The penitent do not stand in the place where the perfectly just stand; as it is said, Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near. He names *him that is far off first, and then him that is nigh*. But R. Jochanan, Who is he that is far off? He that was far off from transgressing *from his first original*. And who is he that is nigh? He that was next to transgression, but now is afar off from it."

These passages of the Talmud are quoted by Kimchi upon [Isaiah 57:19](#); and, out of him, by Drusius upon this place; but as far as I can perceive, very far wide from the mind of Kimchi. For thus Drusius hath it; R. David [Isaiah 57:19](#), Hoc in loco, &c. In this place *the penitent* is said to be *far off*, and *the just* to be *nigh*, according to the ancients: but he that is *far off* is preferred; whence they say, The *penitents* are better than *the perfectly just*. As if this obtained amongst them all as a rule or maxim; when indeed the words of Kimchi are these: "He *that is far off*, that is, he that is far off from Jerusalem, and *he that is near*, that is, he that is near to Jerusalem. But there is a dispute in the words of our Rabbins about this matter. *And some of them interpret it otherwise*; for they expound *him that is afar off*, as to be understood of the *penitent*, and *him that is near*, as meaning *the just*: from whence they teach and say, That *the penitent* are better than those that are *perfectly just*."

Some, indeed, that do so expound it, say, that those that are *penitent* are to be preferred before those that are the *perfectly just*, but this was not the common and received opinion of all. Nay, the more general opinion gave so great a preference to *perfect righteousness*, that *repentance* was not to be compared with it. Hence that of R. Jochanan, approved of by R. Chajjah the great Rabbin, that those good and comfortable things concerning which the prophets do mention in their prophecies, belong only to those who were sometimes wicked men but afterward came unto *repentance*; but they were far greater things that were laid up

for *perfectly just persons*,--things which had never been revealed to the prophets, nor no prophetic eye ever saw, but God only; things which were indeed of a higher nature than that they could be made known to men; for so the Gloss explaineth those words of theirs.

In this, indeed, they attribute some peculiar excellency to the *penitent*; in that, although they had tasted the sweets of sin, yet they had abandoned it, and got out of the snare: which it might have been a question whether those that are *perfectly just* would have done if they had tasted and experienced the same. But still they esteemed it much nobler never to have been stained with the pollutions of sin, always to have been *just*, and never otherwise than good. Nor is it seldom that we meet with some in the Talmudists making their own *perfection* the subject of their boast, glorying that they have never done any enormous thing throughout their whole life; placing those whom they called *holy* or *good* men, who were also the same with *perfectly just*, placing them (I say) in the highest form of *just persons*.

IV. After all this, therefore, judge whether Christ spoke simply or directly of any such persons (as if there were really any such) that could *need no repentance*; or rather, whether he did not at that time utter himself according to the common conceptions that nation had about some *perfectly just persons*, which he himself opposed. And this seems so much the more likely by how much he saith, "I say unto you," as if he set himself against that common conceit of theirs: and that example he brings of a certain person that *needed no repentance*, viz., the prodigal's brother, savours rather of the Jewish doctrine than that he supposed any one in this world perfectly just.

8. Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?

[*A woman lighteth a candle.*] There is a parable not much unlike this in *Midras Schir*, "R. Phineas Ben Jair expoundeth. If thou seek wisdom as silver, that is, if thou seek the things of the law as hidden treasures--A parable. It is like a man *who if he lose a shekel or ornament in his house, he lighteth some candles, some torches*, till he find it. If it be thus for the things of this world, how much more may it be for the things of the world to come!"

11. And he said, A certain man had two sons:

[*A certain man had two sons.*] It is no new thing so to apply this parable, as if the elder son denoted the Jew, and the younger the Gentile. And, indeed, the elder son doth suit well enough with the Jew in this, that he boasts so much of his obedience, "I have not transgressed at any time thy commandment": as also, that he is so much against the entertainment of his brother, now a penitent. Nothing can be more grievous to the Jews than the reception of the Gentiles.

13. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

[*He wasted his substance with riotous living.*] Ought not this prodigal to be looked upon as that *stubborn and rebellious son* mentioned [Deuteronomy 21:18](#)? By no means, if we take the judgment of the Sanhedrim itself. For, according to the character that is given of a stubborn and rebellious son in *Sanhedrim*, cap. 8, where there is a set discourse upon that subject, there can hardly be such a one found in nature as he is there described. Unless he steal from his father and his mother, he is not such a son; unless he eat half a pound of flesh, and drink half a log of wine, he is not such a son. If his father or mother be lame or blind, he is not such a son, &c. Half a pound of flesh! It is told of Maximin, that "he drank frequently in one day a Capitoline bottle of wine, and ate forty pounds of flesh; or, as Cordus saith, threescore."

Chapter 16

1. And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

[*Which had a steward.*] This parable seems to have relation to the custom of letting out grounds, which we find discoursed of, *Demai*, cap. 6, where it is supposed a ground is let by its owner to some tenant upon this condition, that he pay half, or one third or fourth part of the products of the ground, according as is agreed betwixt them as to the proportion and quantity. So, also, he supposes an olive-yard let out upon such kind of conditions. And there it is disputed about the payment of the tithes, in what manner it should be compounded between the owner and him that occupies the ground.

Steward with Kimchi is *pakidh*, where he hath a parable not much unlike this: "The world (saith he) is like unto a house built; the heaven is the covering of the house; the stars are the candles in the house; the fruits of the earth are like a table spread in the house; the owner of the house, and he indeed that built it, is the holy blessed God. Man in the world is *as it were the steward* of the house, into whose hands his lord hath delivered all his riches, if he behave himself well, he will find favour in the eyes of his lord; if ill, *he will remove him from his stewardship.*"

3. Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

[*I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed.*] Is there not some third thing betwixt *digging* and *begging*? The distinction betwixt *artificers* and *labourers*, mentioned in *Bava Mezia*, hath place here. This steward, having conversed only with husbandmen, must be supposed skilled in no other handicraft; but that if he should be forced to seek a livelihood, he must be necessitated to apply himself to *digging* in the vineyards, or fields, or olive-yards.

6. And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

[*Take thy bill, &c.*] That is, "Take from me *the scroll of thy contract*, which thou deliveredst to me; and make a new one, of fifty measures only, that are owing by thee." But it seems a great inequality, that he should abate one fifty in a hundred measures of oil, and the other but twenty out of a hundred measures of wheat; unless the measures of wheat exceeded the measure of oil ten times: so that when there were twenty cori of wheat abated the debtor, there were abated to him two hundred baths or ephahs.

9. And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

[*Of the mammon of unrighteousness.*] I. Were I very well assured that our Saviour in this passage meant riches well gotten, and alms to be bestowed thence, I would not render it *mammon of unrighteousness*, but *hurtful mammon*. For *hurt* signifies as well to *deal unjustly*. Vulg. *hurt not the earth*. And so riches, even well got, may be said to be *hurtful mammon*; because it frequently proves *noxious* to the owner. It is the lawyers' term, *the damage of mammon* (Maimonides hath a treatise with that title), that is, when any person doth any way *hurt* or *damnify* another's estate. And in reality, and on the contrary, *hurtful mammon*, i.e. when riches turn to the *hurt and mischief* of the owner...

II. Or perhaps he might call it *mammon of unrighteousness* in opposition to *mammon of righteousness*, i.e. *of mercy*, or *almsgiving*: for by that word *righteousness*, the Jews usually expressed *charity* or *almsgiving*, as every one that hath dipped into that language knows very well. And then his meaning might be, *make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness*, i.e. of those riches which you have not yet laid out in *righteousness*, or *almsgiving*...

III. I see no reason, therefore, why we may not, nay, why, indeed, it is not necessary to, understand the words precisely of *riches ill gotten*. For,

1. So the application of the parable falls in directly with the parable itself: "That steward gained to himself friends by ill-gotten goods; so do ye: make to yourselves friends of the wealth you have not well got."

Object. But far be it from our Saviour to exhort or encourage any to get riches unjustly, or to stir them up to give alms out of what they have dishonestly acquired. Saith Heinsius; "*No man but will confess* our Lord meant nothing less than that any one should make friends to himself of riches unjustly gained." Yet, for all this, I must acknowledge myself not so very well satisfied in this matter.

2. Let us but a little consider by what words in the Syriac our Saviour might express *mammon of unrighteousness*, especially if he spoke in the vulgar language. It was a common phrase, *mammon of falsity*, or *false mammon*; at least if the Targumists speak in the vulgar

idiom of that nation, which none will deny. It is said of Samuel's sons, that "they did not walk in his ways *but turned after 'false mammon.'*" "He destroys his own house, *whoso heaps up to himself the 'mammon of falsehood.'*" "Whoever walks in justice, and speaketh right things, *and separates himself from 'the mammon of iniquity.'*" "To shed blood and to destroy souls, *that they may gain 'mammon of falsehood.'*"

There needs no commentator to shew what the Targumists mean by *mammon of falsehood*, or *mammon of unrighteousness*. They themselves explain it, when they render it sometimes by *mammon of violence*; sometimes by *mammon of wickedness*. Kimchi, by *mammon of rapine*, upon [Isaiah 33](#).

By the way, I cannot but observe, that that expression, [Hosea 5:11](#), *after the commandment*, i.e. of Jeroboam or Omri, is rendered by the Targumists *after the mammon of falsehood*. Where also see the Greek and Vulgar.

Seeing it appears before that *mammon of unrighteousness*, is the same in the Greek with *mammon of falsity* or *false mammon* in the Targumists, who speak in the common language of that nation, there is no reason why it should not be taken here in the very same sense. Think but what word our Saviour would use to express *unrighteousness* by, and then think, if there can be any word more probable than that which was so well known, and so commonly in use in that nation. Indeed the word *unrighteousness*, in this place, is softened by some, that it should denote no further than *false*, as not true and substantial: so that the *mammon of unrighteousness* should signify *deceitful mammon*, not opposing *riches well got* to those that are *ill got*, but opposing *earthly riches* to *spiritual*: which rendering of the word took its rise from hence especially, that it looked ill and unseemly, that Christ should persuade any to make to themselves friends by giving alms out of an ill-gotten estate: not to mention that, verse 11, *unrighteous mammon*, is opposed to *true riches*.

III. It is not to be doubted but that the disciples of Christ did sufficiently abhor the acquiring of riches by fraud and rapine: but can we absolve all of them from the guilt of it before their conversion? particularly Matthew the publican? And is it so very unseemly for our Saviour to admonish them *to make themselves friends by restitution*, and a pious distribution of those goods they may have *unjustly* gathered before their conversion? The discourse is about *restitution*, and not *giving of alms*.

IV. It is a continued discourse in this place with that in the foregoing chapter, only that he does more particularly apply himself to his disciples, verse 1, *He said unto his disciples*; where the particle *and* joins what is discoursed here with what went before. Now who were his disciples? not the twelve apostles only, nor the seventy disciples only: but, chapter 15:1, *all the publicans and sinners* that came to hear him. For we needs must suppose them in the number of disciples, if we consider the distinction of the congregation then present, being made between scribes and Pharisees, and those that came to him with a good mind to hear: besides that we may observe how Christ entertains them, converseth with them, and pleads

for them in the parable of the foregoing chapter. Which plea and apology for them against the scribes and Pharisees being finished, he turns his discourse to them themselves, and under the parable of an Unjust Steward, instructs them how they may *make to themselves friends* of the wealth they had unjustly gained, as he had done. And, indeed, what could have been more seasonably urged before the unjust and covetous Pharisees, than to stir up his followers, that, if they had acquired any unrighteous gains before their conversion, they would now honestly restore them, piously distribute them, that so they may make themselves friends of them, as the Unjust Steward had done?

And for a comment upon this doctrine, let us take the instance of Zacchaeus, chapter 19. If Christ, while entertained in his house, had said to him what he said to his disciples here, Zacchaeus, make to thyself friends of the *mammon of unrighteousness*; would Zacchaeus himself, or those that stood by, have understood him any otherwise, than that he should make friends to himself of that wealth he had gotten dishonestly? And why they may not be so understood here, I profess I know not; especially when he discourses amongst those disciples that had been publicans and sinners; and scarce any of them, for aught we know, but before his conversion had been unjust and unrighteous enough.

[*Make to yourselves friends.*] Were it so, that, by *the mammon of unrighteousness* could be understood an estate honestly got, and the discourse were about giving of alms, yet would I hardly suppose *the poor* to be those *friends* here mentioned, but God and Christ. For who else were capable of *receiving them into everlasting habitations*? As for the poor (upon whom these alms are bestowed) doing this, as some have imagined, is mere dream, and deserves to be laughed at rather than discussed.

In *Bava Kama* we have a discourse about restitution of goods ill gotten; and amongst other things there is this passage: "The Rabbins deliver; *those that live upon violence* (or *thieves*), and *usurers*, if they make restitution, their restitution is not received." And a little after, *for shepherds, exactors, and publicans, restitution is difficult*. (The Gloss is, Because they have wronged so many, that they know not to whom to restore their own.) *But they do make restitution to those who know their own goods*, that were purloined from them. They say true, They do make restitution: but others do not receive it of them. To what end then do they make restitution? *That they may perform their duty towards God*.

Upon what nicety it was that they would not allow those to restitution, from whom the goods had been purloined, I will not stand to inquire. It was necessary, however, that restitution should be made; that that which was due and owing to God might be performed; that is, they might not retain in their hands any ill-gotten goods, but devote them to some good use; and, accordingly, those things that were restored, (if the owners could not know them again) were dedicated to public use, viz. *to the use of the synagogue*: and so they made God their friend, of the *goods that they had gained by dishonesty and unrighteousness*.

11. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

[*If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, &c.*] The Vulgar, *If ye have not been faithful in the unjust mammon*: it is not ill rendered. But can any one be *faithful in the unrighteous mammon*? As to that, let us judge from the example of Zaccaeus: although he was not faithful in scraping together any thing unjustly, yet was he eminently faithful in so piously distributing it.

12. And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

[*If ye have not been faithful in that which was another man's, &c.*] To apply *another man's* to that wealth which is given us by God, is something harsh and obscure; but to apply it to the riches of other men, makes the sense a little more easy: "If ye have been unjust in purloining the goods of other men, and will still as unjustly keep them back, what reason have you to think that others will not deal as unjustly with you, and keep back even what is yours?"

16. The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

[*And every one presseth into it.*] These words may be varied into a sense plainly contrary; so far that they may either denote the *entertainment* or the *persecution* of the gospel. Saith Beza: *Every one breaketh into it by force*; which points at the former sense of these words. Vulgar: *Every one commits violence upon it*: which points to the latter. I have admitted of the former, as that which is the most received sense of that passage in [Matthew 11:12](#): but the latter seems more agreeable in this place, if you will suppose a continued discourse in our Saviour from verse 15, and that one verse depends upon another. They do indeed seem independent, and incoherent one with another; and yet there is no reason why we may not suppose a connexion, though at the first view it is not so perspicuous. We may observe the manner of the schools in this very difficulty. In both the Talmuds, what frequent transitions are there infinitely obscure and inextricable at first sight, and seemingly of no kind of coherence; which yet the expositors have made very plain and perspicuous, very coherent with one another.

I would therefore join and continue the discourse in some such way as this: "You *laugh me to scorn*, and have my doctrine in derision, boasting yourselves above the sphere of it, as if nothing I said belonged at all to you. Nor do I wonder at it; for whereas the Law and the Prophets were until John, yet did you deal no otherwise with them, but changed and wrested them at your pleasure by your traditions and the false glosses ye have put upon them. And when with John Baptist the kingdom of heaven arose and made its entry among you, *every one useth violence and hostility against it*, by contradiction, persecution, and

laughing it to scorn. And yet, though you by your foolish traditions have made even the whole law void and of none effect, it is easier certainly for heaven and earth to pass away, than that one tittle of the law should fail. Take but an instance in the first and most ancient precept of the law, 'The man shall cleave unto his wife'; which you, by your traditions and arbitrary divorces, have reduced to nothing; but that still remains, and will remain for ever, in its full force and virtue; and he that puts away his wife (according to the licentiousness of your divorces) and marrieth another, committeth adultery."

19. There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

[*There was a certain rich man.*] Whoever believes this not to be a parable, but a true story, let him believe also those little friars, whose trade it is to shew the monuments at Jerusalem to pilgrims, and point exactly to the place where the house of the 'rich glutton' stood. Most accurate keepers of antiquity indeed! who, after so many hundreds of years, such overthrows of Jerusalem, such devastations and changes, can rake out of the rubbish the place of so private a house, and such a one too as never had any being, but merely in parable. And that it was a parable, not only the consent of all expositors may assure us, but the thing itself speaks it.

The main scope and design of it seems this, to hint the destruction of the unbelieving Jews, who, though they had Moses and the Prophets, did not believe them, nay, would not believe, though one (even Jesus) arose from the dead. For that conclusion of the parable abundantly evidenceth what it aimed at: "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

20. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

[*Lazarus.*] I. We shew in our notes upon St. [John 11:1](#), in several instances, that the word *Lazar* is by contraction used by the Talmudists for *Eleazar*. The author of *Juchasin* attests it: *in the Jerusalem Talmud every R. Eleazar is written without an Aleph, R. Lazar.*

II. In *Midras Coheleth* there is a certain beggar called *Diglus Patragus* or *Petargus*: *poor, infirm, naked, and famished*. But there could hardly be invented a more convenient name for a poor beggar than *Lazar*, which signifies *the help of God*, when he stands in so much need of the help of men.

But perhaps there may be something more aimed at in the name: for since the discourse is concerning Abraham and Lazarus, who would not call to mind Abraham and Eliezer his servant, one born at Damascus, a Gentile by birth, and sometime in *posse* the heir of Abraham; but shut out of the inheritance by the birth of Isaac, yet restored here into Abraham's bosom? Which I leave to the judgment of the reader, whether it might not hint the calling of the Gentiles into the faith of Abraham.

The Gemarists make Eliezer to accompany his master even in the cave of Machpelah: "R. Baanah painted the sepulchres: when he came to Abraham's cave, he found Eliezer standing at the mouth of it. He saith unto him, 'What is Abraham doing?' To whom he, *He lieth in the embraces of Sarah*. Then said Baanah, 'Go and tell him that Baanah is at the door,'" &c.

[*Full of sores.*] In the Hebrew language, *stricken with ulcers*. Sometimes *his body full of ulcers*, as in this story: "They tell of Nahum Gamzu, that he was blind, lame of both hands and of both feet, *and in all his body full of sores*. He was thrown into a ruinous house, the feet of his bed being put into basins full of water, that the ants might not creep upon him. His disciples ask him, 'Rabbi, how hath this mischief befallen thee, when as thou art a just man?'" He gives the reason himself; viz. Because he deferred to give something to a poor man that begged of him. We have the same story in *Hieros Peah*, where it were worth the while to take notice how they vary in the telling it.

22. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

[*He was carried by the angels.*] The Rabbins have an invention that there are three bands of *angels* attend the death of wicked men, proclaiming, "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." But what conceptions they have of *angels* being present at the death of good men, let us judge from this following passage:

"The men of Tsippor said, 'Whoever tells us that Rabbi [Judah] is dead, we will kill him.' Bar Kaphra, looking upon them with his head veiled with a hood, said unto them, 'Holy men, and *angels* took hold of the tables of the covenant, and the hand of the *angels* prevailed; so that they took away the tables.' They said unto him, 'Is Rabbi dead then?'" The meaning of this parabolizer was this; Holy men would fain have detained R. Judah still in the land of the living, but the *angels* took him away.

[*Into Abraham's bosom.*] ...The Jewish schools dispose of the souls of Jews under a threefold *phrase*, I can hardly say under a threefold *state*:--

I. *In the garden of Eden, or Paradise*. Amongst those many instances that might be alleged, even to nauseousness, let us take one wherein this very Abraham is named:

"'He shall be as a tree planted by the rivers of waters.' This is Abraham, whom God took and planted in the land of Israel; or, whom God took and planted *in Paradise*." Take one instance more of one of equal fame and piety, and that was Moses: "When our master Moses departed *into Paradise*, he said unto Joshua, 'If thou hast any doubt upon thee about any thing, inquire now of me concerning it.'"

II. *Under the throne of glory*. We have a long story in *Avoth* R. Nathan of the angel of death being sent by God to take away the soul of Moses; which when he could not do, "God taketh hold of him himself, *and treasureth him up under the throne of glory*." And a little

after; "Nor is Moses' soul only *placed under the throne of glory*; but the souls of other just persons also are *reposed under the throne of glory*."

Moses, in the words quoted before, is in Paradise; in these words, he is *under the throne of glory*. In another place, "he is in heaven ministering before God." So that under different phrases is the same thing expressed; and this, however, is made evident, that there *the garden of Eden* was not to be understood of an earthly, but a heavenly paradise. That in [Revelation 6:9](#), of 'souls crying under the altar,' comes pretty near this phrase, of being placed *under the throne of glory*. For the Jews conceived of *the altar* as *the throne* of the Divine Majesty; and for that reason the court of the Sanhedrim was placed so near the altar, that they might be filled with the reverence of the Divine Majesty so near them, while they were giving judgment. Only, whereas there is mention of the souls of the martyrs that had poured out their blood for God, it is an allusion to the blood of the sacrifices that were wont to be poured out at the foot of the altar.

III. *In Abraham's bosom*: which if you would know what it is, you need seek no further than the Rhemists, our countrymen (with grief be it spoken), if you will believe them; for they upon this place have this passage: "The bosom of Abraham is the resting-place of all them that died in perfect state of grace before Christ's time; heaven, before, being shut from men. It is called in Zachary a lake without water, and sometimes a prison, but most commonly of the divines *Limbus patrum*; for that it is thought to have been the *higher part* or *brim* of hell," &c.

If our Saviour had been the first author of this phrase, then might it have been tolerable to have looked for the meaning of it amongst Christian expositors; but seeing it is a scheme of speech so familiar amongst the Jews, and our Saviour spoke no other than in the known and vulgar dialect of that nation, the meaning must be fetched thence, not from any Greek or Roman lexicon. That which we are to inquire after is, how it was understood by the auditory then present: and I may lay any wager that the Jews, when they heard *Abraham's bosom* mentioned, did think of nothing less than that kind of *limbo* which we have here described. What! Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, &c., in a lake without water, in prison, on *the very brim of hell*! Is this to be *in paradise*? is this to be *under the throne of glory*? And was Lazarus carried *thither* by *angels* when he was carried into *Abraham's bosom*?

We meet with a phrase amongst the Talmudists; *Kiddushin*, fol. 72: it is quoted also from *Juchasin*, fol. 75. 2. Let us borrow a little patience of the reader, to transcribe the whole passage:

"Rabbi [Judah] saith to Levi, *Represent the Persians to me by some similitude*. He saith, They are like to the host of the house of David. *Represent to me the Iberians*. They are like *to the angels of destruction*. Represent to me the Ismaelites. They are *like the devils of the stinking pit*. Represent to me the disciples of the wise, that are in Babylon. they are like to ministering angels. *When R. [Judah] died*, he said, *Hoemnia is in Babylon*, and consists of

Ammonites wholly. *Mesgaria is in Babylon*, and wholly consists of spurious people. *Birkah is in Babylon*, where two men interchange their wives. *Birtha Sataia is in Babylon*, and at this day they depart from God. *Acra of Agma is in Babylon*. *Ada Bar Ahava is there*. *This day he sits in Abraham's bosom*. *This day is Rabh Judah born in Babylon*."

Expositors are not well agreed, neither by whom, nor indeed concerning whom, those words are spoken, *This day he sits 'in the bosom of Abraham.'* And for that reason have I transcribed the whole period, that the reader may spend his judgment amongst them. The author of *Juchasin* thinks they may be the words of Adah Bar Ahavah spoken concerning Rabbi Judah. Another Gloss saith, They are spoken of Adah Bar Ahavah himself. Let us hear them both: "The day that Rabbi died, Rabh Adah Bar Ahavah said, by way of prophecy, This day doth he sit in *Abraham's bosom*." "There are those indeed that expound, This day doth he sit in *Abraham's bosom*, thus; that is, This day he died. Which if it be to be understood of Adah Bar Ahavah, the times do not suit. It seems to be understood therefore, This day he sits in *Abraham's bosom*: that is, This day is Adah Bar Ahavah circumcised, and entered into the covenant of Abraham."

But the reader may plainly see, having read out the whole period, that these words were spoken neither *by* Adah nor *of* him, but by Levi, of whom we have some mention in the beginning of this passage, and spoken concerning Rabbi Judah that was now dead. It is Levi also that saith, that in his room, on that very selfsame day, was Rabh Judah born in Babylon, according to the common adage of their schools, which immediately follows; "A just man never dies, till there be born in his room one like him." So saith R. Meir; "When R. Akibah died, Rabbi [Judah] was born: when Rabbi Judah died, Rabh Judah was born: when Rabh Judah died, Rabba was born: when Rabba died, Rabh Isai was born."

We have here, therefore, if we will make up the story out of both Talmuds, another not very unlike this of ours. In the Jerusalem Talmud, Rabbi Judah is conveyed by angels; in the Babylonian, he is placed in *Abraham's bosom*: neither would the Glosser have doubted in the least either of the thing, or of the way of expressing it, so as to have fled to any new exposition, had he not mistook the person concerning whom these words were uttered. He supposeth them spoken of Adah Bar Ahavah (wherein he is deceived): and because the times do not fall in right, if they were to be understood of his death, he therefore frames a new interpretation of his own, whiles, in the mean time, he acknowledgeth that others expound it otherwise.

We may find out, therefore, the meaning of the phrase according to the common interpretation, by observing, first, that it was universally believed amongst the Jews, that pure and holy souls, when they left this body, went into happiness, to *Abraham*. Our Saviour speaks according to the received opinion of that nation in this affair, when he saith, "Many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with *Abraham*."

Give me leave to transcribe a story a little more largely than usual: "There was a woman the mother of seven martyrs (so we find it also [2 Maccabees 7](#))." When six of her sons were slain, and the youngest brought out in order to it, though but a child of two years and a half old, "the mother saith to Caesar, '*by the life of thy head*, I beseech thee, O Caesar, let me embrace and kiss my child.' This being permitted her, she plucked out her breasts and gave it suck. The she; 'By the life of thy head, I entreat thee, O Caesar, that thou wouldest first kill me and then the child.' Caesar answered, 'I will not yield to thee in this matter, for it is written in your own law, The heifer or sheep, with its young one, thou shalt not kill on the same day.' To whom she; '*O thou foolishhest of all mortals*, hast thou performed all the commands, that this only is wanting?' He forthwith commands that the child should be killed. The mother running into the embraces of her little son, kissed him and said, '*Go thou, O my son, to Abraham thy father*, and tell him, Thus saith my mother, Do not thou boast, saying, I built an altar, and offered my son Isaac: for my mother hath built seven altars, and offered seven sons in one day,'" &c.

This woman, questionless, did not doubt of the innocence and purity of the soul of this child, nor of its future happiness, (for we will suppose the truth of the story) which happiness she expresseth sufficiently by this, that her son was going to his father *Abraham*. There are several other things to the same purpose and of the same mould, that might be produced, but let this suffice in this place: however, see notes upon verse 24.

Now what this *being in Abraham's bosom* may signify amongst the Jews, we may gather from what is spoken of the manners and the death of this R. Judah; concerning whom it is said, *This day he sits in Abraham's bosom*. "Rabbi Judah had the toothache thirteen years; and in all that time there was not an abortive woman throughout the whole land of Israel." For to him it is that they apply those words of the prophet, "He was a man of sorrows, and hath borne our griefs." And for these very pains of his, some had almost persuaded themselves that he was the Messiah. At length this toothache was relieved by Elias, appearing in the likeness of R. Chajjah Rubbah, who, by touching his tooth, cured him. When he died, and was to be buried on the evening of the sabbath, there were eighteen synagogues accompanied him to his grave. "Miracles were done; the day did not decline, till every one was got home before the entrance of the sabbath." *Bath Kol* pronounced happiness for all those that wept for him, excepting one by name; which one when he knew himself excepted, threw himself headlong from the roof of the house, and so died, &c. But to add no more, for his incomparable learning and piety he was called R. Judah *the holy*. And whither would the Jew think such a one would go when he went out of this world? Who amongst them, when it was said of him that was *in Abraham's bosom*, would not without all scruple and hesitancy understand it, that he was *in the very embraces of Abraham*, (as they were wont at table one to lie in the other's bosom) in the exquisite delights and perfect felicities of *paradise*? not in 'a lake without water,' 'a prison,' 'the very brink of hell.'

23. And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

[*He seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus.*] Instead of commentary, take another parable: "There are wicked men that are coupled together in this world. But one of them repents before death; the other doth not: so the one is found standing in the assembly of the just; the other in the assembly of the wicked. The one seeth the other, [this agrees with the passage now before us] and saith, 'Woe! and alas! here is accepting of persons in this thing: he and I robbed together, committed murder together; and now he stands in the congregation of the just, and I in the congregation of the wicked.' They answer him, '*O thou most foolish amongst mortals that are in the world!* Thou wert abominable, and cast forth for three days after thy death, and they did not lay thee in the grave: the worm was under thee, and the worm covered thee: which when this companion of thine came to understand, he became a penitent. It was in thy power also to have repented, but thou didst not.' He saith unto them, 'Let me go now and become a penitent,' But they say, 'O thou foolishest of men, dost thou not know that this world in which thou art is like the sabbath, and the world out of which thou camest is like the evening of the sabbath? If thou dost not provide something on the evening of the sabbath, what wilt thou eat on the sabbath day? Dost thou not know that the world out of which thou camest is like the land, and the world in which thou now art is like the sea? If a man make no provision on land for what he should eat at sea, what will he have to eat?' He gnashed his teeth and gnawed his own flesh."

24. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

[*And he cried and said.*] We have mention of the dead discoursing one amongst another, and also with those that are alive. "R. Samuel Bar Nachman saith, R. Jonathan saith, How doth it appear that the dead have any discourse amongst themselves? It appears from what is said, And the Lord said unto him, This is the land, concerning which I sware unto Abraham, to Isaac, and Jacob *saying: What is the meaning of saying?* The Holy Blessed God saith unto Moses, Go thou and say to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, The oath which I sware unto you, I have performed unto your children." Note that: "Go thou and say to Abraham," &c. "There is a story of a certain pious man, that went and lodged in a burying-place, and heard two souls discoursing amongst themselves. Said the one unto the other, 'Come, my companion, and let us wander about the world, and listen behind the veil, what kind of plagues are coming upon the world.' To which the other replied, 'O my companion, I cannot; for I am buried in a cane mat: but do thou go, and whatsoever thou hearest, do thou come and tell me.' The soul went, and wandered about the world," &c.

"The year following he went again, and lodging in a place of burial, he heard two souls discoursing between themselves. Saith the one unto the other, 'O my companion, come, let

us wander about the world, and hearken behind the veil, what kind of plagues are coming upon the world.' To which the other, 'O my companion, let me alone; for the words that formerly passed between thee and me were heard amongst the living.' 'Whence could they know?' 'Perhaps some other person that is dead went and told them.'"

"There was a certain person deposited some *zuzees* with a certain hostess till he should return; and went to the house of Rabh. When he returned she was dead. He went after her to the place of burial, and said unto her, 'Where are my *zuzees*?' She saith unto him, 'Go, take it from under the hinge of the door, in a certain place there: and speak to my mother to send me *my black lead, and the reed of paint* by the woman N., who is coming hither tomorrow.' But whence do they know that such a one shall die? *Dumah* [that is, the angel who is appointed over the dead] *comes before, and proclaims it to them.*"

"The *zuzees* that belonged to orphans were deposited with the father of Samuel [the Rabbin]. He died, Samuel being absent. He went after him to the place of burial, and said unto them [i.e. to the dead], *I look for Abba*. They say unto him, *Abba the good is here*. 'I look for Abba Bar Abba.' They say unto him, 'Abba Bar Abba the good is here.' He saith unto them, 'I look for Abba Bar Abba the father of Samuel; where is he?' They say unto him, *He is gone up to the academy of the firmament*. Then he saw Levi [his colleague] sitting without." (The Gloss hath it, The dead appeared as without their graves, sitting in a circle, but Levi sat without the circle.) "He saith unto him, 'Why dost thou sit without? why dost thou not ascend?' He answered him, 'They say unto me, Because there want those years wherein thou didst not go into the academy of the Rabbi.' When his father came, he saw him weep. He saith unto him, 'Why dost thou weep?' He saith unto him, 'Where is the orphans' money?' He saith unto him, 'Go, and take it out of the mill-house,'" &c. But I fear, the reader will frown at this huge length of trifles.

[*And cool my tongue.*] There was a good man and a wicked man that died. As for the good man, *he had no funeral rites solemnized*, but the wicked man had. Afterward, there was one saw in his dream the good man walking in gardens, and hard by pleasant springs: but the wicked man *with his tongue trickling drop by drop at the bank of a river, endeavouring to touch the water, but he could not.*

26. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

[*A great gulf fixed.*] It is well known from the poets, that *inferi* among the Latins comprehend the seat both of the blessed and the damned, denoting in general the state of the dead, be they according to the quality of their persons allotted either to joys or punishments. On this hand, *Elysium* for the good; on that hand, *Tartarus* for the wicked; the river Cocytus, or Acheron, or some such *great gulf fixed* betwixt them. The Jews seem not to have been very distant from this apprehension of things. "God hath set the one against the other, that

is, *hell and paradise. How far are they distant? A handbreadth.* R. Jochanan saith, *A wall is between.*" But the Rabbins say, *They are so even with one another, that you may see out of one into the other.*

That of *seeing out of the one into the other* agrees with the passage before us; nor is it very dissonant that it is said, *They are so even with one another*; that is, they are so even, that they have a plain view one from the other, nothing being interposed to hinder it, and yet so great a gulf between, that it is impossible to pass the one to the other. That is worth noting, [Revelation 14:10](#), "Shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb."

29. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

[*They have Moses and the prophets.*] The *historical books* also are comprehended under the title of the *Prophets*, according to the common acceptation of the Jews, and the reading in their synagogues: "All the books of *the Prophets* are eight; Joshua, Judges, Samuel, the Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the twelve." So the Gemara also reckons them. So we find *the Octateuch of the Prophets*, as well as *the Pentateuch of Moses*, in Photius; of which we have spoken elsewhere.

But are *the Hagiographa* excluded, when mention is made only of *the law* and *the prophets*? Our Saviour speaks after the usual manner of their reading *Moses and the Prophets* in their synagogues; where every ordinary person, even the most rude and illiterate, met with them, though he had neither *Moses* nor *the prophets* nor *the Hagiographa* at his own house. Indeed, *the holy writings*, were not read in the synagogues (for what reason I will not dispute in this place), but they were, however, far from being rejected by the people, but accounted for divine writings, which may be evinced, besides other things, even from the very name. Our Saviour therefore makes no mention of them, not because he lightly esteems them, but because *Moses and the prophets* were heard by every one every sabbath day; and so were not the *Hagiographa*.

31. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

[*Neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*] Any one may see how Christ points at the infidelity of the Jews, even after that himself shall have risen again. From whence it is easy to judge what was the design and intention of this parable.

2. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

[*That a millstone were hanged about his neck.*] There is mention among the Talmudic authors, concerning an *ass-mill*, and it is distinguished from a *hand-mill*. "Whoso hireth a house of his neighbour, *he may build an ass-mill, but not a hand-mill.*"

To have a millstone hanged about his neck was a common proverb. "Samuel saith, It is a tradition, that a man may marry, and after that apply himself to the study of the law. But R. Jochanan saith, No. *Shall he addict himself to the study of the law with a millstone about his neck?*"

Suidas tells us, *When they drowned any in the sea, they hung stones about their necks.* And quotes that of Aristophanes:

Lifting him up, I'll plunge him to the deep,
A stone hung at his neck.

3. Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

[*Rebuke him.*] The Rabbins are not sparing in granting the lawfulness of repeating rebuke upon rebuke, but they are most sparing about forgiveness where any hath given an offence. They allow, from [Leviticus 19:17](#), that a man may rebuke a hundred times if there be any need for it; nay, that it is the duty of a disciple to rebuke his master if occasion be. But as to forgiving him that offends, they abuse the words of the prophet, [Amos 1:2](#), "for three transgressions"; and that of [Job 33:29](#), "Lo, God worketh all these things three times with man"; and teach that a man is not bound to forgive a fourth trespass.

6. And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

[*As a grain of mustard seed.*] A phrase greatly in use. Sometimes we have it *like a seed of mustard*. Sometimes, *like a grain of mustard seed*. Sometimes, *like a drop of mustard*.

When our Lord had been teaching his disciples concerning charity towards their offending brother, they beg of him *increase our faith*. Which words (saving that I would not wrong the faith of the apostles, as if they begged of their Master an increase of it) I would inquire whether they might not be put into some such sense as this: "Lay down or add something concerning the measure of our faith, as thou hast done concerning the measure of our charity": which, therefore, he doth in his following discourse.

7. But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

[*Will say unto him by and by, Go and sit down to meat?*] Some there were of old that were wont to do thus. "The wise men of old were used to give their servant something of every thing that they ate themselves." This was indeed kindly done, and but what they ought; but then it follows, *they made their beasts and their servants take their meals before themselves*. This was supererogation.

11. And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

[*He passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.*] If it had been said *through the midst of Galilee and Samaria*, there had been no difficulty; but being said *through the midst of Samaria and Galilee*, it raiseth that doubt to which I have formerly spoken, viz. whether *through 'Galilee,'* in this place, ought not to be understood *through 'Perea.'* The Syriac and Arabic seem to have been aware of this difficulty; and therefore, to accommodate the matter, have rendered *through the midst*, by *between*. So that the sense they seem to make of it is this: that Jesus in his journey to Jerusalem took his way in the very extreme borders of Galilee and Samaria, i.e. that *he went between the confines*, and, as it were, upon the very brink of each country for a good way together. He did, indeed, go to the Scythopolitan bridge, by which he passed over into Perea: but whether *through the midst* will allow of such a rendering, let the more skillful judge.

12. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:

[*Ten men that were lepers.*] I. It is provided by a law, in [Leviticus 13:46](#), that "he that is a leper shall dwell alone, and without the camp." How then came these ten to converse thus together? as also those four together, [2 Kings 7:3](#)?

Other unclean persons must not live with him: i.e. those that are unclean by other kind of defilements: which also is intimated by the Gemarists in these words: "Shall those that have their issues, and those that are defiled by the dead, be sent out into one and the same place? The text saith, "They shall not defile their camps," [Numbers 5:3](#); to assign one camp for these, and another for them."

The *lepers* might be conversant with *lepers*, and those that had issues with those that had issues; but those that were under different defilements might not converse promiscuously. Which confirms what I have conceived concerning the five porches at the pool of Bethesda; viz., that they were so framed and distinguished at first, that there might be a different reception for those that had contracted different kinds of defilements, and were there waiting to be cleansed in that pool.

That there were certain places where they that were unclean by that disease of the *leprosy* were secluded, reason might persuade us: for it were an inhuman thing to cast the *leprosy* out of the city without any provision of a dwelling for them, but that they should always lie *in the open air*. Whether there was any such thing in this place, I will not determine. It seems as if these ten lepers, having heard of our Saviour's coming that way, were got but lately together to attend him there. For when the seventy disciples had beforehand openly proclaimed, in all the places where he was to come, that he would come thither, it is easy to conceive in what infinite throngs the sick, and all that were affected with any kind of distemper, would be crowding thither for a cure.

II. "*The leper that transgresseth his bounds, let him receive forty stripes*. Those that have their issues, men or women, if they transgress their limits, let them also receive forty stripes." Where the Gloss is, "The limits for those that have their issues are the Mountain of the House, or the Court of the Gentiles: for they are forbid to enter into the camp of the Levites. The unclean are not excluded but from the Court: excepting those that have their issues and a gonorrhoea upon them; they are excluded even from the Mountain of the House; and the *leper*, who is excluded from the camp of Israel, that is, from the city."

Now *the camp of Israel*, out of which the *leper* was to be excluded, they interpreted to be every city that had been walled from the days of Joshua: "For (say they) Joshua sanctified the walled cities with the holiness that was ascribed to *the camp of Israel*; but he did not so to the rest of the land, nor the cities that had no walls." This was a village, and not such a city, where these *ten lepers* meet our Saviour; and if they were within this village, it was neither beyond the custom nor the rule, provided that they kept but their distance.

"A *leper* enters into the synagogue: they make him some *grates*, or *bounds*, ten hands high and four cubits broad: he enters the first, and goes out the last." The Gloss is, "Lest they should be defiled that stand in the synagogue," &c.

20. And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

[*The kingdom of god cometh not with observation.*] *The kingdom of God*, or of heaven, hath especially a twofold distinct sense in the Holy Scriptures. In some places it signifies the propagation of the gospel by the Messias and his followers, and that especially amongst the Gentiles: in other places it denotes the Messias's victory and vengeance upon the Jews, the enemies of this gospel; but in the Jewish schools this was their conceit of him: that when he came he should cut off all those nations that obeyed not his, i.e., the Jewish law; redeeming Israel from the Gentile yoke; establishing a kingdom and age amongst them that should be crowned with all kind of delights whatever. In this they were miserably deceived, that they thought the Gentiles were first to be destroyed by him, and then that he himself would reign

amongst the Israelites. Which, in truth, fell out just contrary; he was first to overthrow Israel, and then to reign amongst the Gentiles.

It is easy to conceive in what sense the Pharisees propounded that question, *When the kingdom of God should come?* that is, when all those glorious things should be accomplished which they expected from the Messiah? and, consequently, we may as well conceive, from the contexture of his discourse, in what sense our Saviour made his reply: "You inquire when the Messiah will come: His coming will be as in the days of Noah, and as in the days of Lot. For as when Noah entered the ark the world perished by a deluge, and as when Lot went out of Sodom those five cities were overthrown, 'so shall it be in the day when the Son of Man shall be revealed.'" So that it is evident he speaks of the kingdom of God in that sense, as it signifies that dreadful revenge he would ere long take of that provoking nation and city of the Jews. The kingdom of God will come when Jerusalem shall be made like *Sodom*, verse 29, when it shall be made a *carcase*, verse 37.

It is plain to every eye, that the cutting-off of that place and nation is emphatically called *his kingdom*, and *his coming in glory*. Nor indeed without reason: for before he wasted the city and subverted that nation, he had subdued all nations under the empire and obedience of the gospel; according to what he foretold, "That the gospel of the kingdom should be preached in all the world, and then should the end [*of Jerusalem*] come." And when he had obtained his dominion amongst the Gentiles, what then remained towards the consummation of his *kingdom* and victories, but to cut off his enemies the Jews, who would not that he should rule over them? Of this *kingdom of God* he speaks in this place, not answering according to that vain apprehension the Pharisee had when he propounded the question, but according to the thing itself and the truth of it. There are two things he saith of *this kingdom*:

1. That it comes not *with observation*. Not but that it might be seen and conspicuous, but that they would not see and observe it. Which security and supineness of theirs he both foretells and taxeth in other places once and again.

2. He further tells them, *this kingdom of God is within you*: you are the scene of these triumphs. And whereas your expectancies are of that kind, that you say, Behold here a token of the Messiah in the subduing of such a nation, and, Behold there in the subduing of another; they will be all in vain, for *it is within you; within*, and upon your own nation, that these things must be done. I would lay the emphasis in the word *you*, when commonly it is laid in *within*.

Besides, those things which follow, verse 22, do very much confirm it, that Christ speaks of the *kingdom of God* in that sense wherein we have supposed it: they are spoken to his disciples "that the days will come, wherein they shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, but shall not see it." *The days of the Son of man*, in the Jewish style, are *the days of the Messias*: days, wherein they promise themselves nothing but pleasing, prosperous, and gay enjoyments: and, questionless, the Pharisees put this question under this notion only.

But our Saviour so applies the terms of the question to the truth, and to his own purpose, that they signify little else but vengeance and wrath and affliction. And it was so far from it, that the Jews should see their expected pleasures, that the disciples themselves should see nothing but affliction, though under another notion.

Chapter 18

1. And he spake a parable unto them to *this end*, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

[*And not to faint.*] The discourse is continued still; and this parable hath its connexion with chapter 17, concerning Christ's coming to avenge himself upon Jerusalem; which if we keep our eye upon, it may help us to an easier understanding of some more obscure passages that occur in the application of this parable. And to this doth the expression *not to faint*, seem to have relation; viz. that they might not suffer their hopes and courage to languish and droop, upon the prospect of some afflictions they were likely to grapple with, but that they would give themselves to continual prayer.

2. Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

[*There was a certain judge, &c.*] If the scene of this parabolical history must be supposed to have been amongst the Jews, then there would some questions arise upon it: 1. Whether this judge were any way distinguished from an *elder* or *presbyter*: for the doctors are forced to such a distinction from those words in [Deuteronomy 21:2](#), *thy elders and thy judges*: if a *judge*, be the same with an *elder*, which the Babylonian *Sotah* approve of, then might it be inquired, whether it was lawful for one elder to sit in judgment; which the Sanhedrim deny. But I let these things pass.

The parable propounded is of that rank or order that commonly amongst the Jews is argued *from the less to the greater*: "If that judge, the wickedest of men, being overcome by the endless importunity of the widow, judged her cause, will not a just, merciful, and good God appear for his own much more, who continually solicit him?"

[*Who feared not God, &c.*] How widely distant is this wretch from the character of a just judge! "Although in the triumviral court all things are not expected there which are requisite in the Sanhedrim, yet is it necessary, that in every one of that court there should be this sevenfold qualification; prudence, gentleness, piety, hatred of mammon, love of truth, that they be beloved themselves, and of good report."

7. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

[*Though he bear long with them.*] [So 2 Peter 3:9](#), *is longsuffering to us-ward*. In both places the discourse is concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and the times immediately preceding it; in which the Lord exercised infinite patience towards his elect. For in that

slippery and unsteady state of theirs, when apostasy prevailed beyond measure, and it was a hard thing to abandon Judaism, people were very difficultly gained over to the faith, and as difficultly retained in it, when they had once embraced it. And yet, after all this *longsuffering* and patience, *shall he find faith on earth?*

12. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

[*I fast twice in the week.*] I. There were *fasts of the congregation*, and *fasts of this or that single person*. And both principally upon the account of *afflictions* or *straits*. "These are the calamities of the congregation for which they *fast*. Being besieged by enemies, the sword, pestilence, a hurtful beast, locusts, the caterpillar, mildew, blasting, abortions, diseases, scarcity of bread, drought." "As the congregation *fasts* upon the occasion of general calamities, so does this or that person for his particular afflictions. If any that belong to him be sick, or lost in the wilderness, or kept in prison, he is bound to *fast* in his behalf," &c.

II. "The *fasts* appointed by the congregation by reason of general calamities, are not from day to day, because there are few that could hold out in such a *fast*, but *on the second and fifth days of the week*." On those days they assembled in their synagogues to public prayers: and to this I would refer that of [Acts 13:2](#), *as they ministered before the Lord and fasted*; much rather than to the celebration of the mass, which some would be wresting it to.

III. It was very usual for *the single person*, to devote himself to stated and repeated *fasts* for religion's sake, even when there was no affliction or calamity of life to urge them to it. And those that did so chose to themselves those very days which the congregation was wont to do; viz. the *second* and the *fifth* days of the week. *The single person that taketh upon him to fast on the second and fifth days, and the second day throughout the whole year*, &c.

Let me add this one thing further about these *fasts*: "R. Chasda saith, The *fast* upon which the sun sets is not to be called a *fast*." And yet they take very good care that they be not starved by *fasting*, for they are allowed to eat and drink the whole night before the *fast*. "It is a tradition. Rabbi saith, It is lawful to eat till day-light."

[*I give tithes of all that I possess.*] This Pharisee in the profession he maketh of himself, imitates the profession which he was to make that offered the firstfruits: "I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house and given them to the Levite and to the stranger, to the fatherless and to the widow," &c.

But tell me, O thou Pharisee, dost thou thus strictly give tithes of all things out of an honest mind and pure justice, viz., that the priest and Levite and poor may have every one their own? and not rather out of mere fear and dread, because of that rule, "He that eateth of things that are not tithed is worthy of death?"

13. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

[*And the publican, standing afar off, &c.*] I. That the Israelites, when they went into the Temple to put up their own private prayers, went beyond the outward court, or the Court of the Gentiles, into the Court of the Women; this, amongst other things, makes it evident, viz., that in that court were placed thirteen *eleemosynary chests*, into which they threw in their voluntary oblations: which was done by the widow with her two mites in that place.

II. It is a question whether any person for his private praying might come as far as the gate of Nicanor, or the Court of Israel; much less into the Court of the Priests, unless the priests only. We read of our Saviour's being in the Court of the Gentiles, viz., in Solomon's Porch, and that he was in the treasury, or the Court of the Women; but you will hardly find him at any time in the Court of Israel. And the negative upon their entrance into that court is confirmed, at least if that rule avail any thing which we meet with in *Hieros. Beracoth*: "R. Joshua Ben Levi saith, 'He that stands to pray, it is necessary that he first sit down, because it is said, *Blessed are they that "sit" in thy house.*'" Now it was lawful for no person to sit down in that court but the king only.

III. That therefore this publican *stood* so much further off while he prayed than the Pharisee, was probably more from his humility than any necessity that lay upon him so to do. For though the heathen and publican go together in those words of our Saviour, "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican," yet it is a question whether the publicans, if they were Jews, were bounded to the outward court only, as the heathens were.

[*He would not lift so much as his eyes unto heaven.*] What needed this to have been added, when this was the very rule of praying, "Let him that prayeth cover his head and look downward." "The disciple of the wise men, when he stands praying, let him look downward." But were those of the laity or of the common people to do thus? If not, our question is answered, that this man (otherwise than the vulgar was wont) in deep humility and a conscience of his own vileness, would not lift up his eyes. But if this was the usage of all in common, that whilst they were actually praying they must look downward; yet probably in the time that they were composing themselves to prayer, they might be a little lifting up their eyes towards heaven. "If they pray in the Temple, they turn their faces towards the holy of holies; if elsewhere, then towards Jerusalem." And it would be a strange thing if they were not to have their eyes towards heaven at all: indeed, when they began to pray, then they looked downward.

[For more info, please see A Discourse upon the Pharisee and Publican by John Bunyan (341k).]

15. And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

[*But when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.*] "Wicked Israelites' little ones shall not come into the world to come: wicked heathen's little ones all men confess they shall not come into the world to come. *From what time is a little child capable of the world to come?* R. Chaijah and R. Simeon Bar Rabbi; one of them saith, *From the time wherein he is born.* The other saith, *From the time that he can speak.* Rabbona saith, *From the time it is begot.* Rabh Nachman Bar Isaac saith, *From the time he is circumcised:* R. Meir saith, *From the time that he can answer, Amen."*

Whether this question was handled in the schools or no in the times of the apostles, it is very probable they took this bringing of little children to Christ ill, because (if they might be judges) they were not capable of the kingdom of heaven. And indeed our Saviour's answer to them seems to favour this conjecture of ours: "Is it so indeed, that you suppose such as these unfit and incapable? I tell you, that of such is the kingdom of God."

19. And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.

[*Why callest thou me good?*] I. For the better understanding our Saviour's sense and meaning in these and the following words, I would affirm, (and who can argue it to the contrary?) that this man acknowledged Jesus for the true Messiah.

1. This several others did also, who, as yet, were not his disciples; so those blind men, when they call him 'the Son of David,' [Matthew 20:30](#): not to mention others. And what reason can there be for the negative upon this man? Especially when he appears to be a person of more than ordinary parts and accomplishments, not only from what he tells us of himself, but from that kind and affectionate reception he met with from Christ.

2. This was no vulgar or ordinary question he put here, "What shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?" For it seems plain that he was not satisfied in the doctrine of their schools, about the merit of good works, and justification by the law: but he thinks there is something more requisite towards the obtaining salvation, because, after he had (as he tells us) performed this law from his youth up, he yet inquireth further, "What shall I do," &c.; in which that he was in earnest, our Saviour's behaviour towards him sufficiently testified; as also that he came to Jesus, as to no ordinary teacher, to be instructed in this affair.

3. It was very unusual to salute the Rabbins of that nation with this title. For however they were wont to *adorn* (not to say *load*) either the dead or absent with very splendid epithets, yet if they spoke to them while present, they gave them no other title than either *Rabbi*, or *Mar*, or *Mari*. If you turn over both the Talmuds, I am deceived if you once find either *Good Rabbi*, or *Good Mar*.

II. So far, therefore, is our Lord in these words from denying his Godhead, that he rather doth, as it were, draw this person in to own and acknowledge it: "Thou seemest in thy very

address to me, and the compellation thou gavest me, to own me for the Messiah: and dost thou take me for God too as well as man, when thou callest me *good*, seeing there is none good but God only?" Certainly he saw something that was not ordinary in this man, when it is said of him that *he loved him*, [Mark 10:21](#): i.e. he spoke kindly to him, and exhorted him, &c. See [2 Chronicles 18:2](#); [Psalm 78:36](#): *they flattered him with their mouth*. Nor is it an ordinary affection this young man seemed to have for the blessed Jesus, in that he departs *sorrowful* from the counsel that had been given him; and that he had the person that had counselled him in very high esteem, appears in that he could not without infinite grief reject the counsel he gave him.

31. Then he took *unto him* the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

[*He took unto him the twelve.*] This falls in with that of [John 11:7](#), "Let us go into Judea." What! say they, into Judea again, where thou wast lately in so much danger? However, he comes out and goes on, his disciples following him wondering, and fearing the effects of it, [Mark 10:32](#). He mentioned only at present his journey into Judea, to see Lazarus: but, as they were going, he foretells his progress to Jerusalem, and what was to be done with him there. It is probable he was at Bethabarah when the message came to him that Lazarus was sick; and from thence, his way lying conveniently over the Scythopolitan bridge, and so through part of Samaria, he chooseth the transjordanine way to the fords of Jericho.

Chapter 19

2. And, behold, *there was* a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

[*Zacchaeus.*] there is mention of one of the same name, *Zacchai*, a father of a famous family, [Ezra 2:9](#): and about the time wherein our *Zacchaeus* lived, there was one *Zacchai*, the father of Rabban Jochanan; than whom there was hardly a more noted Rabban in the whole catalogue. This man brought up his son Jochanan in merchandise, wherein he had employed himself for forty years, before he gave himself either to letters or religion. From whence there might arise some conjecture, as if that *Zacchai* was this *Zacchaeus* here mentioned, but that these two things make against it:

I. Because he was a Rabbin, or preferred to be one of the elders, as the author of *Juchasin* doth, not without reason, conjecture. Now whereas the very employment of publicans lay under so ill a name universally in that nation, it is hardly credible that that should consist with the degree of Rabbin. To which I may add, that that *Zacchai* was of a priestly descent: and what a monster would that seem amongst them, a priest and a publican!

II. We may judge from the character of that *Zacchai*, whether he did not live and die a Jew as to his religion, in every punctilio of it. "R. Zacchai's disciples asked him" (where note, he bears the title of *Rabbi*), "How dost thou attain to old age? He answered them, 'I did never in my whole life make water within four cubits of the place of prayer: I never miscalled my neighbour: I never let slip *the consecration of a day*. My mother was a very old woman, who once sold her hair-lace, and bought wine with it, for me to consecrate a day with.' There is a tradition. When she died, she bequeathed to him three hundred hogsheads of wine: and when he died, he bequeathed three thousand hogsheads to his sons." The Gloss is: He that is constant in the consecration of a day, by the merit of that obtains wine.

[*Chief among the publicans.*] A few things concerning the degree of publicans:

I. The lexicographer tells us, that they called those the greater *publicans* who redeemed at a certain fixed price the tax and other revenues of the Romans: these were commonly called the *Daciarii*.

II. "These are persons not capable of giving any public testimony, *shepherds, exactors, and publicans.*" Upon which words R. Gaon hath this passage: "The Rabbins do not exclude the publicans upon the account that they exact more than is appointed to them; for then they would be the same with *exactors*. But when the king lays a tax upon the Jews, to be required of every one according to the proportion of their estates, these publicans, in whose power it is to value every one's estate, will favour some in the mitigation of their tax, and burden others beyond all measure."

III. There were *publicans* (to omit those who collected the taxes in every town) who stood at gates and bridges, requiring tribute of all passengers, concerning whom we meet with something in *Schabbath*. Where there is also mention of *the greater and the lesser publican*. Concerning whom the Gloss speaks thus; "Sometimes there is a *greater publican*, to whom it is very grievous to stand at the bridge all the day long: he therefore substitutes an inferior or *lesser publican*." Let us take this story out of this same tract.

"R. Judah, R. Joseph, R. Simeon, and R. Judah Ben Garis sitting together, R. Judah began and said, 'O how great are the works of this (*Roman*) nation: they build streets and bridges and bagnios.' R. Jose held his tongue, and said nothing; but R. Simeon Ben Jochai answered and said, 'Whatsoever they have built, they have built it for their own advantage. They have built bridges that they might gain a toll by them.' R. Judah Ben Garis went and told this to the Roman empire, who thus decreed: 'Let R. Judah, who hath magnified the empire, be promoted: Jose that held his tongue [which, I imagine, ought to be rendered] *let him be banished to Cyprus*; and for Simeon that reproached it, let him be killed.'" Simeon hearing these things, betook himself into a cave; and there lay hid with his son for the space of thirteen years.

Now as to what order or degree amongst the publicans our *Zacchaeus* held, it is neither easy nor *tanti* to determine it. The title of *chief among the publicans*, will hardly bear it, that

he was one of those that received toll or custom at bridges; though even amongst those there were some who had the title of *the greater publicans*. He may rather be esteemed either of the first or the second class of those I have already named. In either of those it was easier for him *to raise false accusation against any* (which he chargeth himself with) than at the bridge or so.

8. And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore *him* fourfold.

[*The half of my goods I give to the poor.*] I. A distribution amongst *the poor* of these goods that had been ill got was necessary. In *Sanhedrim* there is a discourse of restitution, and distribution of dishonest gains, especially what wealth had been got by merchandise of fruits of the seventh year, which are forbidden. And this is the form of restitution: "I, N., the son of N., scraped up such a sum by the fruits of the seventh year; and behold, I bestow it all upon *the poor*."

II. Alms were to be given to *the poor* out of wealth honestly acquired: but according to the rules and precepts of the Rabbins, they were not bound to bestow above one fifth part. "As to what help is to be afforded by *mammon*, there is a stated measure; *a fifth part of his mammon*. No one is bound to give more than one fifth." And they say, "That it is decreed in Usha, that a man should set apart *the fifth part of his estate according to the command*."

The fifth part was so stated and decreed, that, 1., so far they ought to go upon the account of a command. 2. No man is bound by the law to go further. But, 3., he may do more, if he please, on his own accord. Which this Zacchaeus did in a large and generous measure. The restitution of fourfold for his sycophancy agreed with the law about theft.

9. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

[*This day is salvation come to this house.*] It is said, verse 7, "That they all murmured that Christ was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." What then did they think of the house itself that belonged to this sinner? Do we think they would enter in, when they despised any thing that belonged to publicans? Perhaps that expression *Zacchaeus stood and said*, may seem to hint that he came forth, and stood talking with those that were without doors, and would not enter. However, if we well consider how meanly they accounted of the house of a publican, we may the more easily understand what the meaning of that expression is, *This day is salvation come to this house*.

[*Forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.*] That is, say most, *the son of Abraham by faith*; which indeed is most true. But I doubt, however, that this is not directly the sense of these words. For I question whether the Jews knew of any kind of relation to Abraham but that which was according to the flesh, and by way of stock and offspring. *The son of Abraham*

by faith was a notion unknown; and I scarce believe our Saviour would speak to them in an unintelligible dialect...

11. And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

[*And because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.*] The time draweth nigh that the kingdom of heaven shall be revealed. We have observed elsewhere, that it was the nation's universal opinion, that that very time wherein Christ did appear was the time wherein they expected the coming of Messiah, being so taught by the prophecy of Daniel. Which however the more modern Jews would now endeavour to evade, as also other more illustrious predictions that concern our Jesus, yet were those times then more truly and more sincerely interpreted. Hence that conflux of Jews from all nations to Jerusalem, [Acts 2:5](#). And to this doth that in some measure attest which the Talmudists relate concerning the paraphrast of the prophets, that when he went about to paraphrase also the *Hagiographa*, or *holy writings*, he was forbidden by *Bath Kol*, saying, That he must abstain from that; for in those books was the end of the Messiah, viz. [Daniel 9:26](#).

13. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

[*And delivered them ten pounds.*] This parable of the *pounds* hath for the general the very same scope with that of the *talents*, [Matthew 25](#). That nobleman or king that went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom is Christ in his gospel, going forth to call in the Gentiles to his obedience: returning, he cuts off the nation of the Jews that would not have him to reign over them, verse 27: and while they were now in expectation of the immediate revelation of the kingdom of heaven, and were dreaming many vain and senseless things concerning it, our Saviour, by this parable, warns and admonisheth them, that *he* must not look for any advantage by that kingdom who cannot give a good account of those talents which God had committed to his trust and improvement.

A talent is the value of sixty pounds. A pound is a hundred drachms. A drachm is six oboli. An obolus is six pieces of brass coin. A brass piece of coin is seven mites.

44. And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

[*Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.*] The Masters dispute the reason of the laying-waste of Jerusalem.

"Abai saith, Jerusalem was not destroyed for any thing but the profanation of the sabbath. R. Abba saith, It was not destroyed for any thing but their neglect in reciting their phylacteries

morning and evening. Rabh Menona saith, It was not destroyed for any thing but their not minding the bringing up of their children in the school. Ulla saith, Jerusalem had not been destroyed but for their immodesty one towards another. R. Isaac saith, It had not been destroyed, but that they equalled the inferior with the superior. R. Chainah saith, It had not been destroyed, but that they did not rebuke one another. R. Judah saith, It had not been destroyed, but that they condemned the disciples of the wise men," &c. But Wisdom saith, Jerusalem was destroyed, *because she knew not the time of her visitation.*

All those great good things that were promised to mankind were promised as what should happen in *the last days*, i.e. in the last days of Jerusalem. Then was the Messiah to be revealed: then was the Holy Ghost to be poured out: then was the mountain of the Lord to be exalted, and the nations should flow in to it: in a word, then were to be fulfilled all those great things which the prophets had foretold about the coming of the Messiah and the bringing in of the gospel. These were the times of Jerusalem's *visitation*, if she could have known it. But so far was she from that knowledge, that nothing was more odious, nothing more contemptible, than when indeed all these ineffable benefits were dispensed in the midst of her. Nor indeed were those times described beforehand with more remarkable characters as to what God would do, than they were with black and dreadful indications as to the perverseness and obstinacy of that people. They were the best of times, and the worst generation lived in them. In those last days of that city were 'perilous times,' [2 Timothy 3:1](#): 'departing from the faith,' [1 Timothy 4:1](#): 'Scoffers' of religion, [2 Peter 3:3](#): in a word, 'many antichrists,' [1 John 2:18](#). So far was Jerusalem and the nation of the Jews from knowing and acknowledging the things that belonged unto their peace.

1. And it came to pass, *that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders.*

[*The chief priests and the scribes with the elders.*] So it is in [Mark 11:27](#): but in [Matthew 21:23](#), it is *the chief priests and elders of the people*. Now the question is, who these *elders* should be, as they are distinguished from the *chief priests* and the *scribes*. The Sanhedrim consisted chiefly of priests, Levites, and Israelites, although the original precept was for the priests and Levites only. "The command is, that the priests and Levites should be of the great council; as it is said, Thou shalt go unto the priests and Levites: *but if such be not to be found, although they were all Israelites, behold, it is allowed.*"

None will imagine that there ever was a Sanhedrim wherein there were Israelites only, and no priests or Levites; nor, on the other hand, that there ever was a Sanhedrim wherein there were only priests and Levites, and no Israelites. The *scribes*, therefore, seem in this place to denote either the *Levites*, or else, together with the Levites, those inferior ranks of priests who were not the *chief priests*: and then the *elders*, may be the Israelites, or those *elders of the laity* that were not of the Levitical tribe. Such a one was Gamaliel the present president of the Sanhedrim, and Simeon his son, of the tribe of Judah.

37. Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

[*He calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, &c.*] "Why doth Moses say ([Exo 32:13](#)), Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? R. Abin saith, The Lord said unto Moses, 'I look for ten men from thee, as I looked for that number in Sodom: find me out ten righteous persons among the people, and I will not destroy thy people.' Then said Moses, 'Behold, here am I, and Aaron, and Eleazar, and Ithamar, and Phineas, and Caleb, and Joshua.' 'But' saith God, 'these are but seven; where are the other three?' When Moses knew not what to do, he saith, 'O eternal God, *do those live that are dead?*' 'Yes,' saith God. Then saith Moses, 'If those that are dead do live, remember Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.'"

42. And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

[*The Lord said unto my Lord, &c.*] Whereas St. Matthew tells us, That "no man was able to answer him a word" to that argument, whereby he asserted the divinity of the Messias, it is plain that those evasions were not yet thought of, by which the Jews have since endeavoured to shift off this place. For the Talmudists apply the psalm to Abraham; the Targumist (as it seems) to David; others (as Justin Martyr tells us) to Hezekiah; which yet I do not remember I have observed in the Jewish authors. His words are in his Dialogue with Tryphon: *I am not ignorant, that you venture to explain this psalm* (when he had recited the whole psalm) *as if it were to be understood of king Hezekiah.*

The Jewish authors have it thus: "Sem the Great said unto Eliezer [Abraham's servant], 'When the kings of the east and of the west came against you, what did you?' He answered and said, 'The Holy Blessed God took Abraham, and made him to sit on his right hand.'" And again: "The Holy Blessed God had purposed to have derived the priesthood from Shem; according as it is said, Thou art the priest of the most high God: but because he blessed Abraham before he blessed God, God derived the priesthood from Abraham. For so it is said, And he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abraham of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth, and blessed be the most high God. Abraham saith unto him, Who useth to bless the servant before his Lord? Upon this God gave the priesthood to Abraham, according as it is said, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand. And afterward it is written, The Lord swore and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever *for the speaking* of Melchizedek." *Midras Tillin* and others also, in the explication of this psalm, refer it to Abraham. Worshipful commentators indeed!

46. Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

[*Which desire to walk in long robes.*] In garments to the feet; *in long robes*: which their own Rabbins sufficiently testify. "R. Jochanan asked R. Banaah, *What kind of garment is the inner garment of the disciple of the wise men?* It is such a one, that the flesh may not be seen underneath him." The Gloss is, It is to reach to the very sole of the foot, that it may not be discerned when he goes barefoot. "*What is the 'talith,' that the disciple of the wise wears?* That the inner garment may not be seen below it to a handbreadth."

What is that, [Luke 15:22](#), *the first robe?* [*the best robe*, AV]. Is it the *former robe*, that is, that which the prodigal had worn formerly? or the *first*, i.e. *the chief and best robe*? It may be queried, whether it may not be particularly understood the *talith* as what was in more esteem than the *chaluk*, and that which is the *first* garment in view to the beholders. "I saw amongst the spoils a *Babylonish garment*, [Joshua 7](#). Rabh saith, *A long garment called melotes.*" The Gloss is, "*a 'talith' of purest wool.*"

Chapter 21

24. 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.

[*Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*] "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, *until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*": and what then? in what sense is this word *until* to be understood? Let every one have his conjecture, and let me be allowed mine. I am well assured our Saviour is discoursing about the fall and overthrow of Jerusalem; but I

doubt, whether he touches upon the restoration of it: nor can I see any great reason to affirm, that the times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled before the end of the world itself. But as to this controversy, I shall not at present meddle with it. And yet, in the mean time, I cannot but wonder that the disciples, having so plainly heard these things from the mouth of their master, what concerned the destruction both of the place and nation, should be so quickly asking, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" Nor do I less wonder to find the learned Beza expounding the very following verse after this manner: "Then shall there be the signs in the sun, &c.; that is, after those times are fulfilled, which were allotted for the salvation of the Gentiles, and vengeance upon the Jews, concerning which St. Paul discourses copiously." [Romans 11:25](#), &c: when, indeed, nothing could be said clearer for the confutation of that exposition, than that of verse 32; "Verily, I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." It is strange this should be no more observed, as it ought to have been, by himself and divers others, when, in truth, these very words are as a gnomon to the whole chapter. All the other passages of the chapter fall in with [Matthew 24](#) and [Mark 13](#), where we have placed those notes that were proper; and shall repeat nothing here. Which method I have taken in several places in this evangelist, where he relates passages that have been related before, and which I have had occasion to handle as I met with them.

Chapter 22

4. And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

[*And captains.*] They are called, verse 52, *captains of the Temple*: and in the singular number, *the captain of the Temple*, [Acts 4:1](#): but who should this or these be?

I. All know that there was a Roman garrison in the castle of Antonia, whose charge especially was to suppress all tumults and seditions in the Temple: but was the tribune, or the centurions of that garrison called by the name of *the captains of the Temple*? Surely rather *the captains of the castle of Antonia*. And indeed it appears not that the Roman captains had conspired against the life of Christ, that Judas should betake himself to them to make a bargain for the betraying of him.

II. The conjecture might be more probable of those rulers in the Temple, concerning whom we have this mention: "These are the rulers that were in the Temple: Jochanan Ben Phineas, governor of the seals; Ahijah, set over the drink-offerings: Matthiah Ben Samuel, that presided over the lots," &c. But to me it seems beyond all doubt that the *captains of the Temple* were the captains of the several watches. "In three places the priests kept watch and ward in the Temple, viz. in Beth Abtines, Beth Nitsots, and Beth Mokad. The Levites also in one-and-twenty places more." Whereas, therefore, these watches or guards consisted every one of several persons, there was one single person set over each of them as their

captain, or the head of that watch. And this way looks that of Pilate, [Matthew 27:65](#); *ye have a watch* of your own; let some of them be sent to guard the sepulchre.

III. The *captain of the Temple*, therefore, distinctively and by way of eminence so termed, I would suppose him, whom they called *the ruler of the mountain of the house*, who was the chief of all the heads of those wards. "*The ruler of the mountain of the Temple takes his walks through every watch* with torches lighted before him: and if he found any upon the watch that might not be standing on his feet, he said, 'Peace be with thee!' But if he found him sleeping, he struck him with a stick; and it was warrantable for him to burn the garments of such a one. And when it was said by others, 'What is that noise in the court?' the answer was made, 'It is the noise of a Levite under correction, and whose garments are burning, for that he slept upon the watch.' R. Eliezer Ben Jacob said, 'They once found my mother's son asleep, and they burnt his clothes.'" Compare this passage with [Revelation 16:15](#): "Behold I come as a thief; blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

It is easy distinguishing this *captain of the mountain of the Temple* from the *ruler of the Temple* or the *sagan*. The former presided only over the guards; the latter over the whole service of the Temple. And so we have them distinguished, [Acts 4:1](#): there is *the captain of the Temple*, and Annas, who was the *sagan*.

19. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

[*This is my body.*] The words of the institution of the holy eucharist throughout the whole contain a reflection, partly by way of antithesis, partly by way of allusion.

I. *This is my body.* Upon the account of their present celebration of the Passover, these words might very well have some reference to the body of the Paschal lamb: the *body* (I say) *of the Paschal lamb*. For the Jews use this very phrase concerning it: "They bring in a table spread, on which are bitter herbs, with other herbs, unleavened bread, *pottage*, and *the body of the Paschal Lamb*." And a little after: *he eateth of the body of the Passover*. From whence our Saviour's meaning may be well enough discerned; viz. that by the same signification that the Paschal lamb was my *body* hitherto, from henceforward let *this bread be my body*.

II. *Which is given for you.* But the apostle adds, "Which is *broken* for you": which, indeed, doth not so well agree with the Paschal lamb as with the lamb for the daily sacrifice. For as to the Paschal lamb, there was not a bone of it *broken*; but that of the daily sacrifice was *broken* and cut into several parts; and yet they are both of them the body of Christ in a figure. And although, besides the *breaking* of it, there are these further instances wherein the Paschal lamb and that of the daily sacrifice did differ, viz., 1. that the daily sacrifice was for all Israel, but the Paschal for this or that family: 2. the daily sacrifice was for the atonement of sin; the Passover not so: 3. the daily sacrifice was burnt, but the Passover eaten: yet in this they

agreed, that under both the body of our Saviour was figured and shadowed out, though in a different notion.

III. *This do in remembrance of me.* As you kept the Passover *in remembrance* of your going out of Egypt. "Thou shalt remember the day of thy going out of Egypt all the days of thy life. Ben Zuma thus explains it; The days of thy life, that is, in the day time: all the days of thy life, that is, in the night time too. But the wise men say, The days of thy life, that is, in this age: all the days of thy life, that the days of the Messiah may be included too." But whereas, in the days of the Messiah there was a greater and more illustrious redemption and deliverance than that out of Egypt brought about; with the Jews' good leave, it is highly requisite, that both the thing itself and he that accomplished it should be remembered. We suspect in our notes upon [1 Corinthians 11](#), as if some of the Corinthians, in their very participation of the holy eucharist, did so far Judaize, that what had been instituted for the commemoration of their redemption by the death of Christ, they perverted to the commemoration of the going out of Egypt; and that they did not at all 'discern the Lord's body' in the sacrament.

Under the law there were several eatings of holy things. The first was that which *Siphra* mentions, *when the priests eat of the sacrifice, and atonement is made for him that brings it.* There were other eatings, viz., of the festival sacrifices of the tenths, thanksgiving-offerings, &c., which were to be eaten by those that brought them; but these all now have their period: and now, *Do ye this, and do it in remembrance of me.*

IV. *This cup...which is shed for you.* This seems to have reference to that *cup* of wine that was every day poured out in the drink offerings with the daily sacrifice; for that also was poured out for the remission of sins. So that the bread may have reference to the body of the daily sacrifice, and the *cup* to the wine of the drink offering.

V. *My blood of the new testament.* So St. Matthew and St. Mark with reference to "the blood of bulls and of goats," with which the old testament was confirmed, [Exodus 24](#); [Hebrews 9:19](#).

VI. *The new testament in my blood.* So our evangelist and so the apostle, [1 Corinthians 11](#) with reference to the whole ministry of the altar, where blood was poured out; nay, with respect to the whole Jewish religion, for here was the beginning or entry of the new covenant. And indeed it seems that the design of that frequent communion of the Lord's supper in the first ages of the church, among other things, was, that those who were converted from Judaism might be sealed and confirmed against Judaism; the sacrament itself being the mark of the cessation of the old testament and the beginning of the new.

21. But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

[*But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me, &c.*] What can be desired more as a demonstration that Judas was present at the eucharist? And whereas the contrary is endeavoured to be proved out of [John 13](#), nothing is made out of nothing: for there is not only

syllable throughout the whole chapter of the paschal supper, but of a supper before the 'feast of the Passover.'

26. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

[*As the younger.*] The vulgar and interlinear, *sicut junior*. We, *as the younger*, very well. For, as Beza hath it upon the place, *it is properly to be understood of age*. I ask therefore,

I. Whether Peter was not the oldest of the whole company? What reason can any have to deny this? It was necessary that some one of them should be the first both in number and order; and it was as fit and equal that the oldest amongst them should be reckoned the first. And who will you say was older than Peter? Hence was it that he had the first place in the catalogue of the apostles, because he was the oldest. For this reason he sat at table in the uppermost place next our Lord: for this reason did our Saviour so often direct his discourse so immediately to him: and for this reason were his answers to Christ taken in the name of all the rest, viz., because the oldest. Which brings to mind *the interpreter of the doctor* in the school of the Rabbins, who was the interlocutor between the master and the disciples, and for that reason the chief in the school, but without any primacy. Whereas therefore St. Peter, after our Saviour's ascension into heaven, was (to speak vulgarly) the *prolocutor* in that sacred college, what more probable reason can be offered why he was so, than this seniority? Were not others as capable as speaking as he? had they not equal authority, zeal, faith, knowledge with him, &c.? but he indeed was the eldest man.

II. I cannot therefore but suspect from the proper signification of the word *younger*, (to which *the greater*, respecting age, does answer) that some one amongst them had been challenging some privilege and primacy to himself upon the account of seniority: and unless any can make it out that there was somebody older than Peter, pardon me, if I think that he was the chief in this contention, and that it was chiefly moved betwixt himself and the two sons of Zebedee. For it seems unlikely that the other nine would have contended for the primacy with Peter, James, and John; whom Christ had so peculiarly distinguished in their presence with marks of his favour. So that the struggle seems to be especially between these three and Peter the beginner of the strife: which appears, partly in that our Saviour rebukes him by name, and partly in that he could not forget without some grudge, that request of the two brothers, "Lord, let us sit one on thy right hand the other on thy left."

31. And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.

[*Simon, Simon.*] Let us change the name and person: "Thomas, Thomas"; or "Philip, Philip, Satan hath desired, &c.; but I have prayed," &c. And who would from hence have picked out an argument for the primacy of Thomas or Philip over the rest of the apostles and the universal church? And yet this do the Romanists in the behalf of Peter. Who would

not have taken it rather as a severe chiding? As if he should have said, "Thou, Thomas or Philip, art thou so hot in contending for the primacy, while Satan is so hot against all of you? And whilst you are at strife amongst yourselves, he is at strife against you all!" Under such a notion as this I doubt not our Saviour did speak to Peter, and that in these words he found a severe reprimand rather than any promotion to the primacy.

32. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

[*That thy faith fail not.*] There seems an emphasis in the word *faith*. As to the other apostles, indeed, that Christian courage and magnanimity which they ought to have exerted in that difficult time did fail them; but their *faith* was nothing so near shipwreck as Peter's faith was. They indeed deserted their Master and fled, [Mark 14:50](#): which they seem to have not done without some connivance from himself, [John 18:8](#). But when Peter renounced and abjured his Lord, how near was he becoming an *apostate*, and his faith from suffering a total shipwreck? Certainly it was Peter's advantage that Christ prayed for him; but it was not so much for his honour, that he, beyond all others, should stand in need of such a prayer.

36. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

[*Let him sell his garment, and buy a sword.*] Doth our Saviour give them this counsel in good earnest?

I. He uses the common dialect. For so also the Rabbins in other things: "He that hath not wherewithal to eat, but upon mere alms, let him beg or sell his garments to buy oil and candles for the feast of Dedication," &c.

II. He warns them of a danger that is very near; and in a common way of speech lets them know that they had more need of providing swords for their defence against the common enemy, than be any way quarrelling amongst themselves. No so much exhorting them to repel force with force, as to give them such an apprehension of the common rage of their enemies against them, that might suppress all private animosities amongst themselves.

37. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

[*For the things concerning me have an end.*] That is, "My business is done, yours is but beginning. While I was present, the children of the bridechamber had no reason to weep; but when I am taken away, and numbered amongst the transgressors, think what will be done to you, and what ought to be done by you; and then think if this be a time for you to be contending with one another."

43. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

[*An angel strengthening him.*] I. In his temptations in the wilderness there was no angel by him; for St. Matthew saith, chapter 4:11, "Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him": that is, not till the devil had first left him. But in the midst of this trial there was an 'angel strengthening him': and why so? By reason of his agony, you will say, and that very truly: but whence arose this agony? and of what kind was it? It was occasioned (you will say) from a sense of divine indignation and wrath. This dare not I say or imagine, that God was angry or conceived any indignation against him at all. And if the anguish and agony of his mind was the result of the divine wrath pressing in upon him, I do not see what kind of comfort an angel could minister against the wrath of God. It is rather an argument God was not angry with him, when he sent an angel to comfort him.

II. It is not to be doubted, but that Christ was now wrestling with a furious enraged devil; yea, a devil loosed from his chain, and permitted, without any check or restraint from divine providence, to exert all his force and rage against him: which was permitted by God, not from any displeasure against his Son, but that even human nature might, by this her combatant, get a conquest over this insulting enemy. For it had been a small thing to have vanquished the devil by mere divine power.

III. However therefore it is not here related in express terms, yet could I easily persuade myself, that the devil might at this time appear to our Saviour in some visible shape. When he tempted him in the wilderness, he put on the disguise of some good angel, or rather some kind of resemblance of the Holy Ghost. But in this last temptation he puts on himself, and appears in his own colours; viz. in some direful formidable figure, on purpose to terrify our Lord. And from thence it was that *he began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy*, [Mark 14:33](#); and here *to be in an agony*. Nor do I rashly, and without any ground, suppose this, but upon these reasons:

I. Whereas that old dragon assaulted the first Adam in a garden in a visible shape; it is not absurd to imagine, he did so now to the second Adam, in a garden, in a visible shape.

II. This our evangelist tells us concerning his temptation in the wilderness, that "when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him, *for a season*." Here he takes the *season* to return; and I see no reason why he should not at this time, as well as in the wilderness, assume some visible shape. Then, indeed, he addressed himself in a charming and grateful shape, to have enticed and deceived him; but now in a frightful and horrid one, to have amazed and terrified him. He had already experienced how vain a thing it was to go about to cheat and allure him: what remained therefore but to shake his mind (if possible) with fright and terror?

III. For when he had no greater invention in his whole storehouse, by which he could distress and shake the minds of mortals, than the horrid apparition of himself, none will conceive he would neglect this engine, that if it could be, he might disturb his soul through

his eye. That, therefore, which the Jews feign or dream about Solomon, that he saw the angel of death (that is, the devil) gnashing his teeth, and that a disciple of Rabbi did so too, I suppose acted in good earnest here; namely, that Christ saw the devil, that old dragon, gaping at him with all horror he could put on. And in this sense would I understand that of the "messenger of Satan buffeting the apostle": viz. that the devil did appear visibly to him in some frightful shape, to afflict and terrify him. And perhaps that vehement desire he had to sift the disciples (v 31) respects this same thing, namely, that he might be permitted to assault them with such kind of affrightments.

44. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

[*His sweat was as it were great drops of blood.*] Diodorus Siculus, speaking of a country where Alexander the Great had to do with Porus, hath this passage; "There are serpents there which, by their bites would occasion most bitter deaths: they are horrible pains that afflict any that are struck by them, and an issue of sweat, like blood, seizeth them." I would ascribe this *bloody sweat* of our Saviour to the bite of that old serpent, rather than to the apprehension of divine wrath.

[For more info, please see Appendix VII: Heart Rupture: A Possible Cause of the Lord's Death? by Arthur C. Custance.]

47. And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

[*To kiss him.*] Our Saviour had to do with a frightful and terrifying devil; but this traitor seems possessed with a tame and gentle one. He converses with the apostles, and there is no token of a devil dwelling in him. He is present at the Passover, at the eucharist, and the very lips of Christ, and still no sign of Satan being his inmate. But when once the devil hath done his work by thee, then, Judas, take heed of thy devil.

As to this treacherous contrivance of Judas, let us frame the most gentle opinion of it that the matter can bear: for instance, that he might perhaps think with himself, that it was not possible for Christ to be apprehended by the Jews, having already seen him working such stupendous miracles, and more than once strangely delivering himself from them: and grant further, that when he said to them, "Whomsoever I shall *kiss*, that is he, lay hold of him," he said it scoffingly, as believing they could not be able to lay hold on him: grant we, in a word, that when he saw him condemned, he repented himself, having never suspected that matters would have gone so far, presuming that Christ would easily have made his escape from them, and himself should have got thirty pieces of silver by the bargain: let us grant, I say, that this was his contrivance, and colour it over with as plausible excuses as we can; yet certainly was there never any thing so impiously done by mortal man, than for him thus

to play with the Holy of Holies, and endeavour to make merchandise of the Son of God. However, I suspect much worse things hatched in the breast of this traitor: viz. that Christ did really not please him; and, with the great chiefs of that nation, though he supposed him the true Messiah, yet not such a one as answered their carnal expectation.

The Rabbins distinguish between *lawful kisses* and *kisses of folly*; saying, that "all *kisses* are *kisses of folly* excepting three": which they there reckon up. But what kind of *kiss* was this? a *kiss of folly*? Alas! it is too low and dwarfish a term for this gigantic monster.

53. When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

[*This is your hour, and the power of darkness.*] The serpent himself is now come in Judas; and the seed of the serpent was that rout that came with him, to whom it was fatal to bruise the heel of the Messiah; and now was the hour for that wickedness. It was anciently foretold and predetermined, both as to the thing itself and the instruments; and now all fences lie open, and you may do what you please. The chains of the devil himself are now loosed; and it is permitted to him, without the least check or restraint of Divine Providence, to exert all his furies at pleasure; for now is the power of darkness.

Darkness, is the devil among the allegorists. "It is said, On the first day of the creation, the angel of death [i.e. the devil] was created, according as it is written, There was darkness upon the face of the deep; that is, the angel of death, who darkeneth the eyes of men."

Chapter 23

2. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.

[*We found this fellow perverting the nation.*] "A disciple corrupting his food publicly, as did Jesus of Nazareth." "To corrupt their food publicly," is a phrase amongst the Rabbins to denote a mingling of true doctrine with heresy, and the true worship of God with idolatry. This was the accusation they framed against our Saviour at this time, that he taught heterodox and destructive principles, such especially as would tend to turn off and alienate the people from their obedience to the Romans. Aruch recites this passage of the Talmud more cautiously; for instead of *as Jesus of Nazareth did*, he hath it, *as Jeroboam did*.

7. And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.

[*He sent him to Herod.*] Did Pilate do this as yielding to Herod a jurisdiction in capital matters within the city of Jerusalem upon those that were Galileans? Probably he did it, either in flattery to the tyrant, or else that he might throw off from himself both the trouble and the odium that might arise upon the occasion of condemning Jesus, whom he judged

to be an innocent man, and whom in some measure he pitied, looking upon him as a sort of a *delirant* person, one not very well in his wits: which opinion also Herod seems to have conceived of him, by putting upon him that fool's coat wherewith he clothed him: which I should willingly enough render *white and shining*, but that I observe our evangelist, when he hath occasion to mention such a garment, calls it a *white and shining robe* expressly. Chapter 9:29, *his garment was white and glistering*: [Acts 1:10](#), *two men in white apparel*.

30. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

[*Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, &c.*] So they do say, [Revelation 6:6](#): from whence, among other arguments, it may be reasonably supposed, that that chapter treats of the plagues and afflictions that should forerun the destruction of Jerusalem, and, indeed, the destruction and overthrow itself. Weigh the place accurately; and perhaps thou wilt be of the same mind too. Nay, I may further add, that perhaps this observation might not a little help (if my eyes fail me not) in discovering the method of the author of the Book of the Revelation.

31. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

[*If they do these things in a green tree, &c.*] Consult John Baptist's expression, [Matthew 3:10](#); "*Now also the axe is laid to the root of the tree,*" viz., *then* when the Jewish nation was subdued to the government of the Romans, who were about to destroy it. And if they deal thus with me, a *green* and flourishing *tree*, what will they do with the whole nation, a dry and sapless trunk?

34. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

[*They cast lots.*] *They cast lots* for his seamless coat, [John 19:23,24](#). Moses is supposed to have ministered in such a garment: "In what kind of garment did Moses attend the seven days of consecration? *In a white vestment*. Rabh Cahnah saith, *In a white vestment, wherein there was no seam.*" The Gloss is, "The whole garment was made of one thread, and not as our clothes are, which have their sleeves sewed to the body with a seam." But he gives a very senseless reason why his coat was without a seam; viz., to avoid the suspicion lest Moses should at any time hide any consecrated money within the seams of his coat.

36. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

[*They brought him vinegar.*] *Vinegar* was the common drink of the Roman soldiers; and hence those to whom the custody of crucified persons was committed had it always ready by them. "He commanded that no soldier should drink wine in their expedition, but that every one should content himself with *vinegar*."

"The provision this man (*viz. Mithras*) made in the commonwealth was such, that there never was any great frontier-city which had not *vinegar*, bread-corn, and bacon, and barley, and chaff, laid up for a whole year," &c. "Thou shalt give us as much hay, chaff, *vinegar*, herbs, and grass, as may suffice us."

Hence it may become less difficult to reconcile the evangelist amongst themselves, speaking of *wine* given him *mingled with myrrh*, and of *vinegar* too; *viz.*, a twofold cup: one, before he was nailed to the cross, *i.e.* of wine mingled with *myrrh*; the other, of *vinegar*, while he hung there: the first, given by the Jews according to their custom; the second, by the soldiers, in abuse and mockery. But if you will grant a third cup, then all difficulty vanishes indeed. Let the first be *wine mingled with myrrh*; the second, *vinegar mingled with gall*; the third, *mere vinegar*: which the soldiers gave to malefactors if they had desired drink, being that which they drank themselves. Hence *the vessel filled with vinegar*, was always in readiness, that the soldiers might drink when they had a mind, and persons also upon the cross, if they stood in need of it.

42. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

[*Lord, remember me.*] Christ is now upon the cross, as of old Joseph was in the prison, between two malefactors. There one of them was delivered, the other hanged; here one obtains salvation, the other perishes. The faith of this thief is admirable; and kept even pace with that of the apostles, if, in some circumstances, it did not go beyond it. The apostles acknowledged 'Jesus to be the Messiah'; and so doth he: with this addition, which I question whether they did so clearly own and know or no, *viz.*, that Christ should reign and have his kingdom after his death. He seems to have a sounder judgment concerning Christ's kingdom than the apostles themselves, as may be gathered from their question, [Acts 1:6](#).

It pleased God, in this last article of time, to glorify the riches of his grace in a singular and extraordinary manner, both in the conversion of a sinner and the forgiveness of his sins: I say in such an article of time which the world had never before seen, nor ever was like to see again; *viz.*, in the very instant wherein the Messiah was finishing his redemption. It was not unknown to either of the thieves that Jesus was therefore condemned to die because he had professed himself 'the Christ'; hence that of the impenitent malefactor, "If thou art Christ, save thyself and us." And if the penitent thief did for a while join with the other in his petulant reproaches (which seems intimated to us [Matthew 27:44](#)), yet was his heart touched at length, and, perhaps, upon his observation of that miraculous darkness which at that time had covered the world.

43. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shall thou be with me in paradise.

[*Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.*] I. Let us here first consider the phrase *in paradise*: in common Jewish speech, *in the garden of Eden*. In what sense we may collect from these following passages: "*The Rabbins have a tradition. There are four that went into*

paradise: namely, Ben Azzai, Ben Zumah, Acher, and R. Akibah. R. Akibah saith unto them, 'When you come to the stones of pure marble, do not ye say *Waters, waters* [i.e. Alas! these waters will hinder us from going forward]; for it is written, He that telleth lies shall not dwell in my presence [now, it would be a lie to call white marble water].'" "Ben Azzai *looked with some curiosity about him*, and died: of him the Scripture speaks, 'Precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his saints.' Ben Zumah *looked with some curiosity about him, and he was disturbed in his intellectuals*: of him the Scripture speaketh, 'Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.'"

Aruch, reciting these words, saith, "*It is called paradise, under the signification of the garden of Eden, which is reserved for the just. This place is in the heavens, where the souls of the just are gathered together.*" And the Talmudical Gloss hath it much to the same sense: "These four, by God's procurement, *went up into the firmament.*"

While we are reading these passages, that story may easily occur to mind of St. Paul's being "caught up into *paradise*," [2 Corinthians 12](#); and perhaps the legend before us is but the ape of that story. In the story it is observable, that *paradise* and the 'third heaven' are one and the same thing: in the legend *paradise* and the *highest heavens*. For so the doctors comment upon the word in [Psalm 68:5](#): "There are seven classes or degrees of just persons, who see the face of God, sit in the house of God, ascend up unto the hill of God, &c. And to every class or degree there is allotted their proper dwellingplace *in paradise*. There are also seven abiding places in hell. Those that dwell in *paradise, they shine like the shining of the firmament*, like the sun, like the moon, like the firmament, like the stars, like lightning, like the lilies, like burning lamps."

II. Our Saviour, therefore, telling the penitent thief, *This day shalt thou be with me in paradise*, he speaks in the common dialect, and to the capacity of the thief; viz., that he should be in heaven with Christ, and with all just persons that had left this world. Nor, indeed, would I fetch the explication of that article of our creed, *He descended into hell*, from any passage in the Scripture sooner than this here: adding this, that we must of necessity have recourse to the Greek tongue for the signification of the word, which they generally use to denote *the state of the dead*, as well the blessed as the miserable. Those who expound that passage in [1 Peter 3:19](#), of his going down from the cross into hell to preach to the spirits in prison there, do very little regard the scope of the apostle, and are absolute strangers to his meaning in it. For,

1. In that he shuts up the generation before the flood in an infernal prison, he falls in with the received opinion of that nation, which was, that that generation had no part in the world to come; and that they were condemned to boiling waters in hell.

2. He compares the present generation of the Jews with that generation before the flood; that Christ did of old preach even to that generation, and so he hath done to this; that that generation perished through its disobedience, and so will this. He runs much upon the same

parallel in his second Epistle, chapter 3:6, &c. We must observe, that the apostle makes his transition from the crucifixion and resurrection of our Saviour directly to the generation before the flood, passing over all those generations that came between, on purpose that he might make the comparison betwixt that and the age he lived in.

53. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

[*Wrapped it in linen.*] "Mar Zutra saith, that *out of the linen in which they wrapped up books, when it grew old they made shrouds for the dead of the precept; for this is to their disgrace.*" The Gloss adds, "That they do it of the linen wherein they fold up the book of the Law." Him who had suffered death by the sentence of the Sanhedrim, or magistrate, they were wont to call *the dead of the precept*, because he was executed according to the precept: and such a one to them was our Jesus. Now as to one that was condemned to death by the magistrate, they had an opinion that by how much the more disgracefully they dealt with him, by so much the greater atonement was made for him. Hence that expression, "*They did not openly bewail him, that that very setting him at nought*" (no man lamenting him) "might redound to his atonement." And from thence, perhaps, if the women at Jerusalem had bewailed any other person as they bewailed our Saviour, that other person might have said, "Ye daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, lest ye cut short my atonement": but Christ speaks to them upon a far different account. And under this notion they wrapped one that had been so executed, in some ragged, torn, old, dirty windingsheets; that this disgrace, being thrown upon him, might augment his expiation. But this good Arimathean behaves himself otherwise with Jesus, as having conceived quite another opinion concerning him.

54. And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

[*And the sabbath drew on.*] The vulgar reads, *the sabbath began to dawn*: not ill rendered. Beza reads, *and the sabbath succeeded*: not properly. One would have thought it would have been more congruously said, *it began to be dark towards the sabbath*: for the night before the sabbath was coming on: but,

I. The sabbatical candles that were lighted in honour of the sabbath were now set up. "There are three things which it is necessary a man should warn those of his own house of on the evening of the sabbath, when night is coming on: Have you paid your tenths? *Have you begun your Erubhick society? Light up your candle.*" "Men and women are bound to light up a candle in their houses upon the sabbath day. If a man hath not bread to eat, yet he must beg from door to door to get a little oil to set up his light." These things being noted, the evangelist may not be improperly understood thus, "The sabbath began to shine with the lights set up"; respect being had to these sabbath candles. But I do not acquiesce here.

II. The evening of the sabbath was called amongst the Jews *light*. *By the light of the fourteenth day they make a search for leaven by the light of a candle. By the light of the fourteenth day*; that is, on the evening, or in the night that immediately precedes that day. So Rambam upon the place, "*the search for leaven is in the night of the fourteenth day*, although the eating of leavened bread is not forbidden before the noon of the fourteenth day. But they instituted this because it is most convenient searching in the night time by candlelight; and at that time also all persons are at home."

"The woman that miscarries on the light [i.e. the evening] of the eighty-first day, the Shammean school absolves her from any offering; but the school of Hillel doth not." The Gloss hath it, *on the light of the eighty-first day*, i.e. *in the night of the eighty-first day*. The question disputed there is: "The woman that had been brought to bed of a girl was bound to the purification of eighty days"; when those days were at an end, then she was bound to offer, [Leviticus 12:5,6](#). Now therefore seeing the oblation was to be brought on the eighty-first day, the question is, What if the woman should happen to miscarry within the very night that begins the eighty-first day, must she the next day offer one or two sacrifices? one for the girl, and one for that of which she hath miscarried? The Shammean school will have but one, but the school of Hillel saith two.

Pesikta speaking concerning a vowed sacrifice, from [Leviticus 7:17](#), hath this passage: "Perhaps it may be eaten on the light [i.e. the evening] of the third day. The text saith *upon the third day*; it is eaten until the third day. *It is not eaten on the light* [i.e. the evening, or the night] *of the third day*": for then the third day was actually begun. But now in this phrase they restrain the word especially to the beginning of the night, though sometimes it is taken for the whole night, as in that tradition newly quoted concerning the woman that miscarried: and so the Gloss upon *Pesachin*. Maimonides discoursing about putting away the leaven which ought to be *on the light of the fourteenth day*, i.e. on the night that begins the fourteenth day, hath this passage; "By prescription of the scribes they search for, and cast out their leaven *in the night; namely, the beginning of that night that ushers in the fourteenth day*." Much to the same sense the Gemarist concerning *the light*: "*How comes twilight to be called light?* From thence, because it is written, In the twilight, in the evening, of the day," [Proverbs 7:9](#). Rambam thinks it so called by a rule of contraries; for so he in *Pesachin*: "The night is called *light*, by the same rule that they call many other things by their contraries."

But the Gemarists upon the place affirm that the evening is not improperly called *light*, and prove it from that expression, [Psalm 148:3](#): *Praise him all ye stars of light*. However unsuitably therefore it might sound in the ears of Greeks or Latins, when they hear the evening or the beginning of the night expressed by *the light of the sabbath*, yet with the Jews it was a way of expression very usual: and they could readily understand the evangelist speaking in their own vulgar way, when he would tell us *the night of the sabbath drew on*; but expresseth it by *the light of the sabbath began to shine*.

56. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.

[*And rested the sabbath day.*] If our Saviour was taken down from the cross about sunset, as it was provided, [Deuteronomy 21:23](#); [Joshua 8:29](#), then had the women this interim of time to buy their spices and despatch other business before the entry of the sabbath day.

I. *Between the suns.* So they called that space of time that was between the setting of the sun and the appearance of any star.

II. Might they not have that space of time also that was between the first and second star? We may judge something from this passage: "In the evening of the sabbath, if he see one star and do any work, he is acquitted; but if he see two stars, let him bring his trespass-offering."

III. Might they not have some farther allowance in the case of funerals? We may judge from this passage: "*they do all works necessary about the dead* [on the sabbath day]; they anoint him, they wash him, provided only that they do not stir a limb of him," &c. It was not safe for those women to shew themselves too busy in preparing for his interment; especially seeing Jesus died as a malefactor, and was odious to the people: this might exasperate the people against them, and so much the more too, if they should, in the least measure, violate the sabbath day. But further, besides the honour they gave to the sabbath, it was not prudence in them to break it for a work which they thought they might as well do when the sabbath was done and over.

5. And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

[*Why seek ye the living among the dead?*] "A parable. A certain priest (who had a foolish servant) went somewhere without the city. The servant seeking about for his master, goes into the place of burial, and there calls out to people standing there. 'Did you see my master here?' They say unto him, 'Is not thy master a priest?' He said, 'Yes.' Then said they unto him, 'Thou fool, who ever saw a priest among tombs?' So say Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh; 'Thou fool, is it the custom to *seek the dead among the living?* (or perhaps *the living among the dead?*) Our God is the living God; but the gods of whom thou speakest are dead,'" &c.

13. And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs.

[*And behold two of them were going, &c.*] One of these was Cleopas, verse 18, whom we have elsewhere shewn to be the very same with Alpheus, both from the agreement of the name, and also by comparing [John 19:25](#), with [Mark 15:47](#), and [Matthew 27:56](#). That Peter was the other, I do not at all question, grounding my confidence upon verse 34 of this chapter; and [1 Corinthians 15:5](#). This Cleopas or Alpheus, we see, is the speaker here, and not Peter, being older than Peter, as being the father of four of the apostles.

15. And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

[*Jesus himself drew near, and went along with them.*] "After that, he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country." But what *form* that was, it would be something bold to determine. But it seems to be different from the form of a *gardener*, and indeed not the *form* of any plebeian; but rather of some scholar, because he instructs them while they were upon the road, and giveth thanks for them when they sat at meat. So *Beracoth*; "If two eat together, the one of them *a learned man*, the other of them *an unlearned man*, he that is the learned man gives thanks." Hence that passage: "Janneus the king calls out Simeon Ben Shetahh, vice-president of the Sanhedrim, and a doctor, to say grace after supper: and thus he begins; 'Blessed be God for the meat which Janneus and his guests have eaten.' To whom the king, 'How long wilt thou persist in thy frowardness?' Saith the other, 'Why, what should I have said? Must we bless God for the meat that we have eaten, when as I have eaten none at all?'"

21. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done.

[*We trusted, &c.*] "We trusted it had been he that should have redeemed Israel": viz., in the sense that that nation had of a *redemption*, which they hoped for from the Gentile yoke. But the poverty and meanness of Jesus gave them no ground to hope that any such thing

should be brought about by arms, as that people had generally dreamed; they hoped, however, it might have been miraculously accomplished, as their first redemption from Egypt had been.

[*Today is the third day, &c.*] It is worthy our observation what notice the Rabbins take of *the third day*: "Abraham lifted up his eyes the third day, [Genesis 22:4](#). It is written, After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight, [Hosea 6:2](#). It is written, concerning *the third day* of the tribes, Joseph said unto them, *The third day*, [Genesis 42:18](#). Concerning *the third day* also of the spies: Hide yourselves there *three days*, [Joshua 2:16](#). And it is said of *the third day* of the promulgation of the law, And it came to pass on *the third day*, [Exodus 19:16](#). It is written also of the *third day* of Jonas, Jonas was in the belly of the fish *three days* and three nights, [Jonah 1:17](#). It is written also of the *third day* of those that came up out of the captivity. And there abode we in tents *three days*, [Ezra 8:15](#). It is written also of the *third day* of the resurrection from the dead, After two days will he revive us, and *the third day* he will raise us up. It is written also of *the third day* of Esther, And on *the third day* Esther put on her royal apparel, [Esther 5:1](#). The Targumist adds, *On the third day of the Passover.*" And that indeed is the day we are at present concerned in, namely, *the third day* of the Passover. If these things were taken so much notice of concerning the *third day*, at that time, in the schools and synagogues, (as I see no reason why it should be denied), then these words of Cleopas may seem to look a little that way, as speaking according to the vulgar conceptions of the Jews. For whereas it had been plain enough to have said, *today is the third day*, but he further adds, *beside all this*, and the word *this*, too; there seems a peculiar force in that addition, and an emphasis in that word. As if the meaning of it were this: "That same Jesus was mighty in word and deed, and shewed himself such a one, that we conceived him the true Messiah, and him that was to redeem Israel: and besides all these things which bear witness for him to be such, *this very day* bears witness also. For whereas there is so great an observation amongst us concerning the *third day*, this is the *third day* since he was crucified; and there are some women amongst us, that say they have been told by angels that he is risen again."

30. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

[*He took bread, and blessed it, &c.*] It is strange that any should expound this breaking of bread of the holy eucharist, when Christ had determined with himself to disappear in the very distribution of the bread and so interrupt the supper. And where indeed doth it appear that any of them tasted a bit? For the supper was ended before it began.

"*If three eat together*, they are bound to say grace"; that is, as it is afterward explained, "One of them saith, 'Let us bless': but if there be three and himself, then he saith, 'Bless ye.'" Although I do not believe Christ tied himself exactly to that custom of saying, 'Let us bless';

nor yet to the common form of blessing before meat; yet is it very probable he did use some form of blessing, and not the words, 'This is my body.'

32. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

[*Did not our hearts burn within us?*] Beza saith, "In one copy we read it written, *Was not our heart hid?*" Heinsius saith, "It is written *hidden*, in the best copies." Why then should it not be so in the best translations too? But this reading favours his interpretation, which amounts to this: "Were we not fools, that we should not know him while he was discoursing with us in the way?" I had rather expound it by some such parallel places as these: "My heart waxed hot within me, and while I was musing the fire burned," [Psalm 39:4](#); "His word was in mine heart as a burning fire," [Jeremiah 20:9](#). This meaning is, That their hearts were so affected, and grew so warm, that they could hold no longer, but must break silence and utter themselves. So these, 'Were we not so mightily affected, while he talked with us in the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures, that we were just breaking out into the acknowledgment of him, and ready to have saluted him as our Lord?'

That is a far-fetched conceit in *Taanith*: "R. Alai Bar Barachiah saith, If two disciples of the wise men journey together, and do not maintain some discourse betwixt themselves concerning the law, they deserve to be burnt; according as it is said, It came to pass, as they still went on and talked, behold a chariot of fire, and horses of fire," &c. [2 Kings 2](#).

34. Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

[*Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.*] I. That these are the words of the Eleven appears from the case in which the word *the eleven* is put. *They found the eleven and them that were with them, saying.* They having returned from Emmaus, found the eleven and the rest, saying to them, when they came into their presence, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon." But do they speak these things amongst themselves as certain and believed? or do they tell them to the two disciples that were come from Emmaus, as things true and unquestionable? It is plain from St. Mark, that the eleven did not believe the resurrection of our Saviour, till he himself had shewed himself in the midst of them. They could not, therefore, say these words, "The Lord is risen, and hath appeared unto Simon," as if they were confidently assured of the truth of them: but when they saw Simon so suddenly and unexpectedly returning, whom they knew to have taken a journey towards Galilee, to try if he could there meet with Jesus, they conclude hence, "Oh! surely the Lord is risen, and hath appeared to Simon," otherwise he would not have returned back so soon.

Which brings to mind that of the messenger of the death of Maximin: "The messenger that was sent from Aquileia to Rome, changing his horses often, came with so great speed that he got to Rome in four days. It chanced to be a day wherein some games were celebrating,

when on a sudden, as Balbinus and Gordianus were sitting in the theatre, the messenger came in; and before it could be told, all the people cry out, 'Maximin is slain'; and so prevented him in the news he brought," &c.

We cannot well think that any worldly affairs could have called away these two from the feast before the appointed time, nor indeed from the company of their fellow-disciples, but something greater and more urgent than any worldly occasions. And now imagine with what anguish and perplexity poor Peter's thoughts were harassed for having denied his Master: what emotions of mind he felt, when the women had told him, that they were commanded by angels to let Peter particularly know that the Lord was risen, and went before them into Galilee, and they might see him there, [Mark 16:7](#): that it seems to me beyond all question, that one of these disciples going towards Emmaus was Peter, who as soon as he had heard this from the women, taking Alpheus as a companion of his journey, makes towards Galilee, not without communicating beforehand to his fellow-disciples the design of that progress: they, therefore, finding him so suddenly and unexpectedly returned, make the conjecture amongst themselves, that certainly the Lord had appeared to him, else he would never have come back so soon. Compare but that of the apostle, 1 [Corinthian 15:5](#), *he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve*; and nothing can seem expressed more clearly in the confirmation of this matter.

Object. But it may be objected, that those two returning from Emmaus found the eleven apostles gathered and sitting together. Now if Simon was not amongst them, they were not eleven. Therefore he was not one of those two.

Ans. I. If it should be granted that Peter was there and sat amongst them, yet were they not exactly eleven then; for Thomas was absent, [John 20:24](#). II. When the eleven are mentioned, we must not suppose it exactly meant of the number of apostles then present, but the present number of the apostles.

37. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

[*They supposed they had seen a spirit.*] Whereas the Jews distinguished between angels and *spirits* and demons; *spirits* are defined by R. Hoshaniah to be "such to whom souls are created, but they have not a body made for those souls." But it is a question, whether they included all *spirits* or souls under this notion, when it is more than probable that apparitions of ghosts, or deceased persons who once had a body, were reckoned by them under the same title. Nor do I apprehend the disciples had any other imagination at this time, than that this was not Christ indeed, in his own person, as newly raised from the dead; but a spectrum only in his shape, himself being still dead. And when the Pharisees speak concerning Paul, [Acts 23:9](#), "That if an angel or a *spirit* had spoken to him," I would easily believe they might mean it of the apparition of some prophet, or some other departed just person, than of any soul that had never yet any body created to it. I the rather incline thus to think, because it

is so evident, that it were needless to prove how deeply impressed that nation was with an opinion of the apparitions of departed ghosts.

44. And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.

[*In the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms.*] It is a known division of the Old Testament into *the Law, the Prophets, and the Holy writings*.

I. The books of the law and their order need not be insisted upon, commonly called by us, *the Pentateuch*; but by some of the Rabbins, *the Heptateuch*; and by some Christians, *the Octateuch*. "R. Samuel Bar Nachman saith, R. Jonathan saith, 'Wisdom hath hewn out her seven pillars.' *These are the seven books of the law.*" But are there not but *five books* only? "Ben Kaphra saith, *The Book of Numbers is made three books.* From the beginning of the book to *And it came to pass when the ark set forward* [chap. 10:35], is a book by itself. That verse and the following is a book by itself: and from thence to the end of the book is a book by itself"...

Eulogius, speaking concerning Dosthes or Dositheus, a famous seducer of the Samaritans, hath this passage: *He adulterated the Octateuch of Moses with spurious writings, and all kind of corrupt falsifyings.* There is mention also of a book with this title, *The Christians' Book, an Exposition upon the Octateuch.* Whether this was the *Octateuch* of Moses it is neither certain nor much worth our inquiry; for Photius judgeth him a corrupt author: besides that it may be shewn by and by, that there was a twofold *Octateuch* besides that of Moses. Now if any man should ask, how it come to pass that Eulogius (and that probably from the common notion of the thing) should divide the books of Moses into an *Octateuch*; I had rather any one else than myself should resolve him in it. But if any consent that he owned the *Heptateuch* we have already mentioned, we should be ready to reckon the last chapter of Deuteronomy for the eighth part.

Aben Ezra will smile here, who in that his obscure and disguised denial of the books of the *Pentateuch*, as if they were not writ by the pen of Moses, instances, in that chapter in the first place, as far as I can guess, as a testimony against it. You have his words in his Commentary upon the Book of Deuteronomy, a little from the beginning, *But if you understand the mystery of the twelve, &c.*, i.e. of the twelve verses of the last chapter of the book (for so his own countrymen expound him), "thou wilt know the truth"; i.e. that Moses did not write the whole *Pentateuch*; an argument neither worth answering, nor becoming so great a philosopher. For as it is a ridiculous thing to suppose that the chapter that treats of the death and burial of Moses should be written by himself, so would it not be much less ridiculous to affix that chapter to any other volume than the *Pentateuch*. But these things are not the proper subject for our present handling.

II. There also was an *Octateuch* of the prophets too: "All the books of the prophets are eight; Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the twelve." For the historical books also were read in their synagogues under the notion of the prophets, as well as the prophets themselves, whose names are set down. You will see the title prefixed to them in the Hebrew Bibles, *The former prophets*, as well as to the others, *The latter prophets*. The doctors give us the reason why they dispose the prophets in that order, that Jeremiah is named first, Ezekiel next, and Isaiah last, which I have quoted in notes upon [Matthew 27:9](#): and let not the reader think it irksome to repeat it here.

"Whereas the Book of Kings ends in destruction, and the whole Book of Jeremiah treats about destruction; whereas Ezekiel begins with destruction, and ends in consolation; and whereas Isaiah is all in consolation, they joined destruction with destruction, and consolation with consolation."

III. The third division of the Bible is entitled *the Holy Writings*. And here also is found an *Octateuch* by somebody (as it seems), though I know not where to find it.

"Herbanus the Jew *was a man excellently well instructed in the law, and holy books of the prophets, and the Octateuch, and all the other writings.*" What this *Octateuch* should be, distinct from the law and the prophets, and indeed what *all the other writings* besides should be, is not easily guessed. This *Octateuch* perhaps may seem to have some reference to the *Hagiographa*, or *Holy Writings*: for it is probable enough that, speaking of a Jew well skilled in the Holy Scriptures, he might design the partition of the Bible according to the manner of the Jews' dividing it: but who then can pick out books that should make it up? Let the reader pick out the eight; and then I would say, that the other four are *all the other writings*. But we will not much disquiet ourselves about this matter.

It may be asked, why these books should be called *the Scriptures*, when the whole Bible goes under the name of *the Holy Scriptures*. Nor can any thing be more readily answered to this, than that by this title they would keep up their dignity and just esteem for them. They did not indeed read them in their synagogues, but that they might acknowledge them of most holy and divine authority, *out of them they confirm their traditions, and they expound them mystically*: yea, and give them the same title with the rest of the Holy Scriptures.

"This is the order of *the Hagiographa*, Ruth, the Book of Psalms, Job, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Canticles, the Lamentations, Daniel, the Book of Esther, Ezra, and the Chronicles." It is here disputed, that if Job was in the days of Moses, why then is not his book put in the first place? the answer is, *They do not begin with vengeance or affliction*; and such is that Book of Job. They reply, *Ruth also begins with affliction*, viz. with the story of a famine, and the death of Elimelech's sons. "But that was (say they) *an affliction that had a joyful ending.*" So they might have said of the book and affliction of Job too. We see it is disputed there, why the Book of Ruth should be placed the first in that rank, and not the

Book of Job. But we might inquire, whether the Book of Psalms ought not to have been placed the first, rather than the Book of Ruth.

IV. In this passage at present before us, who would think otherwise but that our Saviour alludes to the common and most known partition of the Bible? and although he name the *Psalms* only, yet that under that title he includes that whole volume. For we must of necessity say, that either he excluded all the books of that third division excepting the Book of Psalms, which is not probable; or that he included them under the title of the *Prophets*, which was not customary; or else that under the title of *the Psalms* he comprehended all the rest. That he did not exclude them, reason will tell us; for in several books of that division is he himself spoken of, as well as in the Psalms: and that he did not include them in the title of *the Prophets* reason also will dictate: because we would not suppose him speaking differently from the common and received opinion of that nation. There is very little question, therefore, but the apostles might understand him speaking with the vulgar; and by *the Psalms* to have meant all the books of that volume, those especially wherein any thing was written concerning himself. For let it be granted that Ruth, as to the time of the history and the time of its writing, might challenge to itself the first place in order (and it is that kind of priority the Gemarists are arguing), yet, certainly, amongst all those books that mention any thing of Christ, the Book of Psalms deservedly obtains the first place; so far that in the naming of this the rest may be understood. So St. Matthew, chapter 27:9, under the name of *Jeremiah*, comprehends that whole volume of *the Prophets*, because he was placed the first in that rank: which observation we have made in notes upon that place.

45. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

[*Then opened he their understanding.*] When it is said, that by the imposition of the hands of the apostles the gift of tongues and of prophecy was conferred ("they spake with tongues, and they prophesied," [Acts 19:6](#)), by 'prophecy' nothing may be better understood than this very thing, that the minds of such were *opened, that they might understand the Scriptures*: and perhaps their 'speaking with tongues' might look this way in the first notion of it, viz., that they could understand the original wherein the Scriptures were writ.

50. And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

[*As far as Bethany.*] How many difficulties arise here!

I. This very evangelist ([Acts 1:12](#)) tells us, that when the disciples came back from the place where our Lord ascended, "they returned from mount Olivet, distant from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey." But now the town of *Bethany* was about fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, [John 11:18](#), that is, double a sabbath day's journey.

II. Josephus tells us that the mount of Olives was but five furlongs from the city; and a sabbath day's journey was seven furlongs and a half. "About that time there came to Jerusalem a certain Egyptian, pretending himself a prophet, and persuading the people that they would

go out with him to the mount of Olives, *which, being situated on the front of the city, is distant five furlongs.*" These things are all true: 1. That the mount of Olives lay but five furlongs' distance from Jerusalem. 2. That the town of *Bethany* was fifteen furlongs. 3. That the disciples were brought by Christ as far as *Bethany*. 4. That when they returned from the mount of Olives they travelled more than five furlongs. And, 5. Returning from *Bethany*, they travelled but a sabbath day's journey. All which may be easily reconciled, if we would observe that the first space from the city towards this mount was called *Bethphage*, which I have cleared elsewhere from Talmudic authors, the evangelists themselves also confirming it. That part of that mount was known by that name to the length of about a sabbath day's journey, till it came to that part which was called *Bethany*. For there was *Bethany*, a tract of the mount, and the town of *Bethany*. The town was distance from the city about fifteen furlongs, i.e., two miles, or a double sabbath day's journey: but the first border of this tract (which also bore the name of *Bethany*) was distant but one mile, or a single sabbath day's journey only.

Our Saviour led out his disciples, when he was about to ascend, to the very first brink of that region or tract of mount Olivet which was called *Bethany*, and was distant from the city a sabbath day's journey. And so far from the city itself did that tract extend which was called *Bethphage*: and when he was come to that place where the bounds of *Bethphage* and *Bethany* met and touched one another, he there ascended; in that very place where he got upon the ass when he rode into Jerusalem, [Mark 11:1](#). Whereas, therefore, Josephus saith that mount Olivet was but five furlongs from the city, he means the first brink and border of it: but our evangelist must be understood of the place where Christ ascended, where the name of *Olivet* began, as it was distinguished from *Bethphage*.

And since we have so frequent mention of a sabbath day's journey, and it is not very foreign from our present purpose to observe something concerning it, let me take notice of these few things:

I. The space of *a sabbath day's bound* was two thousand cubits. "Naomi and to Ruth, 'We are commanded to observe the sabbaths, and the feasts, *but we are not to go beyond two thousand cubits.*'" "It is ordained by the scribes, that no man go out of the city beyond two thousands cubits." Instances of this kind are endless. But it is disputed upon what foundation this constitution of theirs is built. "Whence comes it to be thus ordained concerning the *two thousand cubits*? It is founded upon this, 'Let no man go out of his place on the seventh day,'" [Exodus 16:29](#). "Where are these two thousand cubits mentioned? they have their tradition from hence, *Abide ye every man in his place*, [Exodus 16:29](#). These are four cubits. Let no man go out of his place: these are two thousand cubits." It is true, indeed, we cannot gain so much as one cubit out of any of these Scriptures, much less two thousand; however, we may learn from hence the pleasant art they have of working any thing out of any thing.

"Asai Ben Akibah saith, 'They are fetched from hence,' in that it is said, *Place, place*. Here *place* is said [Let no man go out of his *place*]. And it is said elsewhere, I will appoint

thee a *place*, [Exodus 21:13](#). As the *place* that is said elsewhere is two thousand cubits, so the *place* that is spoken of here is two thousand cubits." But how do they prove that the *place* mentioned elsewhere is two thousand cubits? "I will appoint thee a *place* whither he shall flee that kills a man unawares: this teaches us that the Israelites in the wilderness" (i.e. those that had slain any one) "betook themselves to a *place* of refuge. And whither did they flee? To the camp of the Levites."

Now, therefore, when the Israelites' camp in the wilderness was distant from the tabernacle and from the Levites' camp that was pitched about the tabernacle, two thousand cubits, which thing they gather from [Joshua 3:4](#); and whereas it was lawful for them at that distance to approach the tabernacle on the sabbath day; hence they argue for the two thousand cubits as the sabbath day's journey, which we are now inquiring into. But, by the way, let us take notice of the "four cubits," which they gathered from those words, "Abide ye every man in his place." Which must be thus understood: "If any person through ignorance, or by any accident, had gone beyond the limits of the sabbath, and afterward came to know his transgression, he was confined within four cubits, so that he must not stir beyond them till the sabbath was done and over."

They further instance in another foundation for the two thousand cubits: "'Ye shall measure from without the city on the east side two thousand cubits,' [Numbers 35:5](#). But another Scripture saith, 'From the wall of the city and outward ye shall measure a thousand cubits': the thousand cubits are the suburbs of the city, and the two thousand cubits are the sabbatical limits." Maimonides very largely discourseth in what manner and by what lines they measured these two thousand cubits from each city: but it makes very little to our purpose. Only let me add this one thing; that if any one was overtaken in his journeying in the fields or wilderness by the night, when the sabbath was coming in, and did not exactly know the space of two thousand cubits, then he might walk "*two thousand ordinary paces*: and these were accounted *the sabbatical bounds*."

So far from the city was that place of mount Olivet, where Christ ascended; viz., that part of the mount where *Bethphage* ended and *Bethany* began. Perhaps the very same place mentioned [2 Samuel 15:32](#); or certainly not far off, where David in his flight taking leave of the ark and sanctuary, looked back and worshipped God. Where if any one would be at the pains to inquire why the Greek interpreters retain the word *Ros*, both here and in chapter 16:1; *and David came unto Ros*; and *and David passed on a little way from Ros*; he will find a knot not easy to be untied. The Talmudists would have it a place of idolatry, but by a reason very far-fetched indeed. The Jewish commentators, with a little more probability, conceive that it was a place from whence David, when he went towards Jerusalem, looking towards the place where the tabernacle was seated, was wont to worship God.

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica

John Lightfoot

(1602-1675)

Chorographical Notes

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Chapter 1 Some historical passages concerning the territories of Herod, &c.

Before we make any particular inquiries into the countries mentioned [Luke 3:1](#), it will not be amiss to dip into history a little more generally.

"Augustus Caesar received Herod's sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, upon their arrival at Rome, with all the kindness imaginable, *granting a power to Herod to establish the kingdom in which of his sons he pleased: yea, and moreover, gave him the region of Trachonitis, Batanea, and Abranitis.*" We find Perea (peculiarly so called) not mentioned in this place, when yet

it was most assuredly under Herod's jurisdiction: how else could he have built Herodium, which was in the extreme confines of Perea southward, where he himself was buried?

Neither, indeed, doth St. Luke say any thing of Perea, even then when he mentions the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas, under whose jurisdiction, Josephus tells us, were both Perea and Galilee. "Perea and Galilee were both under Antipas."

Why Josephus should not mention Perea, when he is speaking of the father's kingdom, or why St. Luke should omit it, when he instances the tetrarchy of the son, that being so unquestionably within his jurisdiction, I confess is something strange to me; nor could I pass it without some remark.

The same Josephus tells us this of the tetrarchy of Philip: "Batanea, also, and Trachonitis, Auranitis, and some parts of Zeno's house, about Jamnia, yielding the profits of one hundred talents, were under Philip's government." And again, "Then died Philip, in the twentieth year of the reign of Tiberius, when he himself had governed for seven-and-thirty years over Trachonitis, Gaulonitis, and the country of the Bataneans." Here we see Auranitis is not mentioned, but Gaulonitis is; and in St. Luke, neither Batanea, nor Gaulonitis, nor Auranitis; but, instead of them, Iturea. There is a chronological difficulty in these words of Josephus, which is not easily solved; but this is not the business of this treatise.

It is hard to say whether this *house of Zenon*, have any relation with Zenodorus the robber. Josephus, in the place above quoted, mentions him, saying, that Augustus was the more willing to put Batanea, Trachonitis, and Auranitis, under the government of Herod the Great, that he might the more effectually suppress the thefts and rapines committed by one Zenodorus and the Trachonites. Strabo also speaks of this Zenodorus, telling us, that "there were few robberies committed now; *the robbers of Zenodorus' party being cut off.*"

But if the name should be writ in the mother tongue, *Beth Zenun*, it might signify a *place* or *region of cold*; and so denote some country adjacent to the snows of Lebanon; or some part of *the mountain of snow* [Hermon]; I rather believe.

Whether Perea may not also be called Galilee.

I. Although the whole Transjordanine country might justly enough be called *Perea*, for this very reason, because it was *on the other side* Jordan; yet, generally speaking, the country is distinguished, and that is peculiarly called Perea, which was the kingdom of Sehon, the dwelling afterward of the Reubenites, and part of the tribes of Gad.

Hence that of Ptolemy, that "from the east of the river Jordan," there are only these cities reckoned up by him: *Cosmos. Livias. Callirrhoe* (of old, Lasha.) *Gazorus. Epicaerus.*

Other places that were beyond Jordan he mentions under other districts; as, some under Coelosyria, others under Batanea.

That which we are now inquiring about, is, whether the Transjordanine country was ever called Galilee. The rise of this question is, because our Evangelist mentions the whole tetrarchy of Herod, under the name of Galilee, when as Perea was a great part of it. I incline much to the affirmative, for these reasons: and first, I suppose that the upper part of the country 'beyond Jordan' might be called 'Galilee.'

1. From [Matthew 4:15](#), "by the way of the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles." Are not those places beyond the sea of Gennesaret, called, in this place, 'Galilee of the Gentiles,' in distinction to Galilee properly so called, on this side Jordan?

2. Judas, who moved the sedition against the Roman tax, is, by Gamaliel, called 'Judas of Galilee,' [Acts 5:37](#),--who yet, by Josephus, is called, "A Gaulonite of the city of Gamala." Now it is well enough known that Gaulona and Gamala were beyond Jordan.

II. I suppose Perea, properly so called, to have gone also under the name of Galilee, for these reasons:

1. The whole land of Canaan, both that beyond and that on this side Jordan, was under the jurisdiction of Herod the Great. So that divide this whole country into four tetrarchies, the first Judea; the second Samaria; both which were under the government of Pilate; the third, Iturea and Trachonitis, under Philip; the fourth will be Galilee on this side, and Perea beyond Jordan. Whereas, therefore, St. Luke, in the division of the tetrarchies, names only Galilee, as that which belonged to Herod, it is manifest he includes Perea under that of Galilee, and speaks of it as a known and commonly-received thing.

2. In [Luke 7:11](#), it is said of Jesus, that "as he went to Jerusalem, he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee." One would have thought it had been proper to have said, "through the midst of Galilee and Samaria." For when he went from Jerusalem to his own country, he then passed through Samaria, and so into Galilee; but going from home to Jerusalem, he in his passage went through Galilee, and then through Samaria: but now it is very certain, that in that journey he did pass through Perea, having first gone through the Samaritan country. Whence it is very probable that Perea is called, by our evangelist in this place, Galilee; in the very same manner as he had also included it in the mention of Galilee, [Luke 3:1](#).

3. In that tragical feast, wherein the last mess was the head of John Baptist, those who then were treated by Herod are called the "great estates of Galilee," [Mark 6:21](#). Now, that supper was kept in the palace Herodium, which was in the very extreme parts of Perea towards the south; and, therefore, surely those "great estates of Galilee," that were with him, must be no other than the great estates of Perea.

4. There is mention of *Geliloth of Jordan*, [Joshua 22:11](#), when the passage was concerning Perea: whence that country might well take its name of Galilee.

Some things in general concerning the country beyond Jordan.

As to the tetrarchies of Herod and Philip, this, I suppose, we may determine without prejudice or question, that nothing was within their jurisdiction but what was within the confines of the land of Israel, properly so called. As to what may be objected concerning Iturea, we shall consider in its own place. Whilst we are, therefore, looking into these countries, our main business will be with what was beyond Jordan; for that on this side the river was only Galilee, about which we shall not much trouble ourselves, because there is no difficulty concerning it.

The Transjordanine country, if I mistake not, from greatest antiquity, is divided in that story, [Genesis 14:5](#): "Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, smote the Rephaims in Ashtaroth-karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh-kiriathaim, and the Horites in mount Seir."

These two things we may apprehend from this passage: 1. That the country of Bashan was inhabited by the Rephaims; Perea (another part of the land beyond Jordan), by the Zuzims, Moab by the Emims. 2. That Ashtaroth-karnaim, Ham, and Shaveh-kiriathaim are not every one the names of whole countries, but particular places in those countries; perhaps where the several fights were, or where the people of that country had been subdued.

As to Ashtaroth-karnaim, there is little doubt but that was in the kingdom of Bashan; the larger region being called Ashtaroth, Karnaim is added in a distinguishing limited sense: [Deuteronomy 1:4](#), "Og, the king of Bashan, which dwelt at Ashtaroth in Edrei."

Of the place itself, the Jewish doctors thus: "At twenty cubits, a man sits in the shadow of his tent" (viz. in the feast of Tabernacles); "he does not sit in the shadow of his tabernacle beyond twenty cubits, but in the shadow of its sides" [that is, if the roof or cover of his tabernacle be above twenty cubits high]. "Abai saith unto him, If, therefore, any one shall pitch a tabernacle in Ashtaroth-karnaim, is not the tabernacle so also?" Gloss: "Ashtaroth-karnaim were two great mountains, with a valley between; and, by reason of the height and shadow of those mountains, the sun never shone upon the valley."

Why the Samaritan copy should use here *Aphinith Karnaiiah*, instead of "Ashtaroth-karnaim," especially when it retains the word Ashtaroth elsewhere, is not easy to say, unless it should have some relation to *boughs*; as a place thick and shady with boughs. But such is the confusion of the guttural letters in the Samaritan language, that we can determine nothing positively.

That the Zuzims inhabited Perea, as it is distinguished from the country of Bashan, may be evident from the progress of the conqueror; for whereas it is plain that the Rephaims dwelt in Bashan, and the Emims in the country of Moab, [Deuteronomy 2:10,11](#), it is manifest that the Zuzims, who were conquered after the Rephaims, and before the Emims, lay in a country between both, and that was Perea.

And hence are those to be corrected that would correct the reading here, and instead of "the Zuzims *in Ham*," would render it, "the Zuzims *with them*." So the Greek, Vulgar, &c.: as if the Zuzims were amongst the Rephaims, when they were distinguished both in nation and dwelling.

When the Israelites went out of Egypt into that land, the whole Transjordanine region was divided into these two seigniories,--the kingdom of Sehon, and the kingdom of Og. That of Sehon was Perea, strictly so called now; that of Og, was all the rest under the name of Bashan. But after the return of Israel from Babylon, Bashan was so subdivided, that Batanea, or Bashan, was only a part of it, the rest going under the name of Trachonitis, Auranitis, and, if you will, Gaulonitis too; for we meet with that distinction also in Josephus. To give, therefore, all these countries at this time their proper bounds and limits, if it does not exceed all human skill and wit, I am sure it doth mine.

So that all we can do in this matter, is only to propound a few things of these places thus divided, as far as conjecture may carry us, which we submit fairly to the fair and candid judgment of the reader. Let us, therefore, begin with Trachonitis.

Trachonitis

Argob, mentioned [Deuteronomy 3:14](#), is, by the Targumists, called *Trachona*. And so Jonath. [1 Kings 4:13](#): the Samaritan hath it, *Rigobaah*, which seems akin to *Regab*, amongst the Talmudists.

"Tekoah hath the preeminence for oil: Abba Saul saith, *The next to that is Regab beyond Jordan*."

Gul. Tyrius would derive the name from *dragons*. For so he: "It [Trachonitis] seems to have taken its name from dragons. Those hidden passages and windings underground, with which this country abounds, are called dragons. Indeed, almost all the people of this country have their dwellings in dens and caves; and in these kind of dragons."

Other things might be offered as to the signification of the word: but we are looking after the situation of the place, not the etymology of the name. And the first thing to be inquired into, as to its situation, is, whether it extended in longitude from the south to the north, or from the west to the east. The reason of our inquiry is, partly upon the account of Auranitis, which we are to speak of presently, and partly those words in Josephus, "Batanea was bounded with Trachonitis." How so? Either that Batanea lay between Perea and Trachonitis, extending itself from the west towards the east, or between Trachonitis and Galilee, strictly so called, extending itself in length from the south towards the north: which last I presume most probable; and so we place Trachonitis in the extreme parts of the Transjordanine country towards the east. And both which, upon these reasons taken together:

1. The Gemarists, describing the circumference of the land from the north, do mention "Tarnegola [or Gabara] the upper, which is above Caesarea [Philippi], and Trachona, which extends to Bozrah": where the extension of Trachona must not be understood of its reaching to some Bozrah in those northern borders; but to some Bozrah or Bosorrah in the confines of Perea: and so it supposes the country extending itself from the north towards the south.

2. "Of the province of Batanea; east of which is Saccea, and here, under the hill Alsadamus, are the Trachonite Arabians." Behold here the Trachonites living east of Batanea.

3. "The country of Gamala, and Gaulanitis, and Batanea, and Trachonitis." But were not Gamalitica itself and Gaulonitis within Batanea? Right: but by this distinction he divides between that Batanea that was nearer Galilee, and that that was farther off. That country that lay nearest, from those noted towns of Gaulan and Gamala, he calls Gaulonitis and Gamalitica; and that which was farther off, he calls by its own name of Batanea; and what lies still beyond that, Trachonitis.

There was a time when all that whole country, which now is distinguished into these severals, had one general name of *Bashan*; which word, how it came to change into Bathan, or Batanea,--as also, with the Targumists and Samaritans, into Batnin and Matnin,--any one, indifferently skilled in the Syrian tongue, will easily discern.

Auranitis

That Auranitis took its denomination from Hauran, hardly any one will question, especially that observes [Ezekiel 47:16](#), to be rendered by the Greek interpreters, "which are upon the borders of Auranitis."

Hauran is reckoned up amongst those hills, at the top of which, by lifting up some flaming torches, they were wont to give notice of the new year.

"Where did they hold up those lights? *From mount Olivet to Sartaba. And from Sartaba to Gryphena. And from Gryphena to Hauran. And from Hauran to Beth Baltin.* And from Beth Baltin, he that held up the light there, did not depart, but waved it hither and thither, up and down, till he saw the lights kindled throughout the whole captivity."

The Gemarist queries, "What is Beth-Baltin? Rabh saith, It is Biram. What is the captivity? Rabh Joseph saith, It is Pumbeditha." Gloss: "The sense of it is this: That Biram is in the land of Israel." How! is Biram the same with Beth Baltin, and yet is Biram within the land of Israel? when, in the Jerusalem Gemara, "Rabh Honna saith, When we came hither, we went up to the top of Beth Baltin, and discerned the palm trees in Babylon." If this be true, the geographers are to consider whether there can be any prospect of Babylon from the land of Israel. In their sense it may be true enough, who commonly by the name of Babylon understand all those countries into which the Babylonish captivity were carried; not only Chaldea, but Mesopotamia also, and Assyria. So that bounding the land of Israel with the river Euphrates

(which, indeed, the Holy Scriptures themselves do), they make it contiguous with Mesopotamia, the river only between; and they place Beth Baitin not far from the bank on this side the river.

The Gemarists acknowledge that lights were lifted up upon some hills between those which they had mentioned; but these were the most known and celebrated, and therefore they named them only. Now it is probable enough that mount Hauran gave the denomination to the whole country Auranitis, which we are now upon. Perhaps there might be some part of Antilibanus called Hauran, either from the Syriac word *Havar*, which signifies *white*; or from the Hebrew word *Hor*, a *cave*. It may well enough agree either way, the hill being *white* with snow, and *hollow with the subterranean passages* that were there.

However, it is plain enough, from the place in Ezekiel before quoted, that Hauran was situated in the very extreme parts of the land towards the north, and from thence the country, as it had its situation there, so had its name Auranitis. Gul. Tyrius (by what authority I cannot tell) placeth it near the sea of Gennesaret: "The country of Auranitis being suddenly run through, which is by the sea of Tiberias," &c.

And that the river Orontes [springing between Libanus and Antilibanus near Heliopolis, as Pliny hath it] took its name from Hauran, the word itself seems to assure us. Although some, quoted by Eustathius, do apprehend it to be a Latin name. As if 'Orontes' were the same with 'Orientalis,' 'the Eastern.' Orontes was of old called Typhon, as Strabo tells us.

Iturea

The reader must excuse me if I make a narrower search into the situation of Iturea, although Barradius may confidently enough have told him (upon his own trust merely, as far as I can learn), that "the country is in the tribe of Nephthali, at the foot of mount Libanus." Perhaps he hath followed Borchard, who himself writes only upon the credit of Jacobus de Vitriaco: "You must know, the region of Decapolis hath several names in Scripture. Sometimes it is called Iturea; sometimes, Trachonitis; sometimes, the plain of Libanus; sometimes, the land of Moab; in one place, Gabul; in another place, Galilee of the Gentiles, and the Upper Galilee; but everywhere it is all one and the same country." Thus he confusedly enough.

Pliny places some nation or other, called by the name of the Itureans, in Cyrrhestica of Syria: "Next that is Cyrrhestica, the Irneates, the Gindareni, the Gabeni, two tetrarchies, which are called Granii Comatitae, the Emisenes, the Hylatae, a nation of the Itureans, and those of them also called the Betarreni, the Mariamitani," &c.

[Strabo] "After Macra is Marsyas, wherein are some hilly places, on one of which stands Chalcis, a garrison of Marsyas. The beginning of it is Laodicea, about Libanus. The Itureans and Arabs hold all the mountainous places, a very mischievous sort of people, all of them."

[Eupolemus] "David made war with the Edomites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Itureans, the Nabathites, and Nabdites." He had said before, "That he had subdued the Syrians dwelling by Euphrates and Comagene, the Assyrians and Phoenicians that were in Galadene."

[Gul. Tyr.] "Taking the way by the sea of Galilee, we entered Phoenice, and, leaving Paneas, which is Caesarea Philippi, on the right hand, we came to Iturea."

"The king passing through the country of Sidon, and going up some hilly places which lay between ours and the enemy's borders, he came to a place every way accommodated with all necessaries, a fruitful soil and well watered; the name of it Messahara. Going thence into the valley called Bacar, he found the land which hath been said to flow with milk and honey. Some are of opinion that this country was of old called Iturea. But long before that, viz. in the days of the kings of Israel, it was called the Grove of Libanus."

Where at length shall we find this Iturea? Had Philip any part of his tetrarchy within Cyrrestica, or Chalcis of Syria? And yet, if you believe either Pliny or Strabo, there were the Itureans. I suspect there is something couched in the etymology of the word, that may as much puzzle as the situation of the place.

If Bacar, as it is described by Tyrius, be indeed Iturea, it may be derived from *Hittur*, which signifies *wealth*; or from *crowning*, especially when the country itself is crowned with so much plenty. It is a notion familiar enough amongst the Talmudic authors.

Indeed, if I could believe that Iturea were the same with Decapolis, then I would suppose the word *ten* might have been altered by the change of Shin into Thau, according to the Syriac manner: but I neither can believe that, nor have I ever met with such a change made in that word, but rather that it would go into Samech.

May it not, therefore, be derived from *Chitture*, *diggings*, because of the caves and hollows underground? So that the Iturei might signify the same with Troglodytae, "those that dwell in caverns and holes." And so the Troglodytes, which were on the north of Israel, are distinguished from those on the south, viz. the Horites in Edom. Now that these countries, of which we are treating, were peculiarly noted for caves and dens; and they not only numerous, but some very strange and wonderful, Strabo, Josephus, Tyrius, and others, do abundantly testify.

"There are, beyond Damascus, two mountains called Trachones." Afterward; "Towards Arabia and Iturea, there are some cragged hills, famous for large and deep caves; one of which was capable of receiving four thousand men in it." But that was a prodigious cave of Zedekiah's, wherever it was, that was eighteen miles' space; at least, if those things be true which are related concerning it.

There was a cave beyond Jordan, about sixteen miles from Tiberias, that was three stories high; had a lower, a middle, and an upper dining room. Which, indeed, was fortified, and held a garrison of soldiers in it.

So that we may, not without reason, conjecture the Iturea of which we now speak might be so called from *Chitture*, such kind of *diggings* under ground: and that Pliny and Strabo, when they talk of the "nation of the Itureans in Cyrrhestica and Chalcis," do not place the country of Iturea there; only hinted that the Troglodytes, who dwelt in dens and caves, were there.

Iturea therefore, mentioned by our evangelists, was in the country beyond Jordan, viz. Batanea and Auranitis, or Auranitis alone, as may appear out of Josephus, compared with this our evangelist. For St. Luke saith, that "Philip was tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis": Josephus, that he was tetrarch of Trachonitis, Batanea, and Auranitis. Either, therefore, Auranitis and Batanea in Josephus is the Iturea in St. Luke or else Batanea in Josephus is confounded with Trachonitis mentioned in St. Luke, and Auranitis alone is Iturea. For that passage in Josephus ought to be taken notice of: "Caesar invest Agrippa with the tetrarchy that Philip had, and Batanea, adding moreover Trachonitis with Abella." Where it is observable, that there is mention of the tetrarchy of Philip, distinct from Batanea and Trachonitis. And what is that? certainly Auranitis in Josephus, and perhaps Iturea in St. Luke.

Abilene

Josephus, in the words before quoted, speaking of Abella, adds this passage; "that had been the tetrarchy of Lysanias." So also Ptolemy; "Abila, that bore the name of Lysanias": and he reckons this up among the cities of Coelosityria, under these degrees: Heliopolis 68.40 33.40; Abila 68.45 33.20.

It is not without cause distinguished by its relation to Lysanias, because in one place or another there were several Abilas or Abellas: for the Hebrew word *Abel* goes into that pronunciation in the Greek: and there were many places of that name.

Abel-shittim, where the Israelites pitched their tents immediately after they had passed the river Jordan, in Josephus is called *Abila*, "distant from Jordan threescore furlongs": which he also mentions with Julius *in Perea*. There is also Abel-meholah, and Abel-beth-maachah, &c.

Near this sound comes *Abelas of the Cilicians*. The very word *Abilene* is in Vajicra Rabba; "The Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away. ([Job 1:15](#)) R. Abin Bar Cahna saith, *They came out of Caphar Karinus, and they went through all Abilene, and came to Migdol Zabaiah, and there died.*"

2 Samuel 20:18 discussed.

Amongst all the cities and countries that bear the name of Abel, the most celebrated is that in [2 Samuel 20](#), made famous by the history of a foolish Sheba and a wise woman. The woman's expression is not a little wrested and tortured by interpreters: "They were wont to

speaking in old time, saying, They shall surely ask counsel at Abel; and so they ended the matter."

The Greek version hath more perplexed it. The Latin interpreter renders it thus: "They spake a word in former days, saying, Asking he was asked in Abel and in Dan, if those things have failed which the faithful of Israel laid up. Asking they will ask in Abel, and so if they have failed."

If any one can make any tolerable sense of these words, he would do well to teach others how to do it too; especially let them tell the reason why Dan should be added here. It is true Dan and Abel-beth-maacah are mentioned together as not very distant from one another, [1 Kings 15:20](#): and if we do by the words understand their neighbourhood to one another, I see nothing else that can be picked out of them.

However, both the Roman and Alexandrian editions agree in this reading, which have the preference of all other editions of the Greek version. And let them now, who are for correcting the Hebrew Bibles by the Greek, say, whether they are for having them corrected here; only let them give me leave to enjoy the Hebrew text as we now have it.

The Hebrew makes the sense plain, if the first words be but rightly applied, namely, to Sheba and his party speaking; "When Sheba and his followers came hither, they at first certainly said thus, That they would ask Abel of its peace, or on whose side it was, *and so they made the matter entire*," or made a show of their own integrity. For that that Joab was chiefly to be satisfied in, was, that this city had not taken part with the conspirators; which is directly done, if we admit this sense and interpretation of the words. This prudent woman assures him, that "those of Abel had by no means invited Sheba and his fellow-rebels into their town, or by any consent with them in their rebellions, would ever willingly have admitted them; but that they were miserably deceived by their fawning and false words, while they only pretended to inquire about the peace and well-being of that city: and that you may know more effectually that all this is true which I now affirm to you, we will immediately throw you the head of Sheba over our wall."

Chapter 2: Sarepta Zarephath, Obadiah verse 20, where.

Sarepta, in the story of Elijah, [1 Kings 17](#), is written in Hebrew *Tzarephath*, and with the same letters in Obadiah verse 20: and therefore it may be reasonably inquired, whether it be one and the same place. Indeed, there would hardly be any doubt in it, but that the Jews ordinarily by *Tzarephath* understand *France*; and by *Sepharad*, which by the prophet is used in the very same verse, *Spain*. The words of the prophet are very variously rendered; and yet in all that variety, nothing hinders but that Zarephath there may be understood of the Zarephath mentioned in the Kings. For whether the passage concern the captivity's being detained in Zarephath, or the captivity's possessing the land to Zarephath (for in that variety

chiefly the words are expounded), in either sense it may well enough be, that the 'Sarepta that belongs to Zidon' may be the scene of the affair. As to the former, if we compare but that passage concerning Tyre, the sister of Sidon, [Amos 1:9](#), and withal the potency and dominion of the Sidonians, it may not be improbable but that the Israelites might be captived in Sarepta of Sidon. And as to the latter, whereas in the verse immediately before, the discourse is of the possession of the mount of Esau, of the fields of Ephraim, Samaria, and Gilead, and then there is mention of possessing the land of Canaan as far as Zarephath, who would seek Zarephath in France, and not in some neighbouring place, according to all the rest of the places there named, which were all very near? Let me add moreover, that whereas there is mention of possessing the land of the Canaanites "even unto Zarephath," the Greek interpreters will tell you who those Canaanites were that are distinguished from the rest of the nations in the land of Canaan; viz. the Phoenicians, [Joshua 5:1](#). And by the 'kings of the Hittites,' mentioned [1 Kings 10:29](#) and [2 Kings 7:6](#), I would likewise suppose the *Phoenician kings*.

Sepharad, where.

The Italian interpreter for Sepharad retains Zarphath...

The Greek hath *Ephratha*, with which the Arabian interpreter agrees. But the Syriac with the Targumist, *Spain*. The Vulgar, *Bosphorus*, confusedly. And yet Nobilius hath this passage: "St. Jerome tells us, the other interpreters agreed with the Hebrew word Sepharad, which he rendered Bosphorus." If he means that all agreed in acknowledging the word Sepharad, he tells us no news; but who agreed with his word Bosphorus?

I must confess, Sepharad is not a place so obvious as Zarephath, nor can any thing be offered in it but conjecture only: and if I might be allowed my guess, I would look for Sepharad in Edom rather than in Spain: and that because Obadiah prophesies against the Edomites properly so called. Whereas, therefore, he tells us, That the captivity of Israel, in Sarepta of the Phoenicians, shall possess the land of the Canaanites, it is probable he means, by the captivity in Sepharad, those captives in Edom who shall possess the cities of the south. The Zarphathani, or Sareptani were of the north, the Sepharadani of the south, amongst the *Erembi*. "Whom you may rightly call the Troglodyte Arabs," saith Strabo; that is, probably, the Horims in mount Seir; for I suspect Horim, by ill use, might form itself into *Eremb*.

If we consider that the Jews do generally by Edom understand the Roman empire, and indeed all the Christian nations in the west, we shall easily perceive why they fix these places, Zarephath and Sepharad, so far from Palestine. For Obadiah prophesying against the Edomites, properly so called, the Jews change the scene and persons according to the vulgar construction of Edom, which they had received amongst themselves.

The situation of Sarepta.

Pliny: "From Tyre is Sarepta and Ornithon, certain towns so called: Sidon where glass is made, and from whence sprang the Boeotian Thebes."

Borchard: "About three very short leagues from Tyre, the river Eleutherus runs into the sea: about two leagues from that river is Sarepta: about two leagues from Sarepta is Sidon. Sarepta, at this time, doth not consist of above eight houses, though the ruins do still say it was once a brave town."

Some would have Zarephath signify as much as *a place of melting*; from boiling and melting metals, but especially glass.

"Between Acon and Tyre there is a shore all spread over with little hillocks of sand; *that bears a glassy sand*: the glass indeed is not cast here, but being carried to Sidon, there it is made fusile," &c.

Chapter 3: Nain, [Luke 7:11](#) Concerning Nain near Tabor, shewn to strangers.

In the Alexandrian copy *Ijon* is *Nain*, [1 Kings 15:20](#): in the Roman it is *Ain*. So Hazar-enan, [Numbers 34:9](#), in the Roman copy is *Arsenain*; in the Alexandrian, *Asernain*. Neither of them agrees with our Nain: for it is very absurd to conceive that our Saviour ever was at Hazar-enan, the utmost borders of the land towards Syria; nor can we suppose him in Ijon, that seeming to be according to the order of the places as they are ranked in the text above quoted, either beyond Dan, or in the extremest borders of the land on that side.

As to our Nain, Borchard saith thus; "Two leagues from Nazareth, not much above one from mount Tabor southward, is mount Hermon the less, on the north side of which is the city Nain; at whose gates Jesus recovered a widow's son from death, as we read [Luke 7](#)." So also Breidenbach: so some tables as to the situation of Hermon and Tabor, near the situation of Nain near Hermon.

I am well enough satisfied that they should place Nain in the tribe of Issachar, if there be no mistake among them as to mount Tabor. For whereas Tabor is indeed the very utmost border of Issachar northward, [Joshua 19:22](#), it must needs be that what is beyond that southward, a league or two, should be reckoned within that tribe. But I much suspect the Tabor mentioned by them, and that which is now shewn to travellers, is not the true Tabor: nor do I much question but that Hermon, of which they talk, is made out of a mistake and misconstruction of [Psalm 89:12](#), "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name." My scruple as to mount Tabor ariseth hence; because that Tabor, which is shewn to strangers, as our countryman Biddulph, and another acquaintance of mine own, who were on the top of it, do describe it, does not at all agree with the description Josephus gives us of the true mount

Tabor. Our countryman tells us, "It is a hill not very steep, nor very high, nor very large; but a round beautiful hill," &c. On the contrary, "Mount Tabor is in height thirty furlongs, very difficult of ascent on the north side; the top is a great plain of about six-and-twenty furlongs."

The Persian interpreter, instead of *Nain*, hath *Nabelis*, that is, Neapolis, which is also Sychem: but for what reason, I know not. Nor do I suppose that it was conceived by any one expositor, that the widow's son, whom Christ raised from death, was a Samaritan; he was indeed upon the borders of Samaria, but a great distance from Sychar.

Concerning the Nain or Naim in Josephus and the Rabbins.

The Darshanim [*expositors*] upon Bereshith Rabba speak of a certain place called *Naim*, upon this occasion: "Issachar is a bony [or strong] ass, [Genesis 49:14](#). It is spoken of Issachar's country; for as an ass is low before and behind, and high in the middle, so is it in the tribe of Issachar; it is a valley here and a valley there, and hilly elsewhere; it couches between two borders. These are the two valleys, *the valley of Pislán*, and the valley of Jezreel. And he saw that rest was good, *this is Tinaam*: and the land that it was pleasant, *this is Naim*."

We have here, by the way, a taste of those allegorical and far-fetched ways of expounding the Scriptures, wherein these egregious commentators do so much please and value themselves. However, we are thus far beholding to them, that they have given us to understand that there was a Nain in the tribe of Issachar, called so from the *pleasantness* of its situation (as indeed *Tinaam* bears the same derivation), which we have some reason to judge was the same Nain with ours in the evangelist, and that in Josephus.

"It was usual for the Galileans, coming up to the holy city to the feasts, to take their journey through the Samaritans country, And then their way lay through a town called Nais." I confess the Greek expressions are something perplexed; but it is no great matter. "It happened that some of the Samaritans and inhabitants of the great plain fought with them, and killed a great number."

You may think he repeats the very same story, though differing in some circumstances. "There was another fight betwixt the Galileans and Samaritans; For hard by a town called Gema, situated in the great plain of Samaria, multitudes of Jews going up to the feast, there was a certain Galilean slain."

It is not much worth our examining whether this be one and the same story with the other, or whether this Gema be the same town with Nain: but this we may gather hence, that Nain was in the extreme borders of Issachar, touching upon the Samaritan country, and Gema in the extreme borders of Samaria that were next adjoining to Issachar. And when the Galileans went down from Nain, a town in Issachar, into the great plain of Samaria, the first town in their way is Gema, there the enemy meets and fights them: if at least Gema and Nain be not one and the same place.

Engannim

There is a great inclination in me to believe that Naim is the same with Engannim, mentioned [Joshua 19:21, 21:29](#). For, 1. Both of them were within the tribe of Issachar; Engannim, as the Holy Scriptures, and Naim, as the Jewish doctors tell us; and why we should not take their word in such a thing as this, I know no reason. 2. Both of them signify *pleasantness*: Naim, in the very etymon, implies *pleasantness*: and Engannim, *a fountain of gardens*. 3. The Engannim, mentioned [Joshua 21:29](#), in [1 Chronicles 6:73](#), is *Anem*. Now if you transpose the letters, it will be *Naim*. 4. Let me add that Engannim (if there be any credit to those guides that commonly shew these places to travellers) lies directly in the way going from Galilee to Jerusalem; and so, as is very evident, was our Naim. Of this place, thus our countryman Biddulph: "a town, commonly called Jenine, of old Engannim: exceedingly pleasant, abounding with waters and gardens, and delightsome walks."

Why the Seventy should render *Engannim* by *a fountain of letters*, [Joshua 21:29](#), let those that are more learned, search out. It is true, the children of Issachar are celebrated for their skill in computing the times, 1 Chronicle 12:32; where the Targumist, "They were skilled in calculating the beginnings of the years, the calends of the months, and the intercalation both of years and months; *sophists* [skillful] *in new moons*, *astrologers* [conversant] *about planets and stars*," &c.

If we would include the Levites, that dwelt amongst the tribe of Issachar, under the general name of Issachar, then might Engannim, being a Levitical city, be an academy for that kind of mathematical learning; but in both we are very uncertain. Nor is it less obscure, that the same Greek interpreter hath, instead of Remeth, Engannim, Enhaddah, and Bethpazes, rendered, "*Remmas*, and *Jeon*, and *Tomman*, and *Aemarec*, and *Bersaphes*," [Joshua 19:21](#).

Chapter 4: Emmaus, [Luke 24](#). Several things about its name and place.

We have spoken something already concerning Emmaus in our [Chorographical Century](#), chapter 45; let us add some few things in this place.

I. It was distant from Jerusalem, as appears both from our evangelist and Josephus, about threescore furlongs. By account of common furlongs, seven miles and a half, eight of the Jewish. What copy, therefore, of Josephus must the learned Beza have by him, who thus speaks upon the place? "Sixty; so the Syriac hath it, and indeed all copies: so that here is either a mistake in the number, or else it is ill written in Josephus, thirty furlongs." Our Josephus plainly hath it, "A town called Emmaus, distant from Jerusalem threescore furlongs"...

III. Josephus commonly renders Chammath of Tiberias (a place so called from the hot baths) by *Ammaus*; but whether our Emmaus ought to have this derivation, is a question. There were, indeed, at Emmaus, noted waters; but we can hardly suppose they were warm, if we consider but the usual writing of the word amongst the Talmudists.

"Rabban Jochanan Ben Zacchai had five disciples, who, while he lived, sat always with him; but when he died, they retired to Jabneh. But R. Eliezer Ben Erech betook himself to his wife *at Emmaus, a place of pleasant waters and pleasant dwelling.*" There is something in this little story that might not be unworthy our inquiry, as to the scholastical history of the Jews; viz. where Rabban Jochanan should make his abode, if not in Jabneh? for that is the place they commonly allot to him; but this is not a place to dispute of such matters.

"They came to Nicopolis: now Nicopolis is a city in Palestine. This the book of the gospel calls Emmaus, while it was yet a village. There, through the plenty of good waters, and all necessary provisions, they enjoyed a good comfortable night."

This author, upon this occasion, quotes some passages out of Sozomen, in the sixth book of the Tripartite History, which are in his fifth book, chapter 20; wherein the waters at Emmaus are celebrated not only for their plenty and pleasantness, but as they were wonderfully wholesome and medicinal. For thus he: "There is a city in Palestine, which now hath the name of Nicopolis, of which the holy gospel makes mention as of a village (for then it was so), *and calls it Emma.* The Romans, having sacked Jerusalem, and gained an entire victory over the Jews, from the event of that war, gave this town the name of Nicopolis. Before the city near the road (where our Saviour, after he had arisen from the dead, walking with Cleophas, made as if he was hastening to another town), there is a certain medicinal spring, wherein not only men that are sick, being washed, are cured, but other sort of animals also, of whatsoever diseases they are afflicted with. The report is, that Christ, as he was once going that way with his disciples, turned aside to that fountain; and having washed his feet in it, the waters have ever since retained a healing quality and virtue in them."

We leave the credit of the story to the relater of it: only one thing we may observe from the hint he gives us, that it is no wonder if, in the evangelist's time, Emmaus was but a little village, when as, not long before it, it had been burnt and destroyed by Varus. Nor is it more strange, that its ancient name Emmaus should change into Nicopolis, when the place itself became a Roman colony.

Its situation.

Ptolemy tells us something of its situation by its degrees, saying, "Emmaus, 65. 45. 31. 45."

As to the vicinage of countries or places adjacent, thus the Jerusalem Talmud: "*From Beth-horon to Emmaus it is hilly. From Emmaus to Lydda it is champaign; and from Lydda to the sea is valley.*"

If you would hear Ptolemy more largely, thus he writes: Jamnia 65. 40. 31. 0.; Lydda 66. 0. 32. 0.; Antipatris 66. 20. 32. 0.; Emmaus 65. 45. 31. 45.; Jerusalem 66. 0. 31. 40.

Although this account of the distance betwixt Jerusalem and Emmaus doth not very well agree with what our evangelist and Josephus have said, yet may we learn from the places named along with it, in what quarter of the heaven it was situated. To all which we may add that of Josephus, *Antiq. lib. xii. cap. 11.* and [1 Maccabees 4](#): Judas Maccabeus engages with Gorgias near Emmaus: the Gorgians fly, and the Maccabeans pursue "as far as Gadaron (Gezer) to the plains of Idumea, Azotus, and Jamnia."

I therefore recite this passage, that it may appear that Emmaus lay towards Galilee, although from Jerusalem it inclined also westward. For whereas, concerning the latitude of Galilee extending itself from west to east, there must of necessity be several roads from Jerusalem to this or that part of it; so this through Emmaus was one, through Beth-horon another, through Antipatris a third; if, at least, this last did not fall in with that of Emmaus. That passage in *Gul. Tyrius* makes me think it might; who, describing the encampings and journeyings of the crusade army, tells us, "Leaving the maritime towns, Antipatris and Joppa on the right, they passed through Eleutheria, and came to Lydda, which is Diospolis." And *cap. 24*, "From whence, taking guides along with them, persons well skilled in those places, they came to Nicopolis": which is the same with Emmaus.

From all which we may reasonably presume that the two disciples were going to Emmaus, not as to the utmost limit of their journey, but as that lay in their way towards Galilee.

Some story of it. Also of Timnath and mount Gilead, [Judges 7:3](#).

To what tribe Emmaus belonged would be something hard to determine, because of the situation of Beth-horon, which was in Ephraim, [Joshua 16](#); but that the Talmudists do clearly enough say, it was not in the Samaritan country.

"They were servants of the priests, saith R. Meir. But R. Jose saith. They were of the family of Beth Pegarim, and Beth Zippory, in Emmaus, who had placed their daughters in marriage with the priests."

The discourse is about the musicians in the Temple; and the dispute is, whether they were Levites or Israelites, particularly natives of Emmaus, the natives of those two families, who, for their purity, were thought worthy to be taken into the affinity and blood of the priests themselves. And this passage, indeed, puts it out of all question, that Emmaus was not within the tribe of Ephraim; because it would be ridiculous to suppose that either Samaritan women should be joined in marriage with the priests, or that Samaritan men

should be permitted to play on the instruments in the Temple. Emmaus, therefore, must be placed in the tribe of Benjamin, which what it was called before is not easy to guess.

I conceive there is mention made of this place in Siphra: "R. Akibah said; I asked Rabban Gamaliel and R. Joshua *in the shambles of Emmaus*, when they went to receive the beast to make a feast for their son," &c. Now Rabban Gamaliel and R. Joshua were both of Jabneh; so that, by considering the situation of Jabneh, we may more confidently believe that they were in the Emmaus we are speaking of. We have the same passage in Maccoth, fol. 14. 1.

It was one of the larger cities: for so Josephus speaks of it; "Cassius disfranchized four cities, the greatest of which was Gophna and Emmaus; and next to these was Lydda and Thamna."

Under the disposition of the duke of Palestine amongst the rest, was "Ala Antala of the dromedaries of Admatha"; where Pancirole notes, that Admatha in St. Jerome, in his Hebrew Places, is called 'Ammata.' This, by the agreeableness of sound, may seem to be our Emmaus; unless, more probably, at this time it bore the name of Nicopolis.

When I take notice that *Chammath* or the 'Baths of Tiberias,' and Emmaus was much celebrated for famous waters; I cannot forget the 'waters of Nephtoah,' or the 'Fountain of Etam,' from whence water was conveyed by pipes into the Temple. This was in the same quarter from Jerusalem with our Emmaus: so that our Emmaus may as well be derived from *Ammath*, a channel of waters, as well as the other from *Chammath*, the warm baths. But this I leave to the reader's judgment.

In memory of this place, let us record a story out of Sigever's Chronicle, in the reigns of Theodosius and Valentinianus: "At this time, in a garrison in Judea called Emmaus, there was a perfect child born. From the navel upward he was divided, so that he had two breasts and two heads, either of which had their proper senses belonging to them: the one ate when the other did not, the one slept when the other was awake. Sometime they slept both together; they played one with another; they both wept, and would strike one another. They lived near two years; and after one had died the other survived about four days."

If this two-headed child was the issue of a Jew, then might that question be solved which is propounded, *If any one should have two heads, on which of the foreheads should the phylacteries be bound?* No mean scruple indeed. But let us have from the Glossator as considerable a story: "Asmodeus produced, from under the pavement before Solomon, a man with two heads. He marries a wife, and begot children like himself, with two heads, and like his wife, with one. When the patrimony comes to be divided, he that had two heads requires a double portion: and the cause was brought before Solomon to be decided by him."

As to that Thamna, or Timnath, which Josephus, in the place above quoted, makes mention of, it is disputed in Sotah, fol. 17. 1; where "Rabh asserts that there were two Timnaths, one in Judea, and the other that of Samson." We all know of a third of that name, Joshua's Timnath, viz. Timnath-serah in mount Ephraim, where Joshua was buried, [Joshua](#)

24:30. Here give the Rabbins a little play, and let them trifle by transposing the names of *Serah* and *Cheres*, and from thence ground a fiction, that the image of the sun was fixed upon the sepulchre of Joshua, in remembrance of the sun's miraculous standing still by his word. This is like them. Nor, indeed, is that of a much better mould, which the Seventy add, "There they put into the monument with him the stone-knives, with which he circumcised the children of Israel in Gilgal, when he brought them out of Egypt, as the Lord had commanded them." Were these, think you, in the Hebrew text once, and have they slipped out since? Do they not rather savour of the Samaritan Gloss, or the Jewish tradition?

They recede from the Hebrew text in the same story, but something more tolerably, when they render "on the north side of the hill Gaash," "from the north side of the hill Galaad": where, as far as I am able to judge, they do not paraphrase ill, though they do not render it to the letter. Let us consider that obscure passage which hath so much vexed interpreters, in [Judges 7:3](#); "Proclaim now in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, *let him return and depart early from mount Gilead.*" The place where this thing was acted was either in or very near the vale of Jezreel, distant from mount Gilead beyond Jordan, twenty or thirty miles; and therefore how could these Gideonites depart from mount Gilead? I am not ignorant what some do allege towards the untying this knot, viz. that it should be taken thus, "Whoever be of mount Gilead, let them return." The Targumist to this sense; "Whosoever is fearful, let him return, *and let choice be made out of mount Gilead*; i.e. 'Let the Gileadites be chosen.'" But whether his meaning was that the Gileadites should be chosen to remain because they are not afraid, or be chosen to return because they were; I shall not reckon it worth the while to inquire.

But may not mount Gilead in this place be understood of the hill Gaash? It is certain the situation agrees well enough; and perhaps there is no great difference in the name.

Whence that mount Gilead beyond Jordan first had its name, is not unknown; namely, from that *heap of stones*, set up by Jacob for a witness of the covenant betwixt him and Laban ([Gen 31](#)).

We read of something not unlike it set up by Joshua near Shechem, in testimony of the covenant betwixt the people and God, [Joshua 24:26](#). Now, therefore, who can doubt but that Joshua was buried near Shechem? For when that place was particularly bequeathed and set out by Jacob for his son Joseph, who, of the whole stock and lineage of Joseph, could justlier inherit that part of the country than Joshua?

He was buried on the north side of the hill Gaash, in his own ground. Might not that hill be also called Gilead, upon the account of that pillar of witness that was built there a little from Sychem? whence the foot of the hill, and the hill itself beginning to rise (if it were northward, which we suppose), then it might very well reach not far from that place where this matter of Gideon was transacted. For, whereas the field wherein the battle was, was within the tribe of Manasseh, contiguous to mount Ephraim, and Gideon proclaims that

whosoever were afraid should depart from mount Gilead; we can, perhaps, think of no more proper sense wherein this mount Gilead can be taken, than that that part of mount Ephraim was so called from the pillar of testimony placed on the south side of it, when the common name for it was the hill Gaash.

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica

John Lightfoot
(1602-1675)

To the Right Honourable
Sir Orlando Bridegeman;
Knight and Baronet;
Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England,
And
One of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy-Council.

My Lord,

Let me bespeak you in the words of Orosius to St. Austin: "I have obeyed your commands (my most honoured lord); I wish I could say, to as much purpose as I have done it willingly: but I satisfy myself with the bare testimony of my obedience, wherein my will and endeavour is at least seen."

Such is your lordship's value for the Holy Scriptures, such hath been your care to promote and encourage the explication of them for the benefit of others, that you have not disdained my poor endeavours of this kind; animating me to a progress in what I have begun, not only with bare entreaties, but with the additions of your lordship's counsel, assistance, patronage, and bounty.

I should be the most stupid amongst men, if such kind and benign encouragements should not inflame me to attempt something, wherein at least I may give your lordship some specimen, not only of my obedience, but gratitude.

I confess myself, by I know not what kind of genius, warmly carried out towards these kind of studies, than which nothing can to me be more delightful and satisfactory. But when it pleases your lordship both to add such sails to my little vessel, and also fill those sails with such gales of your favour, I still the more pleasingly engage myself, having not only the conscience of my own duty, but an ambition of serving your lordship, and approving myself grateful to quicken me to it.

Under your lordship's wings, do these worthless labours of mine adventure abroad; alas! how much below your patronage, short of your worth, and indeed of my own undertaking; the thin and slender product of a plentiful watering, aiming at great things but trifling in the performance.

I took, I confess, a high flight, when I attempted the explication of this evangelist; but how weak and languid I have proved, (besides that the thing itself speaks sufficiently,) there shall be none readier to accuse, than I to condemn myself. Let then the reader spare his censure, for I will load myself with a shameful acknowledgment, that I have adventured in

things too high for me: and when he sees this, perhaps he will forgive me undertaking so difficult a task, wherein my design hath been only to be useful: nay, perhaps pity me if I cannot indeed attain at what I would. But if he will neither forgive nor pity, but still carp and censure me, let him make the experiment upon this evangelist himself; and see if he also may not step as short as I have done.

My lord, I have this comfort however, that I have not been idle: I had rather puzzle myself with hard and knotty inquiries, than wear out my time in either doing nothing or trivially. Nor can I reproach myself that I have made this research into this sacred volume through unwarrantable curiosity, but out of humble sincere zeal of mind, both to learn what I can myself, and teach others; offering, I hope, nothing that is noxious, and sometimes that that may profit.

But, my lord, that which is my principal encouragement is, the patronage and candour of so great a man, who I cannot but hope will accept this small trifling *gift* with a gentle and easy aspect, from the frequent experiment I have already made. But I must recall that rash word *gift*, when all that I can offer to your lordship is absolute debt: and alas! how poor a paymaster does your lordship find of me! A few sorry scribblings for great and substantial kindnesses not to be reckoned up. Yet such they are, that bring along with them all the returns of thanks that I am able to make. And since I have nothing else, may the great God of heaven, of his infinite goodness and bounty, reward you with all manner of felicity, temporal and eternal: which he from his heart wishes and makes it his daily prayer, who is,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's most humble,
most obliged, and faithful servant,
John Lightfoot

1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

[*In the beginning was the Word.*] *In the beginning*; in the same sense with *Bereshith*, *In the beginning*, in the history of the creation, [Genesis 1:1](#). For the evangelist proposeth this to himself, viz. to shew how that, by the *Word*, by which the creation was perfected, the redemption was perfected also: That the second person in the holy Trinity, in the fulness of time, became our Redeemer, as in the beginning of time he had been our Maker. Compare this with verse 14:

Verse 1

In the beginning was the Word.

Was with God.

The Word was God.

Verse 14

The Word was made flesh.

Dwelt among us.

Was made flesh, and we beheld, &c.

[*Was the Word.*] There is no great necessity for us to make any very curious inquiry, whence our evangelist should borrow this title, when in the history of the creation we find it so often repeated, *And God said*. It is observed almost by all that have of late undertaken a commentary upon this evangelist, that *the Word of the Lord*, doth very frequently occur amongst the Targumists, which may something enlighten the matter now before us. "And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet the *Word of the Lord*." "*And the Word of the Lord accepted the face of Job.*" *And the Word of the Lord shall laugh them to scorn.*" "They believed in the name of his *Word.*" *And my Word spared them.* To add no more, [Genesis 26:3](#), instead of "I will be with thee," the Targum hath it *And my Word shall be thine help*. So [Genesis 39:2](#), "And the Lord was with Joseph": Targ. *And the Word of the Lord was Joseph's helper*. And so, all along, that kind of phrase is most familiar amongst them...

4. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

[*In him was life.*] The evangelist proceeds from the creation by *the Word*, to the redemption of the world by the same *Word*. He had declared how this *Word* had given to all creatures their first being, verse 3; "All things were made by him": and he now sheweth how he restored life to man when he lay dead in trespasses and sins. "Adam called his wife's name *Hevah*, *life*," [Eve, AV *Chavah*, margin] [Genesis 3:20](#): the Greek reads *Adam called his wife's name, 'Life.'* He called her *Life* who had brought in *death*; because he had now tasted a better life in the promise of the woman's seed. To which it is very probable our evangelist had some reference in this place.

[*And the life was the light of men.*] *Life* through Christ was *light* arising in the darkness of man's fall and sin; a *light* by which all believers were to walk. St. John seems in this clause

to oppose the *life* and *light* exhibited in the gospel, to that *life* and *light* which the Jews boasted of in their law. They expected *life* from the works of the law, and they knew no greater *light* than that of the law; which therefore they extol with infinite boasts and praises which they give it. Take one instance for all: "God said, Let there be *light*. R. Simeon saith, *Light* is written there five times, according to the five parts of the law [i.e. the Pentateuch], and God said, Let there be *light*; according to the book of Genesis, wherein God, busying himself, made the world. And there was *light*; according to the book of Exodus, wherein the Israelites came out of darkness into *light*. And God saw the *light* that it was good; according to the Book of Leviticus, which is filled with rites and ceremonies. And God divided betwixt the *light* and the darkness; according to the Book of Numbers, which divided betwixt those that went out of Egypt, and those that entered into the land. And God called the *light*, day; according to the Book of Deuteronomy, which is replenished with manifold traditions." A gloss this is upon *light*, full of darkness indeed!

5. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

[*And the light shineth in darkness.*] This *light* of promise and life by Christ *shined in the darkness* of all the cloudy types and shadows under the law and obscurity of the prophets. And those dark things 'comprehended it not,' i.e. did not so cloud and suppress it but it would break out; nor yet so comprehended it, but that there was an absolute necessity there should a greater light appear. I do so much the rather incline to such a paraphrase upon this place, because I observe the evangelist here treateth of the ways and means by which Christ made himself known to the world before his great manifestation in the flesh; first, in the promise of life, verse 4; next, by types and prophecies; and lastly, by John Baptist.

9. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

[*Which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*] *All the men that are in the world.* "Doth not the sun rise upon all that come into the world?" "All that come into the world are not able to make one fly." "In the beginning of the year, all that come into the world present themselves before the Lord." There are numberless examples of this kind. The sense of the place is, that Christ, shining forth in the light of the gospel, is a light that *lightens all the world*. The light of the law shone only upon the Jews; but this light spreads wider, even over the face of the whole earth.

12. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

[*He gave them power.*] *He empowered them*, so [Ecclesiastes 5:19](#), and 6:2. He gave them *the privilege, the liberty, the dignity*, of being called and becoming the sons of God. Israel was once the son and the first-born, [Exodus 4:22](#): but now the adoption of sons to God was open and free to all nations whatever.

13. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

[*Which were born, not of blood.*] It may be a question here, whether the evangelist in this place opposeth regeneration to natural generation, or only to those ways by which the Jews fancied men were made the sons of God. Expositors treat largely of the former: let us a little consider the latter.

I. *Not of bloods.* Observe the plural number: "Our Rabbins say, That all Israel had thrown off circumcision in Egypt--but at length they were circumcised, *and the blood of the passover was mingled with the blood of the circumcised*, and God accepted every one of them and kissed them." "I said, *while thou wert in thy bloods, Live:* i.e. in the twofold blood, that of the passover, and that of the circumcision." The Israelites were brought into covenant by three things; by circumcision, by washing, and by offering of sacrifices. In the same manner, a heathen, if he would be admitted into covenant, he must of necessity be circumcised, baptized, and offer sacrifice. We see how *of bloods* of the passover and circumcision, they say the Israelites were recovered from the degeneracy: and how *of the bloods* of circumcision and sacrifices (with the addition only of washing), they supposed the Gentiles might become the sons of God, being by their proselytism made Israelites, and the children of the covenant: for they knew of no other adoption or sonship.

II. *Of the will of the flesh.* In the same sense wherein the patriarchs and other Jews were ambitious by many wives to multiply children of themselves, as being of the seed of Israel and children of the covenant.

III. *Of the will of man,* in that sense wherein they coveted so many proselytes, to admit them into the religion of the Jews, and so into covenant and sonship with God.

These were the ways by which the Jews thought any became the sons of God, that is, by being made Israelites. But it is far otherwise in the adoption and sonship that accrues to us by the gospel.

14. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.

[*The glory as of the only begotten.*] This *glory* in this place imports the same thing as *worthy*. We saw his glory as what was *worthy* or became the only-begotten Son of God. He did not glister in any worldly pomp or grandeur according to what the Jewish nation fondly dreamed their Messiah would do; but he was decked with the glory, holiness, grace, truth, and the power of miracles.

16. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

[*And grace for grace.*] He appeared amongst us *full of grace and truth*; and all we who conversed with him, and saw his glory, "of his fulness did receive" *grace* and truth. Nay

farther, we received *grace* towards the propagation of *grace*, i.e. the *grace* of apostleship, that we might dispense and propagate the *grace* of the gospel towards others.

21. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

[*Art thou that prophet?*] That is, [Luke 9:8,19](#), *one of the old prophets that was risen again.*

I. The Masters of Traditions were wont to say that "the spirit of prophecy departed from Israel after the death of Zechariah and Malachi." So that we do not find they expected any prophet till the days of the Messiah; nor indeed that any, in that interim of time, did pretend to that character.

II. They believed that at the coming of the Messiah the prophets were to rise again.

"Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice, with the voice together shall they sing,' [Isaiah 52:8](#). R. Chaia Bar Abba and R. Jochanan say, All the prophets shall put forth a song with one voice."

"All the just whom God shall raise from the dead shall not return again into the dust." Gloss, "Those whom he shall raise in the days of the Messiah."

To this resurrection of the saints they apply that of [Micah 5:5](#): "We shall raise against him seven shepherds; David in the middle, Adam, Seth, Methuselah on his right hand; Abraham, Jacob, and Moses on his left. And eight principal men: but who are these? Jesse, Saul, Samuel, Amos, Zephaniah, Zedekiah [or rather Hezekiah, as Kimch. in loc.], Messiah and Elijah. But indeed [saith R. Solomon] I do not well know whence they had these things." Nor indeed do I.

The Greek interpreters, instead of *eight principal men have eight bitings of men*, a very foreign sense.

Hence by how much nearer still the 'kingdom of heaven,' or the expected time of Messiah's coming, drew on, by so much the more did they dream of the resurrection of the prophets. And when any person of more remarkable gravity, piety, and holiness appeared amongst them, they were ready to conceive of him as a prophet raised from the dead, [Matthew 16:14](#). That therefore is the meaning of this question, "Art thou one of the prophets raised from the dead?"

25. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

[*Why then baptizest thou?*] The Jews likewise expected that the world should be renewed at the coming of the Messiah. "In those years wherein God will renew his world." Aruch, quoting these words, adds, "In those thousand years." So also the Gloss upon the place.

Amongst other things, they expected the purifying of the unclean. R. Solomon upon [Ezekiel 36:26](#); "I will expiate you, and remove your uncleanness, by the sprinkling of the water of purification." Kimchi upon [Zechariah 9:6](#); "The Rabbins of blessed memory have

a tradition that Elias will purify the bastards and restore them to the congregation." You have the like in *Kiddushin*, *Elias comes to distinguish the unclean and purify them*, &c.

When therefore they saw the Baptist bring in such an unusual rite, by which he admitted the Israelites into a new rule of religion, they ask him by what authority he doth these things if he himself were not either the Messiah or Elias, or one of the prophets raised from the dead.

It is very well known that they expected the coming of Elias, and that, from the words of [Malachi 4:5](#), not rightly understood. Which mistake the Greek version seems to patronise; *I will send you Elias the Tishbite*; which word *the Tishbite*, they add of themselves in favour of their own tradition; which indeed is too frequent a usage in that version to look so far asquint towards the Jewish traditions as to do injury to the sacred text.

29. The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

[*The Lamb of God.*] St. John alludes plainly to *the lamb of the daily sacrifice*. Which in shadow took away the sins of Israel.

I. It was commanded in the law that he that offered the sacrifice should lay his hand upon the head of the sacrifice, [Leviticus 1:4](#), [3:2](#), [4:4](#), &c.

II. The reason of which usage was, that he might, as it were, transfer his sins and guilt upon the head of the offering, which is more especially evident in the scapegoat, [Leviticus 16:22](#).

Hence Christ is said "himself to have borne our sins in his own body on the tree," [1 Peter 2:24](#), as the offering upon the altar was wont to do. He was made by God a "sin for us," [2 Corinthians 5:21](#); that is, *a sacrifice for sin*.

III. The same rite was used about the lamb of the daily sacrifice that was offered for all Israel; "The stationary men [as they were called], or the substitutes of the people, laying their hands upon the head of the lamb."

To this therefore the words of the Baptist refer: "The lamb of God, that is, the daily sacrifice, taketh away the sins of the world, as the sacrifice did for all Israel. But behold here the true Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world."

38. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master), where dwellest thou?

[*Where dwellest thou?*] The proper and most immediate sense of this is, *Where dwellest*, or, *Where lodgest thou?* But I could willingly render it as if it had been said, 'Where dost thou keep thy sabbath?' and from thence conjecture that day was the evening of the sabbath. For whereas it is said, "and they abode with him that day," it would be a little hard to understand it of the day that was now almost gone; and therefore we may suppose it meant of the

following day, for it is added *it was now the tenth hour*. It was about the middle of our November when these things fell out in Bethabara, as will easily appear to any one that will be accurate in calculating the times, and that little that was left of that day was *then the tenth hour*. It was then about sunset, and, as it were, the entrance of a new day: so that it might more properly have been said, "They abode with him that *night*," rather than that *day*; only the evangelist seems to point out that they remained with him the next day; which that it was the sabbath I will not so much contend, as (not without some reason) suppose.

"Caesar, for two reasons, would not fight that day; partly because he had no soldiers in the ships, and partly *because it was after the tenth hour of the day*."

41. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

[*He findeth his brother.*] So "*Rab Nachman Bar Isaac found him with Rab Houna*": and many such-like expressions, in the Talmudic authors, as also *We have found!*

42. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

[*The son of Jona.*] I do not see any reason why the word *Joannes*, or *Joannas*, should be here put for *Jona*; or why any should contend (as many do) that it should be the same with *Joannas*.

I. In the third chapter of St. Luke the name of Jochanan is sounded three ways in the Greek pronunciation of it, *Janna*, verse 24; *Joanna*, verse 27; and *Jonan*, verse 30: but never *Jona*.

II. *Jona* was a name amongst the Jews very commonly used, and we meet with it frequently in the Talmudic authors written *Jonah*: why, therefore, should not Peter's father be allowed the name of *Jonah* as well as that of John?

III. Especially when this son of *Jonah* imitated the great prophet of that name in this, that both preached to the Gentiles, and both began their journey from Joppa.

[*Which is by interpretation, A stone.*] So [Acts 9:26](#), "*Tabitha*, which, being interpreted, is *Dorcas*": Beza, *Caprea*, a goat. But what! do the holy penmen of the Scriptures make lexicons, or play the schoolmasters, that they should only teach that the Syriac word *Cepha* signifies in the Greek language a stone; and *Tabitha*, *Dorcas*, that is, a goat? No; they rather teach what Greek proper names answer to those Syriac proper names: for the Syriac proper name is here rendered into the Greek proper name, and not an appellative into an appellative, nor a proper name into an appellative.

But let the Vulgar have what it desires, and be it so, "Thou shalt be called a rock"; yet you will scarce grant that our blessed Saviour should call Simon *a rock* in the direct and most ordinary sense; "There is no rock save our God," [2 Samuel 22:32](#): where the Greek in-

terpreters, instead of *a rock*, have *the Creator*. Which word St. Peter himself makes use of, [1 Peter 4:19](#), showing who is that *rock* indeed.

There is a *rock*, or 'stone of stumbling,' indeed, as well as a 'foundation-stone'; and this stone of stumbling hath St. Peter been made, to the fall of many thousands; not by any fault of his, but theirs, who, through ignorance or frowardness, or both, will esteem him as a *rock* upon which the church is built.

If, therefore, they will so pertinaciously adhere to that version, *Et tu vocaberis Petra*, let it be rendered into English thus, *Thou wilt be called a rock*: and let us apprehend our blessed Lord speaking prophetically, and foretelling that grand error that should spring up in the church, viz., *that Peter is a rock*, than which the Christian world hath not known any thing more sad and destructive.

46. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

[*Come and see.*] Nothing more common in the Talmudic authors than *Come and behold, come and see.*

47. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

[*An Israelite indeed.*] Compare it with [Isaiah 63:8](#). "I saw thee (saith Christ) when thou wert under the fig tree." What doing there? Doubtless not sleeping, or idling away his time, much less doing any ill thing. This would not have deserved so remarkable an encomium as Christ gave him. We may therefore suppose him, in that recess under the fig tree, as having sequestered himself from the view of men, either for prayer, meditation, reading, or some such religious performance; and so indeed from the view of men, that he must needs acknowledge Jesus for the Messiah for that very reason, that, when no mortal eye could see, he saw and knew that he was there. Our Saviour, therefore, calls him an "Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile," because he sought out that retirement to pray, so different from the usual craft and hypocrisy of that nation, that were wont to pray publicly, and in the streets, that they might be seen of men.

And here Christ gathered to himself five disciples, viz., Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathanael (who seems to be the same with Bartholomew), and another, whose name is not mentioned, verse 35, 40; whom, by comparing [John 21:2](#), we may conjecture to have been Thomas.

51. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

[*Verily, verily.*] If Christ doubled his affirmation, as we here find it, why is it not so doubled in the other evangelists? If he did not double it, why is it so here?

I. Perhaps the asseveration he useth in this place may not be to the same things and upon the same occasion to which he useth the single *Amen* in other evangelists.

II. Perhaps, also, St. John, being to write for the use of the Hellenists, might write the word in the same Hebrew letters wherein Christ used it, and in the same letters also wherein the Greeks used it, retaining still the same Hebrew idiom.

III. But, however, it may be observed, that, whereas by all others the word *Amen* was generally used in the latter end of a speech or sentence, our Lord only useth it in the beginning, as being himself the Amen, [Revelation 3:14](#); and [Isaiah 65:16](#), *the God of truth*.

So that that single *Amen* which he used in the other evangelists contained in it the germination, *Amen, Amen*. I, the *Amen*, the true and faithful witness, *Amen*, i.e. "of a truth do say unto you," &c. Nor did it become any mortal man to speak *Amen* in the beginning of a sentence in the same manner as our Saviour did. Indeed, the very Masters of Traditions, who seemed to be the oracles of that nation, were wont to say, *I speak in truth*; but not "*Amen*, I say unto you."

IV. *Amen* contains in it *Yea and Amen*; [2 Corinthians 1:20](#); [Revelation 1:7](#); i.e. *truth and stability*, [Isaiah 25:1](#). Interlin. *faithfulness and truth*. The other evangelists express the word which our Saviour useth: St. John doubles it, to intimate the full sense of it.

I have been at some question with myself, whether I should insert in this place the blasphemous things which the Talmudic authors belch out against the holy Jesus, in allusion (shall I say?) or derision of this word *Amen*, to which name he entitled himself, and by which asseveration he confirmed his doctrines. But that thou mightest, reader, both know, and with equal indignation abhor, the snarlings and virulency of these men, take it in their own words, although I cannot without infinite reluctancy allege what they with all audaciousness have uttered.

They have a tradition, that Imma Shalom, the wife of R. Eliezer, and her brother Rabban Gamaliel, went to *a certain philosopher* (the Gloss hath it 'a certain heretic') of very great note for his integrity in giving judgment in matters, and taking no bribes. The woman brings him a golden candlestick, and prayeth him that the inheritance might be divided in part to her. Rabban Gamaliel objects, "It is written amongst us, that the daughter shall not inherit instead of the son. But the philosopher answered, 'Since the time that you were removed from your land, the law of Moses was made void: *and Aven was given*' [he means the Gospel, but marks it with a scurrilous title]; and in that it is written, *The son and the daughter shall inherit together*. The next day Rabban Gamaliel brought him, *a Libyan ass*. Then saith he unto them, 'I have found at the end of *Aven* [i.e. the Gospel] that it is written there, *I, Aven*, came not to diminish, but to add to the law of Moses": where he abuseth both the name of our Saviour and his words too, [Matthew 5:17](#).

And now, after our just detestation of this execrable blasphemy, let us think what kind of judge this must be, to whose judgment Rabban Gamaliel, the president of the Sanhedrim,

and his sister, wife to the great Eliezer, should betake themselves. A Christian, as it should seem by the whole contexture of the story; but, alas! what kind of Christian, that should make so light of Christ and his gospel! However, were he a Christian of what kind soever, yet if there be any truth in this passage, it is not unworthy our taking notice of it, both as to the history of those times, and also as to that question, Whether there were any Christian judges at that time?

[*Ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God, &c.*] There are those that in this place observe an allusion to Jacob's ladder. The meaning of this passage seems to be no other than this: "Because I said, 'I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou?' Did this seem to thee a matter of such wonder? 'Thou shalt see greater things than these.' For you shall in me observe such plenty, both of revelation and miracle, that it shall seem to you as if the heavens were opened and the angels were ascending and descending, to bring with them all manner of revelation, authority, and power from God, to be imparted to the Son of man." Where this also is included, viz., that angels must in a more peculiar manner administer unto him, as in the vision of Jacob the whole host of angels had been showed and promised to him in the first setting out of his pilgrimage.

Of this ladder the Rabbins dream very pleasantly: "The ladder is the ascent of the altar and the altar itself. The angels are princes or monarchs. The king of Babylon ascended seventy steps; the king of the Medes fifty-and-two; the king of Greece one hundred and eighty; the king of Edom, it is uncertain how many," &c. They reckon the breadth of the ladder to have been about eight thousand parasangae, i.e. about two-and-thirty thousand miles; and that the bulk of each angel was about eight thousand English miles in compass. Admirable mathematicians these indeed!

Chapter 2

1. And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

[*And the third day there was a marriage, &c.*] A virgin marries on the fourth day of the week, and a widow on the fifth. "This custom came not in but from the decree of Ezra, and so onward: for the Sanhedrim doth not sit but on the second and the fifth days; but before the decree of Ezra, when the Sanhedrim assembled every day, then was it lawful to take a wife on any day." There is a twofold reason given for this restraint:

I. The virgin was to be married on the fourth day of the week because the assembly of the twenty-three met on the fifth: so that if the husband should find his wife to be no virgin, but already violated, he might have recourse to the consistory in the heat of his displeasure, and procure just punishment for her according to law. But why then might they not as well marry on the first day of the week, seeing the *Beth Din* met on the second as well as the fifth?

II. Lest the sabbath should be polluted by preparations for the nuptials: for the first, second, and third days of the week are allowed for those kind of preparations. And the reason why the widow was to be married on the fifth day was, that her husband might rejoice with her for three days together, viz. fifth, sixth, and the sabbath day.

If therefore our bride in this place was a virgin, then the nuptials were celebrated on the fourth day of the week, which is our Wednesday: if she was a widow, then she was married on the fifth day of the week, which is our Thursday. Let us therefore number our days according to our evangelist, and let it be but granted that that was the sabbath in which it is said, "They abode with him all that day," chapter 1, verse 39; then on the first day of the week Christ went into Galilee and met with Nathanael. So that the third day from thence is the fourth day of the week; but as to that, let every one reckon as he himself shall think fit.

[*A marriage.*] I. The virgin to be married cometh forth from her father's house to that of her husband, "in some veil, but with her hair dishevelled, or her head uncovered."

II. If any person meets her upon that day, he gives her the way; which once was done by king Agrippa himself.

III. They carry before her a cup of wine, which they were wont to call *the cup of Trumah*, which denoted that she, for her unspotted virginity, might have married a priest, and eaten of the Trumah.

IV. Skipping and dancing, they were wont to sing the praises of the bride. In Palestine they used these words "She needs no paint nor stibium, no plaiting of the hair, or any such thing; for she is of herself most beautiful."

V. They scattered some kind of grain or corn amongst the children; that they, if occasion should serve, might bear witness hereafter that they saw that woman a married virgin.

VI. They sprinkled also or sowed barley before them, by that ceremony denoting their fruitfulness. Whether these sports were used at the wedding where our Saviour was present, let others inquire.

VII. In *Sotah* there is mention of crowns which the bride and bridegroom wore; as also what fashion they were of, and of what materials they were made.

VIII. Because of the mirth that was expected at nuptial solemnities, they forbade all weddings celebrating within the feasts of the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, "because there were great rejoicings at nuptials, and they must not intermingle one joy with another"; that is, the joy of nuptials with the joy of a festival.

IX. The nuptial festivity was continued for the whole seven days; which we also see of old, [Judges 19:12](#).

[*And the mother of Jesus was there.*] *The mother of Jesus was there*, not invited (as it should seem) with Christ and his disciples, but had been there before the invitation made to them.

You may conceive who were the usual nuptial guests by those words of Maimonides: "*The bridegroom and his companions, the children of the bridechamber*, are not bound to make a tabernacle."

I. In a more general sense, denotes a *friend* or *companion*, as in the Targum, [Judges 14:2](#); [2 Samuel 13:3](#): but it is more particularly applied to those friends that are the *nuptial guests*.

II. But in a most strict sense to those two mentioned *Chetubb*. fol. 12. 1: "Of old they appointed two *Shoshbenin*, one for the bridegroom, the other for the bride, that they should minister to them especially at their entry into the bridal chamber." They were especially instituted for this end, that they should take care and provide that there should be no fraud nor deceit as to the tokens of the bride's virginity. So Gloss upon the place. The Rabbins very ridiculously (as they almost always do) tell a trifling story, that Michael and Gabriel were the two *Shoshbenin* at Adam and Eve's wedding.

III. But as to the signification of this nuptial term in a more large sense, we may see farther: "*If any amongst the brethren make a Shoshbenuth* while the father is yet alive, when the *Shoshbenuth* returns, that also is returned too; for the *Shoshbenuth* is required even before the *Beth Din*; but if any one send to his friend any measures of wine, those are not required before the *Beth Din*; for this was a deed of gift? or work of charity."

The words are very obscure, but they seem to bear this sense, viz.: This was the manner of the *Shoshbenuth*: some bachelor or single person, for joy of his friend's marriage, takes something along with him to eat and be merry with the bridegroom: when it comes to the turn of this single person to marry, this bridegroom, to whom he had brought this portion, is bound to return the same kindness again. Nay, if the father should make a wedding for his son, and his friends should bring gifts along with them in honour of the nuptials, and give them to his son [the bridegroom], the father was bound to return the same kindness whenever any of those friends should think fit to marry themselves. But if any one should send the bridegroom to congratulate his nuptials, either wine or oil, or any such gift, and not come himself to eat and make merry with them, this was not of the nature of the *Shoshbenuth*, nor could be required back again before the tribunal, because that was a free gift.

IV. Christ therefore, and five of his disciples, were not of these voluntary *Shoshbenin* at this wedding, for they were invited guests, and so of the number of those that were called the *children of the bridechamber*, distinguished from the *Shoshbenin*. But whether our Saviour's mother was to be accounted either the one or the other is a vain and needless question. Perhaps she had the care of preparing and managing the necessaries for the wedding, as having some relation either with the bridegroom or the bride.

6. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

[*Six waterpots.*] Gloss, "If any one have water fit to drink, and that water by chance contract any uncleanness, let him fill the stone vessel with it."

The number of the *six waterpots*, I suppose, needs not be ascribed to any custom of the nation, but rather to the multitude then present. It is true indeed that at nuptials and other feasts, there were *waterpots* always set for the guests to wash their hands at; but the number of the vessels and the quantity of water was always proportioned according to the number of the guests; for both the hands and vessels, and perhaps the feet of some of them, were wont to be washed.

Mashicala mashi culla, the greater vessel out of which all wash; *maschilta mashia callatha*, the lesser vessel in which the bride washes, and (saith the Gloss) the better sort of the guests.

[*Firkins.*] The Greek version thus expresseth the measure of a *bath*, [2 Chronicles 4:5](#): so [Haggai 2:16](#), where the same measure of a *bath* is to be understood. Now if every one of these *waterpots* in our story contained two or three *baths* apiece, how great a quantity of wine must that be which all that water was changed into!

The waterpots of Lydda and Bethlehem: where the Gloss, "They were wont to make pots in Lydda from the measure of the *seah* to that of the *log*; and in Bethlehem from the measure of two *seahs* to that of one." How big were these *pots* that contained six or nine *seahs*: for every *bath* contained three *seahs*.

As to the washing of the hands, we have this in *Jadaim*; "they allot a fourth part of a *log* for the washing of one person's hands, it may be of two; half a *log* for three or four; a whole *log* to five or ten, nay, to a hundred; with this provision, saith R. Jose, that the last that washeth hath no less than a fourth part of a *log* for himself."

7. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

[*Jesus said, Fill, &c.*] I. It is probable that the discourse betwixt Jesus and his mother was not public and before the whole company, but privately and betwixt themselves: which if we suppose, the words of the son towards the mother, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" will not seem so harsh as we might apprehend them if spoken in the hearing of all the guests. And although the son did seem by his first answer to give a plain denial to what was propounded to him, yet perhaps by something which he afterward said to her, (though not expressed by the evangelist,) or some other token, the mother understood his mind so far, that when they came into company again she could intimate to them, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."

II. He answered his mother, "Mine hour is not yet come": for it might be justly expected that the first miracle he would exert should be done in Jerusalem, the metropolis of that nation.

8. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

[*The governor of the feast.*] This *governor of the feast* I would understand to have been in the place of chaplain, to give thanks, and pronounce blessings in such kind of feasts as these were. There was *the bridegroom's blessing*, recited every day for the whole space of the seven days, besides other benedictions during the whole festival time, requisite upon a cup of wine (for over a cup of wine there used to be a blessing pronounced;) especially that which was called *the cup of good news*, when the virginity of the bride is declared and certified. He, therefore, who gave the blessing for the whole company, I presume, might be called *the governor of the feast*. Hence to him it is that our Saviour directs the wine that was made of water, as he who, after some blessing pronounced over the cup, should first drink of it to the whole company, and after him the guests pledging and partaking of it.

As to what is contained in verses 14, 15, and 16 of this chapter, I have already discussed that in [Matthew 21:12](#).

18. Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

[*What sign showest thou unto us?*] "Noah, Hezekiah, &c., require a sign; much more the wicked and ungodly."

Since there had been so many, no less than four hundred years past, from the time that the Holy Spirit had departed from that nation, and prophecies had ceased, in which space there had not appeared any one person that pretended to the gift either of prophesying or working miracles, it is no wonder if they were suspicious of one that now claimed the character, and required a sign of him.

19. Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

[*Destroy this Temple.*] I. Christ showeth them no *sign* that was a mere *sign*, [Matthew 12:39](#). The turning of Moses' rod into a serpent, and returning the serpent into a rod again; the hand becoming leprous, and restored to its proper temperament again; these were mere *signs*; but those wonders which Moses afterward wrought in Egypt were not mere *signs*, but beneficent miracles; and whoever would not believe upon those infinite miracles which he wrought, would much less have believed upon mere signs. And, indeed, it was unbecoming our blessed Lord so far to indulge to their obstinate incredulity, to be showing new *signs* still at every beck of theirs, who would not believe upon those infinite numbers he put forth upon every proper occasion.

II. [Matthew 12:39,40](#). When they had required a *sign*, Christ remits them to the *sign* of the prophet Jonah; and he points at the very same sense in these words, *Destroy this Temple, &c.*: that is, "My resurrection from the dead will be a *sign* beyond all denial, proving and

affirming, that what I do I act upon divine authority, and that I am he who is to come ([Rom 1:4](#)). Further than this you must expect no other *sign* from me. If you believe me not while I do such works, at least believe me when I arise from the dead."

He acted here, while he is purging the Temple, under that notion as he was the authorized Messiah, [Malachi 3:1,3](#), and expressly calls it "his Father's house," verse 16. Show us therefore some *sign*, (say the Jews,) by which it may appear that thou art the Messiah the Son of God; at least, that thou art a prophet. I will show you a sufficient *sign*, saith Christ: *destroy this temple*, viz. of my body, and I will raise it from the dead again; a thing which was never yet done, nor could be done by any of the prophets.

20. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

[*Forty-and-six years.*] I. That this was spoken of the Temple as beautified and repaired by Herod, not as built by Zorobabel, these reasons seem to sway with me:

1. That these things were done and discoursed betwixt Christ and the Jews in Herod's Temple.

2. That the account, if meant of the Temple of Zorobabel, will not fall in either with the years of the kings of Persia; or those seven weeks mentioned [Daniel 9:25](#), in which Jerusalem was to be built, "even in troublous times." For whoever reckons by the kings of Persia, he must necessarily attribute at least thirty years to Cyrus; which they willingly do that are fond of this account: which thirty years too, if they do not reckon to him after the time that he had taken Babylon, and subverted that monarchy, they prove nothing as to this computation at all.

"Cyrus destroyed the empire of the Medes, and reigned over Persia, having overthrown Astyages, the king of the Medes": and from thence Eusebius reckons to Cyrus thirty years. But by what authority he ascribes the Jews' being set at liberty from their captivity to that very same year, I cannot tell. For Cyrus could not release the Jews from their captivity in Babylon before he had conquered Babylon for himself; and this was a great while after he had subdued the Medes, as appears from all that have treated upon the subversion of that empire: which how they agree with Xenophon, I shall not inquire at this time: content at present with this, that it doth not appear amongst any historians that have committed the acts of Cyrus to memory, that they have given thirty or twenty, no, not ten years to him after he had taken Babylon. Leunclavius gives him but eight years; and Xenophon himself seems to have given him but seven. So that this account of forty-and-six years falls plainly to the ground, as not being able to stand, but with the whole thirty years of Cyrus included into the number.

Their opinion is more probable who make these forty-and-six years parallel with the seven weeks in [Daniel 9:25](#). But the building of the Temple ceased for more years than

wherein it was built; and, in truth, if we compute the times wherein any work was done upon the Temple, it was really built within the space of ten years.

II. This number of *forty-six years* fits well enough with Herod's Temple; for Josephus tells us, that Herod began the work *in the eighteenth year of his reign*; nor does he contradict himself when he tells us, *in the fifteenth year of his reign he repaired the Temple*; because the fifteenth year of his reign alone, after he had conquered Antigonus, was the eighteenth year from the time wherein he had been declared king by the Romans. Now Herod (as the same Josephus relates) lived thirty-seven years from the time that the Romans had declared him king; and in his thirty-fifth year Christ was born; and he was now thirty years old when he had this discourse with the Jews. So that between the eighteenth of Herod and the thirtieth of Christ exclusively there were just forty-six years complete.

III. The words of our evangelist therefore may be thus rendered in English: "Forty-and-six years hath this Temple been in building": and this version seems warranted by Josephus, who, beginning the history of G. Florus, the procurator of Judea, about the 11th of Nero, hath this passage; *From that time particularly our city began to languish, all things growing worse and worse*. He tells us further, that Albinus, when he went off from his government, set open all the gaols and dismissed the prisoners, and so filled the whole province with thieves and robberies. He tells withal, that king Agrippa permitted the Levite singing-men to go about as they pleased in their linen garments: and at length concludes, "And now was the Temple finished [note that]; wherefore the people, seeing the workmen, to the number of eighteen thousand, were at a stand, having nothing to do...besought the king that he would repair the porch upon the east," &c. If therefore the Temple was not finished till that time, then much less was it so when Christ was in it. Whence we may properly enough render those words of the Jews into such a kind of sense as this: "It is forty-and-six years since the repairing of the Temple was first undertook, and indeed to this day is not quite perfected; and wilt thou pretend to build a new one in three days?"

21. But he spake of the temple of his body.

[*But he spake of the temple of his body.*] If we consider how much the second Temple came behind that of the first, it will the more easily appear why our blessed Saviour should call his body *the Temple*.

"In the second Temple there wanted the Fire from heaven, the Ark with the Propitiatory and Cherubims, Urim and Thummim, *the Divine Glory*, the Holy Ghost, and the anointing Oil."

These things were all in Solomon's Temple, which therefore was accounted a full and plenary type of the Messiah: but so long as the second Temple had them not, it wanted what more particularly shadowed and represented him.

I. There was indeed in the second Temple a certain ark in the Holy of Holies; but this was neither Moses' ark nor the ark of the covenant: which may not unfitly come to mind

when we read that passage, [Revelation 11:19](#), "The Temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his Temple the ark of his testament." It was not seen, nor indeed was it at all in the second Temple.

The Jews have a tradition, that Josias hid the ark before the Babylonish captivity, lest it should fall into the hands of the enemy, as once it did amongst the Philistines; but there is no mention that it was ever found and restored again.

II. In Moses' Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple the divine presence sat visibly over the Ark in the Propitiatory, in a cloud of glory: but when the destruction of that Temple drew near, it went up from the Propitiatory, [Ezekiel 10:4](#), and never returned into the second Temple, where neither the Ark nor the Propitiatory was ever restored.

III. The high priest, indeed, ministered in the second Temple as in the first, in eight several garments. Amongst these was the pectoral, or breastplate, wherein the precious stones were put (out of which the jasper chanced to fall and was lost): but the oracle by Urim and Thummim was never restored: see [Ezra 2:63](#); [Nehemiah 7:63](#). And if not restored in the days of Ezra or Nehemiah, much less certainly in the ages following, when the spirit of prophecy had forsaken and taken leave of that people. For that is a great truth amongst the Talmudists; "Things are not asked or inquired after now [by Urim and Thummim] by the high priest, because he doth not speak by the Holy Ghost, nor does there any divine afflatus breathe on him."

This, to omit other things, was the state of Zorobabel's Temple with respect to those things which were the peculiar glory of it. And these things being wanting, how much inferior must this needs be to that of Solomon's!

But there was one thing that degraded Herod's Temple still lower; and that was the person of Herod himself, to whom it is ascribed. It was not without scruple, even amongst the Jews themselves, that it was built and repaired by such a one: (and who knew not what Herod was?) and they dispute whether by right such a person ought to have meddled with it; and invent arguments for their own satisfaction as to the lawfulness of the thing.

They object first, *It is not permitted to any one to demolish one synagogue till he hath built another*: much less to demolish the Temple. But Herod demolished the Temple before he had built another. Ergo,

They answer, "Baba Ben Buta gave Herod that counsel, that he should pull it down." Now this Baba was reckoned amongst the great wise men, and he did not rashly move Herod to such a work; *for he saw such clefts and breaches in the Temple* that threatened its ruin.

They object, secondly, concerning the person of Herod, that he was a servant to the Asmonean family, that he rose up against his masters and killed them, and had killed the Sanhedrim.

They answer, We were under his power, and could not resist it. And if those hands stained with blood would be building, it was not in their power to hinder it.

These and other things they apologize for their Temple; adding this invention for the greater honour of the thing--that all that space of time wherein it was a building, it never once rained by day, that the work might not be interrupted.

The Rabbins take a great deal of pains, but to no purpose, upon those words, [Haggai 2:9](#), "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former." "R. Jochanan and R. Eliezer say; one, that it was a greater for the fabric; the other, that it was greater for the duration." As if the glory of the Temple consisted in any mathematical reasons of space, dimension, or duration; as if it lay in walls, gilding, or ornament. The glory of the first Temple was the Ark, the divine cloud over the Ark, the Urim and the Thummim, &c. Now where or in what can consist *the greater glory* of the second Temple when these are gone?

Herein it is indeed that the Lord of the Temple was himself present in his Temple: he himself was present *in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*, Colossian 2:9; as the divine glory of old was over the ark *typically*, or by way of shadow only.

This is the *glory*, when he himself is present who is the great High Priest and the Prophet; who, answerably to the Urim and Thummim of old, reveals the counsels and will of God; he who is the true and living Temple, whom that Temple shadowed out. "This Temple of yours, O ye Jews, does not answer its first pattern and exemplar: there are wanting in that, what were the chief glory of the former; which very defect intimates that there is another Temple to be expected, that in all things may fall in with its first type, as it is necessary the antitype should do. And this is the Temple of my body." No further did he think fit to reply to them at that time.

1. There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

[*Nicodemus.*] The Talmudists frequently mention *Nicodemus*. Now the Jews derive this name, not from the Greek original, but from this story:

"Upon a certain time, all Israel ascended up to Jerusalem to the feast, and there wanted water for them. Nicodemus Ben Gorion comes to a great man, and prays him, saying, 'Lend me twelve wells of water, for the use of those that are to come up to the feast, and I will give you back twelve wells again; or else engage to pay you twelve talents of silver': and they appointed a day. When the day of payment came, and it had not yet rained, *Nicodemus* went to a little oratory, and covered himself, and prayed: and of a sudden the clouds gathered, and a plentiful rain descended, so that twelve wells were filled, and a great deal over. The great man cavilled that the day was past, for the sun was set: *Nicodemus* goes into his oratory again, covers himself and prays, and the clouds dispersing themselves, the sun breaks out again. Hence that name given him *Nicodemus*, because the sun shone out for him."

If there be any thing of truth in this part of the story, it should seem *Nicodemus* was a priest, and that kind of officer whose title was a *digger of wells*; under whose peculiar care and charge was the provision of water for those that should come up to the feast. His proper name was not *Nicodemus*, but *Bonai*; as *Taanith* in the place above quoted. Now in *Sanhedrim*, *Bonai* is reckoned amongst the disciples of Jesus, and accounted one of the three richest men amongst the Jews at that time, when Titus besieged Jerusalem. "There were three the most wealthy men in Jerusalem, *Nicodemus* Ben Gorion, Calba Sabua, and Zizith Hakkeesoht." But in *Echah Rabbathi*, "There were then in Jerusalem four *counsellors*, Ben Zizith, and Ben Gorion, and Ben *Nicodemon*, and Ben Calba Sabua; men of great wealth," &c.

There is mention also of a "daughter of *Nicodemus* Ben Gorion, the furniture of whose bed was twelve thousand deniers." But so miserably was she and the whole family impoverished, that "Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccahi saw her gathering barleycorns out of the dung of the Arabs' cattle: saith he to her, 'Who art thou, my daughter?' 'I am (saith she) the daughter of *Nicodemus* Ben Gorion.' 'What then (saith he) is become of all thy father's wealth?'" &c.

I leave it with the reader to determine with himself whether the *Nicodemus* mentioned amongst them be the same with this of ours or no. It is not much for the reputation of that *Nicodemus* (whatever may be supposed in the affirmative), that these authors should all along make so honourable mention of him. However, some passages look as if it might be the same man, viz., the name *Bonai*, by which he went for a disciple of Jesus; the impoverishment of his family, which may be conceived to fall upon them in the persecution of Christianity, &c.: but it is not *tanti* that we should labour at all in a thing so very perplexed, and perhaps no less unprofitable.

2. The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

[*We know.*] It may be a question whether Nicodemus, using the plural number [*we know*], does by that seem to own that the whole Sanhedrim (of which himself was a member) acknowledge the same thing. I am apt to think the fathers of the Sanhedrim could not well tell how indeed to deny it: which will be more largely discussed upon chapter 11:48. But *we know* may either be the plural or the singular, which in the first person is most commonly used in all languages. Or else, *we know*, may signify as much as, *it is commonly owned and acknowledged.*

[*Thou art a teacher come from God.*] Nicodemus seems to have reference to the long cessation of prophecy which had not been known in that nation for above four hundred years now past; in which space of time there had been no masters or teachers of the people instituted but by men and the imposition of hands; nor had there in that appeared any one person that would pretend to teach them by a spirit of prophecy:--*But we see that thou art a teacher sent from God.*

3. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

[*Jesus answered, &c.*] You may ask how this answer suits with the question that Nicodemus put: it may appear very apposite upon this account: "You seem, O Nicodemus, to see some sign of the approaching kingdom of heaven in these miracles that are done by me. Verily, I say unto thee, No one can see the kingdom of God as he ought, if he be not born *from above.*"

[*Except a man be born again.*] By what word our Saviour expressed *born again* in the Jewish language, it is not easy determining. The subject of the question, well considered, may afford us some light in the solution of it.

I. We must not suppose it a set discourse merely, and on purpose directed upon the subject of *regeneration*, though the doctrine of the *new birth* may be well enough asserted and explained from hence: but the question is about the aptitude and capacity of the man qualified to be a partaker of *the kingdom of God*, or *of heaven*, or of the times or benefits of the Messiah. For that *the kingdom of God* or *of heaven* are terms convertible in the evangelist, is obvious to every one that will take the pains to compare them: and that by *the kingdom of God* or *of heaven* is meant *the kingdom and times of the Messiah*, is so plain, that it needs no argument to prove it.

When, therefore, there was so vehement and universal an expectation of the coming and reign of the Messiah amongst the Jews, and when some token and indication of these times might appear to Nicodemus in the miracles that Christ had wrought, our Saviour in-

structs him by what way and means he may be made apt and capable for seeing and entering into this kingdom, and enjoying the benefits and advantages of Messiah's days. For,

II. The Jews thought that it was enough for them to have been of the seed of Abraham, or the stock of Israel, to make them fit subjects for *the kingdom of heaven*, and the happiness that should accrue to them from the days of the Messiah. Hence that passage, *There is a part allotted to all Israel in the world to come; that is, in the participation of the Messiah*. But whence comes it that universal Israel claim such a part? Merely because they are Israelites; i.e. merely because they come of the stock and lineage of Israel. Our Saviour sets himself against this error of theirs, and teacheth that it is not enough for them to be the children of Abraham, or the stock of Israel, to give them any title to or interest in the Messiah; but they must further be born *from above*; they must claim it by a *heavenly*, not an *earthly birth*. These words of his seem to fall in and bear the same kind of sense with those of John Baptist, "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father."

III. The Jews acknowledged, in order to proselytism, some kind of *regeneration* or *new birth* absolutely necessary: but then this was very slightly and easily attainable. *If any one become a proselyte, he is like a child new born*. But in what sense is he so?

"The Gentile that is made a proselyte, and the servant that is made free, behold, he is like a child new born. *And all those relations he had* while either Gentile or servant, they now cease from being so. By the law it is lawful for a Gentile to marry his mother, or the sister of his mother, if they are proselyted to the Jewish religion. But the wise men have forbidden this, lest it should be said, We go downward from a greater degree of sanctity to a less; and that which was forbidden yesterday is allowable today." Compare this with [1 Corinthians 5:1](#).

Christ teaches another kind of *new birth*, requisite for those that partake of the kingdom of the Messiah, beyond what they have either as Israelites or proselytes; viz., that they should be *born from above*, or *by a celestial generation*, which only makes them capable of *the kingdom of heaven*.

4. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

[*Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb?*] The common opinion of the Jews about the qualification of an Israelite, *qua* Israelite, still sticks in the mind of this Pharisee: and although our Saviour useth that term, which in the Jewish language plainly enough intimates the necessity of being *born from heaven*, yet cannot he easily get off from his first prejudice about the Israelitish generation: "Whereas the Israelites, as they are Israelites, have a right to be admitted into the kingdom of the Messiah, do you therefore mean by this expression of yours, that it is necessary for any to enter a second time into his mother's womb, that he may be an Israelite anew?"

He knew and acknowledged, as we have already said, that there must be a sort of a *new birth* in those that come over to the Jewish religion; but he never dreamt of any new proselytism requisite in one that had been born an Israelite. He could not therefore conceive the manner of a *new birth*, that he should be made an Israelite anew, unless it were by entering into the mother's womb a second time; which to him seemed an impossible thing.

5. Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

[*Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit.*] He tells him, that the Jew himself cannot be admitted into the kingdom of the Messiah unless he first strip himself of his Judaism by baptism, and then put off his carnal and put on a spiritual state. That by *water* here is meant *baptism*, I make no doubt: nor do I much less question but our Saviour goes on from thence to the second article of the evangelical doctrine. And as he had taught that towards the participation of the benefits to be had by the Messiah, it is of little or of no value for a man to be *born of* the seed of Abraham, or to be originally an Israelite, unless he was also *born from above*.

10. Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

[*Art thou a master of Israel?*] *Art thou a Wise man in Israel?* It was the answer of a boy to R. Joshua, when he asked him, "*Which is the shortest way to the city?*" The boy answered, 'This is the shortest way though it is the longest: and that is the longest way though it is the shortest.' R. Joshua took that way which was the shortest, though the longest. When he came very near the city, he found gardens and places of pleasure hedged in [so that he could go no further]. He returned therefore to the boy, and said to him, 'My son, is this the shortest way to the city?' The boy answered, 'Art thou a wise man in Israel? did I not thus say to thee, That is the shortest way though the longest?' &c.

14. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

[*And as Moses lifted up the serpent, &c.*] The Jews dote horribly about this noble mystery. There are those in *Bemidbar Rabba*, that think that the brazen serpent was not affixed to a pole, but thrown up into the air by Moses, and there to have settled without any other support.

"Moses put up the serpent for a sign; as he that chastiseth his son sticks up the rod in some eminent place, where the child may see it, and remember."

Thou shalt remove the mischief by that which did the mischief; and thou shalt heal the disease by that which made thee sick. The same hath R. Bechai; and both confess that it was

a miracle within a miracle. But it is not for a Jew to understand the mystery; this is the Christian's attainment only.

17. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

[*Not to condemn the world.*] In what sense (beside that which is most common and proper) the Jewish schools use the word *the world*, we may see from these and such like instances:

I. *The whole world hath forsaken the Misnas, and followed the Gemara.* Where something may be noted in the story as well as in the grammar of it.

So [John 12:19](#): *Behold the world is gone after him.* We very often meet with *All the world confeseth*, &c. and *The whole world doth not dissent*, &c. By which kind of phrase, both amongst them and all other languages, is meant a very great number or multitude.

II. When they distinguish, as frequently they do, betwixt *the poor of their own city*, and *the poor of the world*; it is easy to discern, that by the *poor of the world* are meant those poor that come from any other parts.

III. "R. Ulla requires not only that every great man should be worthy of belief, *but that the man of the world should be so too.*" It is easy to conceive, that by *the man of the world* is meant any person, of any kind or degree.

IV. But it is principally worthy our observation, that they distinguish the whole world into *Israel*, and *the nations of the world*; the Israelites and the Gentiles. This distinction, by which they call the Gentiles the *nations of the world*, occurs almost in every leaf, so that I need not bring instances of this nature. Compare [Luke 12:30](#) with [Matthew 6:32](#); and that may suffice.

V. They further teach us, that *the nations of the world* are not only not to be redeemed, but to be wasted, destroyed, and trodden underfoot. "This seems to me to be the sense: the rod of the exactor shall not depart from Judah, until his Son shall come to whom belongs the subduing and breaking of the people; for he shall vanquish them all with the edge of his sword." So saith Rambam upon that passage in [Genesis 49](#).

"The morning cometh, and also the night,' [Isaiah 21:12](#). It will be the morning to Israel [when the Messiah shall come]; but it will be night to the nations of the world."

"R. Abin saith, That the Holy Blessed God will make the elders of Israel sit down in a semicircle, himself sitting president, as the father of the Sanhedrim; and shall judge the nations of the world."

"Then comes the thrashing; the straw they throw into the fire, the chaff into the wind; but the wheat they keep upon the floor: so the nations of the world shall be as the burning of a furnace; but Israel alone shall be preserved."

I could be endless in passages of this nature out of these authors: but that which is very observable in all of them is this; That all those curses and dreadful judgments which God

in his holy writ threatens against wicked men, they post it off wholly from themselves and their own nation, as if not at all belonging to them, devolving all upon the Gentiles and the nations of the world. So that it was not without great reason that the apostle asserteth, [Romans 3:19](#), "Whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them which are under the law." Which yet they will by no means endure.

Christ, therefore, by this kind of phrase or scheme of speech, well enough known to Nicodemus, teacheth him (contrary to a vulgar opinion, which he also could not be ignorant of), that the Messiah should become a Redeemer and propitiation, as well to the Gentiles as to the Jews. They had taught amongst themselves, that God had no regard to *the nations of the world*, they were odious to him, and the Messiah, when he came, would destroy and condemn them: but the Truth saith, "God so loved the world, that he hath sent his Son not to condemn, but to save the world." This very evangelist himself is the best commentator upon this expression, [1 John 2:2](#); "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world"; i.e. not for *us Jews* only, but for the *nations of the world*.

25. Then there arose a question between *some of John's disciples and the Jews* about purifying.

[*A question about purifying.*] I. *Question, Syriac, inquire*: which calls to mind that which is so perpetually in use amongst the Talmudic authors; *R. N. inquired of R. N.* Whence that also, as familiarly used, *If you ask I will tell you*. If the word in this place be taken according to this scholastic use of it, as it may very well be, then we may expound this passage thus:

The disciples of John, having heard that Jesus did baptize also, they with the Jews inquire, what sort of purifying resulted from the baptism of Christ; whether that purified more than the baptism of John. They inquire jointly, Doth Jesus superinduce a baptism upon the baptism of John? and John his upon the baptisms or washing of the Jews? Whither will this purifying at last tend? and what virtue hath this of Jesus' beyond that of John's?

II. Or, if you will, suppose we that this be a *dispute* betwixt the disciples of St. John and the Jews about the legal purifications and the baptism now introduced: there is no doubt but both parties contended to the uttermost of their power.

27. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

[*A man can receive nothing.*] The rendering of this word *receive*, may be a little questioned. The Syriac hath it *to receive*. Perhaps it might be more fitly translated *to perceive* or *apprehend*. For the Baptist seems in these words to rebuke the incredulity and stupidity of these men: q.d. "Ye see, by this very instance of yourselves, that no man can learn, perceive, or believe, unless it be given him from heaven. For ye yourselves are my witnesses, that I did prefer Jesus before myself, that I testified of him that he was the Son of God, the Lamb

of God, &c.; and ye now would cavil against him, and prefer me before him. It is apparent that no one can perceive or discern what he ought to do, unless it be given from heaven." Compare with this, verse 32, "No man receiveth his testimony."

29. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

[*But the friend of the bridegroom.*] Of which we have already spoken in our notes upon chapter 2.

His friend, that is, his 'shoshebin.' Where the Gloss hath this passage, which at first sight the reader may a little wonder at:

The friend of the bridegroom is not allowed him all the days of the nuptials. The sense is; He is not admitted to be a judge or witness for him all that time, wherein for certain days of the nuptials he is his *shoshebin*, or the *friend of the bridegroom*.

31. He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

[*He that is of the earth is earthly.*] Mark but the antithesis, and you will not suspect any tautology:

1. *He that is of the earth*, and *He that cometh from heaven*. Where the antithesis is not so much between Christ and John, as betwixt Christ and all mankind.

2. *He is of the earth*, and *He is above all*. He that is of the earth is only of earthly degree, or rank: and he that is from heaven is above all degree.

3. *He speaks of the earth*, and *what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth*. He that is of the earth speaketh earthly things, and what he hath learned upon the earth; but he that is from heaven speaketh those things which he learned in heaven, viz., those things which he hath seen and heard from God. The Baptist seems to allude to the manner of bearing witness, and teaching. In matter of fact there was need of an eyewitness; in matter of doctrine, they delivered what they had heard from their Master.

Chapter 4

4. And he must needs go through Samaria.

[*He must needs go through Samaria.*] Josephus tells us, *It was the custom for the Galileans, in their journeying to Jerusalem to their feasts, to go through Samaria.*

Our countryman Biddulph describes the way which he himself travelled from Galilee to Jerusalem, anno Domini 1601: out of whom, for the reader's sake, I will borrow a few passages. He tells us, that on March 24 they rode near the sea of Galilee, and gives the computation of that sea to be in length about eight leagues and in breadth five. Now a league

is three miles. After they had gone about seven miles, having the sea of Galilee on their left hands, they went up a hill, not very steep, but very pleasant; which (he saith) is said to be the hill mentioned [John 6:3](#). [Although here indeed either I am mistaken or his guides deceived him; because that mountain was on the other side of the sea.]

However he tells us, that from the top of this hill they discerned Saphetta, the Jews' university. All the way they went was infinitely pleasant, the hills and dales all very fruitful: and that about two o'clock in the afternoon they came to a certain village called by the Arabians 'Inel Tyger,' i.e. 'The merchant's eye.' When they had taken some food and sleep, their mind leaped within them to go up mount Tabor, which was not far off. [I fear his guides deceived him here also concerning this mount.]

On the twenty-fifth of March they spent the whole day in traversing the pleasant fields of Bashan near the hill of Bashan. In the way they saw some rubbish of the tower of Gehazi, [2 Kings 5:24](#); and came to a town commonly called 'Jenine,' of old 'Engannim,' [Joshua 15:34](#) [more truly, Good man, [Joshua 19:21](#)], distant from Tabor two-and-twenty miles; a place of gardens and waters, and places of pleasure. There they stayed all the next day, upon the occasion of a Turkish feast called 'Byram.' March 27, riding by Engannim they were twice in danger; once by thieves, dwelling hard by; another time by the Arabs, in a wood about twelve miles thence. That night they came to Sychar, a city of Samaria, mentioned [John 4](#); distant from Engannim seven-and-twenty miles. They stayed there the next day. It is now called Napolis: Jacob's well is near it, the waters of it sweet as milk.

March 29, they went from Sychar towards Jerusalem; the nearer to which place they came, the more barren and unpleasant they found the soil. At length, coming to a large grove or wilderness full of trees and hills [perhaps this was mount Ephraim], from the top of the hill they saw the sea on the right hand, and little vessels upon it passing to Joppa. About three or four in the afternoon they came to a ruinous town called 'Beere,' of old (as was reported to them) 'Beer-sheba,' a great city [but more probably 'Beeroth,' mentioned [Joshua 18:25](#)]. It is said, that was the place where Christ's parents first missed him in their journey, [Luke 2:44](#). They would have lodged there that night, being weary and hungry, and having spent their provision, but they could have nothing fit for themselves or their horses; and being from Jerusalem but ten miles, they went on; and after having travelled five or six miles, had a view of the city. Thus our countryman, a clergyman, tells us in his book.

This interposition of Samaria between Galilee and Judea must be remembered, when we read the borders and portions of the tribes set out, [Ezekiel 48](#); where Manasseh and Ephraim (the country of Samaria) are bounded and set out as formerly, but must not be reckoned under the notion of Samaria, as they had been.

Necessity itself found, or made a way betwixt Judea and Galilee through Samaria; because, indeed, there was no other way they could go, unless a long way about, through the country

beyond Jordan. Nor was there any reason why they should make any difficulty of going through Samaria, unless the hostility of the country. For,

"The country of the Cuthites is clean." So that without scruple they might gather of the fruits and products of it. "The gatherings of their waters are clean." So that a Jew might drink, or wash himself in them. "Their dwellings are clean." So that he might enter thereinto, eat or lodge there. "Their roads are clean." So that the dust of them did not defile a Jew's feet.

The method of the story in this place, by comparing it with other evangelists, may be thus put together: Herod had imprisoned John Baptist, under pretence of his growing too popular, and that the multitude of his followers increasing, tended to innovate. Our Saviour understanding this, and withal that the Sanhedrim had heard something of the increase of his disciples too, withdrew from Judea into Galilee, that he might be more remote from that kind of thunderbolt that St. John had been struck with.

5. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

[Near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.] [Genesis 48:22](#). Jacob had bought a piece of land of the children of Hamor for a hundred *lambs*, [Genesis 33:19](#). But, after the slaughter of the Shechemites, he with his family being forced to retire to places more remote, viz., to Bethel, Bethlehem, and Hebron; the Amorites thrust themselves into possession, and he fain to regain it with his sword and bow.

6. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.

[Now Jacob's well was there.] Of this *well* doth *Jacob* seem to speak in those last words of his about Joseph, [Genesis 49:22](#): "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well." For Joseph's offspring increased to a kingdom in Jeroboam, and that in Sychem, hard by *Jacob's well*...

[He sat thus.] *He sat thus*, as one wearied. The evangelist would let us know that Christ did not seemingly, or for fashion's sake, beg water of the Samaritan woman, but in good earnest, being urged to it by thirst and weariness. [So 1 Kings 2:7](#); "Shew kindness to the sons of Barzillai," *for so*, that is, in a great deal of kindness, *they came to me*. [Acts 7:8](#), "He gave him the covenant of circumcision," *and so* [being circumcised] "he begat Isaac."

8. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

[To buy meat.] If the disciples were gone into the city *to buy food*, how agrees this with verse 9, *the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans?* and with that rule of the Jews, "*Let no Israelite eat one mouthful of any thing that is a Samaritan's;* for if he eat but a little *mouthful*, he is as if he ate swine's flesh." A *mouthful*, that is, of nothing over which a blessing must be pronounced.

"Ezra, Zorobabel, and Joshua gathered together the whole congregation into the Temple of the Lord; and with three hundred priests, three hundred books of the law, and three hundred children, anathematized, *shammattized*, excommunicated the Samaritans, in the name of Jehovah, by a writing indented upon tables, and an anathema both of the upper and the lower house: 'Let no Israelite eat one morsel of any thing that is a Samaritan's; let no Samaritan become a proselyte to Israel; nor let them have a part in the resurrection of the dead.' And they sent this curse to all Israel that were in Babylon, who also themselves added their anathema to this," &c.

But *Hierosol. Avodah Zara* tells us, "R. Jacob Bar Acha, in the name of R. Lazar, saith, That the victuals of the Cuthites are allowed, if nothing of their wine or vinegar be mingled amongst them." Nay, further, we meet with this passage in *Bab. Kiddushin*; "*The unleavened bread of the Cuthites is allowed, and by that a man may rightly enough keep the Passover.*" If the unleavened bread for the Passover may be had of the Samaritans, much more common bread. And grant that the Samaritans were to the Jews as heathens, yet was it lawful for the Jew to partake of the edibles of the Gentiles, if there was no suspicion that they had been any way polluted, nor been offered to idols; as may be largely made out from Maimonides in his treatise about forbidden meats. Which suspicion was altogether needless as to the Samaritans; because they and the Jews in a manner agreed upon the same things as clean or unclean, and they were very near as free from idolatry.

9. Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

[*For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.*] I. That translation, *the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans*, which the French and English follow, seems to stretch the sense of the word beyond what it will well bear: for, 1. Granting the Samaritans were mere heathens, (which some of the Rabbins have affirmed,) yet did not this forbid the Jews having any kind of dealings with them; for they did not refuse merchandising with any of the Gentile nations whatever. See [Nehemiah 13:16](#), &c. 2. But if the Samaritans were *true proselytes*, as R. Akibah asserts, or 'as the Israelites in all things,' as Rabban Simeon Ben Gamaliel saith of them; then much more might the Jews have dealing with them.

II. "It is lawful to eat the unleavened bread of the Samaritans, nor is there any suspicion as to their leavened bread neither. This is to be understood, if the Samaritan should knead it in the house of an Israelite." Now if the Samaritan may knead dough in an Israelite's house, it is evident the Israelite might use the Samaritan.

"An Israelite may circumcise a Cuthite; but a Cuthite may not circumcise an Israelite, because he is circumcised into the name of mount Gerizim. R. Josah saith, Let him circumcise him, and let him pass into the name of mount Gerizim till he departs this life." If therefore

it was lawful for the Israelite to circumcise the Cuthite or Samaritan, and the Samaritan the Israelite, then *the Jews had dealings with, or did use, the Samaritans...*

"For three days before the feasts of the idolaters, it is forbidden [the Jews] either to give to or receive from them, to ask, or lend, or borrow of them": but for any other parts of the year it was not forbidden them. But as to the Samaritans, it was not permitted the Jews to borrow or receive any thing from them at any time gratis. Whereas it was lawful for the Jews to converse with the Samaritans, buy of them, use their labour, answer to their benedictions, 'Amen,' as we find in *Beracoth*, lodge in their towns, [Luke 9:52](#), I would fain know in what sense, after all this, can it be said, *For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans*, but in this only, that they would not be obliged to them for any kindness? which may a little serve to illustrate that of [Luke 10:33](#), &c.; and it does very well agree with the matter in hand.

For the words which we are handling seem to be what the woman speaks, and not what the evangelist: and they spokesc^optically, or with sarcasm; "Dost thou, who art a Jew, ask water of me, who am a Samaritan?" for you Jews despise all courtesy of the Samaritans to receive the least kindness of them; and do you ask *me* for water?

11. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

[*From whence then hast thou that living water?*] *Living water*; the woman mistakes our Saviour's meaning, as if he intended only what was usually expressed by *bubbling*, or *springing waters*. So that when our Saviour talks to her of a *water* that he had to give, which whosoever should drink of should thirst no more, the woman [laughs in her sleeve indeed, and] with all the scorn that could be, saith, "Sir, pray give me of this water, that I may never have any thirst, or give myself the trouble of coming hither to draw"; for so we ought to conceive of her answer to be rather by way of scoff, not supplication.

18. For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

[*Thou hast had five husbands, &c.*] Christ stops her *fleering* mouth with the dung of her own unchaste conversation, charging her with that infamous sort of life she had hitherto lived: q.d. "Thou, for thy impudent adulteries, hast suffered divorce from five husbands already; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband, but an adulterer."

The Cuthites do not understand the law about betrothings and divorcings. They had their customs of affiancing and divorcing; and perhaps by how much the less accurate they were about their divorces, (I mean with respect to the Jewish rules,) the nearer they might come to the first institution of Moses, who allowed no divorces but in the case of adultery. That this woman was dismissed from her husbands for these infamous faults of hers, seems evident, partly, from the extraordinary number of husbands, partly, that our Saviour mentions

her husbands, as well as him that then lived adulterously with her: as if he would intimate, that she lived dishonestly under her husbands, as well as with this man.

20. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

[*Worshipped in this mountain.*] The story of that Temple on Gerizim, out of Josephus and others, is very well known. It was built in emulation and envy to that at Jerusalem, as of old were Dan and Bethel. Hence that irreconcilable hatred between the two nations, and the apostasy of divers Jews. The Samaritans attributed a certain holiness to the mountain, even after the Temple had been destroyed; but for what reason, they themselves could not well tell. However, for the defence of it, the Samaritan text hath notoriously falsified the words of Moses in [Deuteronomy 27:4](#): for whereas the Hebrew hath it, "Ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, *in mount Ebal*"; the Samaritan text and version hath it *in mount Gerizim*; as I have elsewhere observed.

"R. Jochanan going to Jerusalem to pray, *he passed by that mountain* [Gerizim]. A certain Samaritan seeing him, asked him, 'Whither goest thou?' 'I am,' saith he, 'going to Jerusalem to pray.' To whom the Samaritan, 'Were it not better for thee to pray in this holy mountain, than in that cursed house?' 'Whence comes this mountain to be so holy?' saith he: '*Because* (saith the other) *it was not overflown by the waters of the deluge.*'" A doughty reason indeed!

"R. Ismael, the son of R. Joseph, going to Jerusalem to pray, passed by that mountain. A certain Samaritan meeting him, asks, 'Where art thou going?' 'I am going,' saith he, 'to Jerusalem, to pray.' Saith the other, 'Were it not better for thee to pray in this blessed mountain, than in that cursed place?' Saith the R., 'I will tell you what you are like; you are like a dog greedy after carrion: so you when you know that idols are hid under this mountain, as it is said, *And Jacob hid them*, you are acted with a greedy desire after them.' They said amongst themselves, 'Seeing he knows there are idols hidden in this mountain, he will come in the night and steal them away.' And they consulted together to have killed him, but he, getting up in the night, stole away."

Somewhat akin to this Temple on Gerizim was that built by Onias in Egypt, the story of which you have in Josephus, and the description of it. Of this Temple also the Gemarists discourse, from whom we will borrow a few things.

"Simeon the just dying, said, 'Onias my son shall minister in my stead.' For this, his brother Shimei, being older than he by two years and a half, grew very envious. He saith to his brother, 'Come hither, and I will teach thee the rule and way of ministering.' So he puts him on a *leathern garment* and girds him, and then setting him by the altar, cries out to his brethren the priests, 'See here what this man hath vowed, and does accordingly perform to his wife, viz., that whenever he ministered in the high priesthood, he would put on her stomacher [*pectorale*], and be girt about with her girdle.'" The Gloss upon the place saith *the leathern garment*, but Aruch, from *Avodah Zarah*, saith *the stomacher of the heart*. What

the word in this place should mean is plain enough from the story itself. Shimei, that he might render his brother both ridiculous and odious to the rest of the priests, persuades him to perform his services with his wife's stomacher, instead of the breastplate of the high priest, and her girdle, instead of that curious one they were wont to be girt with, &c.

The story goes on: "His brethren the priests, upon this, contrive his death; but he, escaping their hands, fled into Alexandria of Egypt; and there building an altar, offered idolatrous sacrifices upon it. These are the words of Meir: but R. Judah tells him the thing was not so: for Onias did not own his brother Shimei to be two years and a half older than himself; but envying him, told him, 'Come, and I will teach thee the rule and method of thy ministry.'" And so, as R. Judah relates the matter, the tables are turned, the whole scene altered; so that Onias persuades his brother Shimei to put on his wife's stomacher, and gird himself with her girdle; and for that reason the priests do plot the death of Shimei. "But when he had declared the whole matter as it was indeed, then they designed to kill Onias. He therefore flying into Alexandria in Egypt, builds there an altar, and offered sacrifices upon it to the name of the Lord, according as it is said, *In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt.*"

And now it is at the reader's choice to determine which of these two Temples, that in Egypt, or this upon Gerizim, is built upon the best foundation; the one, by a fugitive priest, under pretence of a divine prophecy; the other, by a fugitive priest too, under pretence that that mount was the mount upon which the blessings had been pronounced. Let the Jews speak for themselves, whether they believed that Onias, with pure regard to that prophecy, did build his Temple in Egypt; and let every wise man laugh at those that do thus persuade themselves. However, this is certain, they had universally much more favourable thoughts of that in Egypt than of this upon mount Gerizim. Hence that passage in the place before quoted: "If any one say, 'I devote a whole burnt offering,' let him offer it in the Temple at Jerusalem; for if he offer it in the Temple of Onias, he doth not perform his vow. But if any one say, 'I devote a whole burnt offering for the Temple of Onias, though he ought to offer it in the Temple at Jerusalem, yet if he offer it in the Temple of Onias, he acquits himself.' R. Simeon saith, It is no burnt offering. Moreover, if any one shall say, 'I vow myself to be a Nazarite,' let him shave himself in the Temple at Jerusalem; for if he be shaven in the Temple of Onias, he doth not perform his vow. But if he should say, 'I vow myself a Nazarite, so that I may be shaven in the Temple of Onias,' and he do shave himself there, he is a Nazarite."

[*And ye say, that in Jerusalem, &c.*] What! did not the Samaritans themselves confess that Jerusalem was the place appointed by God himself for his worship? No doubt they could not be ignorant of the Temple which Solomon had built; nor did they believe but that from the times of David and Solomon God had fixed his name and residence at Jerusalem. And as to their preferring their Temple on Gerizim before that in Jerusalem notwithstanding all

this, it is probable their boldness and emulation might take its rise from hence, viz., they saw the second Temple falling so short of its ancient and primitive glory; they observed that the divine presence over the ark, the ark itself, the cherubims, the Urim and Thummim, the spirit of prophecy, &c., were no more in that place.

25. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

[*I know that Messias cometh.*] If the Samaritans rejected all the books of the Old Testament excepting the five Books of Moses, it may be a question whence this woman should know the name of Messias; for that is not to be found throughout the whole Pentateuch. From whence also may further arise a twofold inquiry more; one, whether the Samaritans were of the same opinion with the Sadducees? the other, whether those Sadducees that lived amongst the Jews rejected all the books of the Old Testament, excepting those of Moses only? Perhaps they might so reject them as to forbid their being read in their synagogues, in the same manner as the Jews rejected the Hagiographa from being read in the synagogues: but the question is, whether they did not use them, read them, and believe them, as the Jews did those holy writings?

"They snatch all the sacred books out of the fire [though on the sabbath day], whether they read or whether they read them not." The Gloss is, "Whether they read them, that is, the Prophets; which they are wont to read in their synagogues on the sabbath day; or whether they read them not, that is, the Hagiographa." It is likely that the Sadducees and Samaritans (I mean those Samaritans that lived about our Saviour's time and before) might disown the Prophets and the holy writings much after the same manner, and no more. For is it at all probable that they were either ignorant of the histories of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, the Kings, and the writings of the prophets, or that they accounted them tales and of no value? There were some amongst the Samaritans, as Eulogius in Photius tells us, who had an opinion, that "Joshua the son of Nun was that prophet of whom Moses spake, that God would raise up to them out of their brethren like to him." Do we think then that the history and Book of Joshua were unknown or disowned by them? However, I cannot omit, without some remarks, some few passages we meet with in *Sanhedrim*, fol. 90. 2:

"The Sadducees asked Rabban Gamaliel, Whence he could prove it, that God would raise the dead? 'From the Law (saith he), and from the Prophets, and from the holy writings.' And accordingly he allegeth his proofs out of each book, which, I hope, may not be very tedious to the reader to take notice of in this place: I prove it out of the Law, where it is written, And the Lord said to Moses, [Deuteronomy 31:16](#), *Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers and rise again. They say*, Probably it is meant *This people will rise up and go a whoring*. I prove it out of the Prophets, according as it is written, Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise: awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, [Isaiah 26:19](#). But, perhaps (*say they*), this may be meant of those dead which Ezekiel raised. I prove it out

of the Hagiographa, according as it is written, The roof of thy mouth is like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak, [Canticles 7:9](#). But perhaps (*say they*), it is meant, they move their lips in the world." I add, *say they*, though it is not, I confess, in the Gemarist's text, because reason and sense make it evident that this ought to be added, and the Gloss confirms it.

Now it would have been a most absurd thing for Gamaliel to have offered any proofs of the resurrection, either out of the Prophets, or the Hagiographa against the Sadducees, if those books had been either not known or of no authority amongst them...

But further, the Book of Ezekiel is quoted by a Samaritan in this story: "Rabban Jonathan went to *Neapolis* (i.e. *Sychar*) of the Samaritans. A certain Samaritan was in his company. When they came to Mount Gerizim, the Samaritan saith unto him, 'How comes it to pass that we are gotten to this holy mountain?' R. Jonathan saith, 'How comes this mountain to be holy?' The Samaritan answered, *Because it was never plagued with the waters of the deluge*. Saith R. Jonathan, 'How prove you this?' The Samaritan answered, 'Is it not written, *Son of man, say unto her, Thou art the land not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation, Ezekiel 22:24*.' 'If it were so (saith R. Jonathan), then should the Lord have commanded Noah to have gone up into this mountain, and not have built himself an ark.'" We also meet with a Sadducee quoting the prophet Amos: "A certain Sadducee said to a certain Rabbi, 'He that created the hills did not make *a spirit* or *the wind*: and he that created the wind did not make the hills: for it is written, *Behold, he that formeth the mountains and createth the wind, Amos 5:13*.' The Rabbi answered, 'Thou fool, go on but to the end of the verse, and thou wilt find the Lord of hosts is his name.'"

That passage also is remarkable: "They do not snatch *the books and volumes of the heretics* from the flames; but they may be burnt where they are." The Gloss is, "The books of heretics, i.e. *idolaters* [or *those that use any strange worship*], who wrote out the Law, the Prophets, and the Holy Writings, for their own use in the Assyrian character and holy language." If by *heretics* the *Sadducees* are to be understood, as the latter Gloss would have it, then comparing it with the former, they had the Law, Prophets, and the Holy Writings writ in the Assyrian character in the holy language.

If by *heretics* the *Christians* are understood, as in the former Gloss (for as to the Gentiles, there is no room to understand it of them in this place), then we see what copies of the Old Testament the Hebrew Christians anciently had in use.

It may be objected, That if the *Sadducees* admitted the books of the Prophets and the Holy Writings with this exception only, that they had them not read in their synagogues, how came they to deny the resurrection from the dead, when it is so plainly asserted in those books?

To this may be answered, That this argument might have something in it, if it had not been one fundamental of the *Sadducees'* faith, that no article in religion ought to be admitted

that cannot be made out plainly from the five books of Moses. Compare this with that of the Pharisees; "However any person may acknowledge the resurrection from the dead, yet if he does not own that there is some indication of it in the law, he denies a fundamental." So that whereas Moses seemed not, clearly and *in terminis*, to express himself as to the resurrection, the Sadducees would not admit it as an article of their faith, though something like it may have occurred in the Prophets, so long as those expressions in the Prophets may be turned to some other sense, either historical or allegorical. But if they had apprehended any thing plain and express in the books of Moses, the Prophets also asserting and illustrating the same thing, I cannot see why we should not believe they were received by them.

Something of this kind is the passage now in hand, where we find the Samaritan woman using the word *Messias*; which though it is not to be met with in the books of Moses, yet Moses having clearly spoken of his coming, whom the Prophets afterward signalized by the name of the *Messias*; this foundation being laid, the Sadducees and the Samaritans do not stick to speak of him in the same manner, and under the same title, wherein the Prophets had mentioned him. But then what kind of conceptions they had of the person, kingdom, and days of the Messiah, whether they expected the forerunner Elias, or the resurrection of the dead at his coming, as the scribes and Pharisees did, is scarcely credible.

27. And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

[*They marvelled that he talked with the woman.*] They marvel he should talk with a woman, much more with a Samaritan woman. "R. Jose the Galilean being upon a journey [I am much mistaken if it should not be writ] *found Berurea in the way*: to whom he said, *What way must we go to Lydda?* She answered, 'O thou foolish Galilean, have not the wise men taught *Do not multiply discourse with a woman?* Thou oughtest only to have said *Which way to Lydda?*'"

Upon what occasion this woman should be called *Berurea* is not our business at present to inquire: but that the reader may know something of her, she was the wife of R. Meir, a learned woman, and a teacher herself: "His wife *Berurea* was a wise woman, of whom many things are related in *Avodah Zarah*." Another story we have of her; "*Berurea found a certain scholar reading mutteringly, and spurned at him,*" &c.

"Samuel saith, They do not salute a woman at all." "A certain matron asked R. Eleazar, 'Why, when the sin of the golden calf was but one only, should it be punished with a threefold kind of death?' He answered, *A woman ought not to be wise above her distaff.* Saith Hyrcanus to him, 'Because you did not answer her a word out of the law, she will keep back from us three hundred measures of tithes yearly.' But he, *Let the words of the law be burned rather than committed to women.*" "Let no one talk with a woman in the street, no, not with his own wife."

28. The women then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

[*Left her waterpot.*] It was kindly done to leave her *waterpot* behind her; that Jesus and his disciples, whom she now saw come up to him, might have wherewithal to drink.

29. Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

[*Which told me all things that ever I did, &c.*] This passage doth something agree with the Jewish notion about their Messiah's smelling:

"It is written, *And he shall make him of quick scent or smell in the fear of the Lord*, [Isaiah 11:3](#). Rabba saith, He shall be of quick scent, and shall judge, as it is written, *He shall not judge by the sight of his eyes*, &c. Ben Coziba reigned two years and a half, and said to the Rabbins, 'I am the Messiah.' They say unto him, 'It is said of the Messiah, that he shall be of quick scent and shall judge: let us see if you can smell and judge': which when he could not do, they killed him."

The Samaritan woman perceived that Jesus had smelt out all her clandestine wickednesses, which she had perpetrated out of the view of men; for which very reason she argued it with herself, that this must be the Messiah. And by her report her fellow-citizens are encouraged to come and see him. They see him, hear him, invite him, receive and entertain him, and believe in him. Is it not probable, therefore, that they, as well as the Jews, might have expected the coming of the Messiah about this time? If so, whence should they learn it? from the Jews? or from the Book of Daniel?

35. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

[*There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest.*] The beginning of the *harvest* [that is, the barley-harvest] was about the middle of the month Nisan. Consult [Leviticus 23:10](#), &c., [Deuteronomy 16:9](#).

"Half Tisri, all Marchesvan, and half Chisleu, is *the seed time*. Half Chisleu, whole Tebeth, and half Shebat, is *the winter*. Half Shebat, whole Adar, and half Nisan, is *the winter solstice*. Half Nisan, all Iyar, and half Sivan is *the harvest*. Half Sivan, all Tammuz, and half Ab, is *the summer*. Half Ab, all Elul, and half Tisri, is *the great heat*."

They sowed the wheat and spelt in the month Tisri, and Marchesvan, and so onward. Targum upon [Ecclesiastes 11:2](#); "Give a good portion of thy seed to thy field in the month Tisri, and withhold thou not from sowing also in Chisleu."

They sowed barley in the months Shebat and Adar.

The lateward seed, or that which is hid and lieth long in the earth; "The wheat and the spelt which do not soon ripen, are sown in Marchesvan; *the early seed*, the barley, which soon ripens, is sown in Shebat and Adar."

"They sow seventy days before the Passover."

The barley, therefore, the hope of a harvest to come after *four months*, was not yet committed to the ground; and yet our Saviour saith, "Behold the fields are already white unto the harvest." Which thing being a little observed, will help to illustrate the words and design of our Lord. "Lift up your eyes (saith he) and look upon the fields," &c. pointing without doubt towards that numerous crowd of people, that at that time flocked towards him out of the city; q.d. "Behold, what a harvest of souls is here, where there had been no sowing beforehand."

Now let us but reckon the *four months* backward from the beginning of the barley-harvest, or the middle of the month Nisan, and we shall go back to the middle of the month Chisleu; which will fall in with the beginning of our December, or thereabout: whence it will be easy to conjecture what feast that was of which mention is made, chapter 5:1.

46. So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

[*A nobleman.*] This *nobleman*, probably, might be some Herodian, such as we find mentioned, [Matthew 22:16](#); not merely a servant or attendant upon Herod the tetrarch, who reigned at this time, but one devoted to Herod's family, out of principles of conscience and submission. For we have elsewhere shewn the controversy in that nation about the introducing of Herod the Great into the government, and whether there was not a spice of that quarrel in the differences of the Shammearns and the Hillelites, might be a matter worth our inquiry, but not in this place. But suppose this *nobleman* at present to have been an attendant upon Herod the tetrarch (setting aside that controversy); and then the words of our blessed Saviour, verse 48, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe," may have this tendency and design in them: The Jews they required signs, [1 Corinthians 1:22](#); but Herod's court was especially to be charged with this curiosity, because they had heard John the Baptist, yea, even the tetrarch himself, with some kind of observance and veneration; and yet because John shewed no sign, "did no miracle," [John 10:41](#), he was the easilier thrown into prison and not believed: for the story of his imprisonment immediately follows. Compare that passage with [Luke 23:8](#).

1. After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

[*After this there was a feast of the Jews.*] The other evangelists speak but sparingly of Christ's acts in Judea; this of ours something more copiously. They mention nothing of the Passovers from his baptism to his death, excepting the very last; but St. John points at them all. The first he speaks of chapter 2:13; the third, chapter 6:4; the fourth, chapter 13:1; and the second, in this place. It is true he does not call it by the name of the *Passover* here, but only a *feast* in general. However, the words of our Saviour mentioned above, chapter 4:35, do give some kind of light into this matter.

2. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

[*In the Hebrew tongue.*] That is, in the language beyond Euphrates, or the Chaldean.

Aruch: that is, the language of those beyond the flood.

If the Holy Books be written in the Egyptian, or Medes', or Hebrew language. Gloss, *In the Hebrew, that is, the language of those beyond Euphrates.*

The Hebrew writing is that of those beyond the river.

So that by *in the Hebrew tongue* they mean the Chaldee language, which, from their return out of Babylon, had been their mother-tongue; and they call it "the language of those beyond Euphrates" (although used also in common with the Syrians on this side Euphrates), that, with respect to the Jews, they might distinguish it from the ancient holy tongue; q.d. "not the tongue they used before they went into captivity, but that which they brought along with them from beyond Euphrates."

The Jews to whom this was the mother-tongue were called Hebrews; and from thence are distinguished from the Hellenists; which every one knows. Whence St. Paul should call himself a Hebrew, [2 Corinthians 11:22](#), when he was born in Tarsus of Cilicia, might deserve our consideration.

[*Having five porches.*] It mightily obtains amongst some, that in Bethesda the sacrifices were washed before they offered them: but here I am a little at a stand. For,

I. It is very difficult proving that the sacrifices were washed at all either here or in any place else, before they were offered. The Holy Scriptures are wholly silent as to any such thing; nor, as far as I have yet found, do the traditional writings speak of it. It is confessed, the entrails were washed after the beast had been slain; and for this service there was set apart in the very Temple *the washing-room*. But for their bodies, their skins, or backs, whether they were washed before they were slain, is justly questionable.

II. Amongst all the blemishes and defects whereby the beast was rendered unfit for sacrifice, we do not read that this was ever reckoned, "that they had not been washed." Do we believe that Abraham washed the ram caught in thicket, [Genesis 22](#), before he sacrificed it? It is said, indeed, "*that he took it and wiped it.*" But this was after he had taken off the skin. He took it, *and taking off the skin*, he said, 'Behold this, O Lord, as if the skin of thy servant

Isaac was taken off before thee.' He wiped it [Gloss, *he wiped it with a sponge*], and said, 'Behold this, as if Isaac was wiped.' He burnt it, and said," &c.

And let that be well considered in *Siphra*, fol. 18. 1, where a dispute is had upon those words, [Leviticus 6:27](#); "If the blood of the sacrifice for sin be sprinkled upon a garment, &c. *When the discourse is of a garment, I would understand it of nothing but a garment.* Whence is to be added, *the skin when it is pulled off.* The text saith, 'Upon whatsoever the blood shall be sprinkled, ye shall wash.' Perhaps, therefore, one may add the skin before it is pulled off. The text saith, *a garment*: as a garment that is capable of uncleanness, so whatsoever is capable of uncleanness. *Except the skin before it be pulled off.* They are the words of R. Judah." Mark, the skin as yet cleaving to the beast's back, and not flayed off, is not capable of uncleanness.

I. I would therefore judge rather, that *men*, and not *beasts*, were washed in the pool of Bethesda. I mean the unclean, that by washing they might be purified. For whoever considers the numbers of the unclean that did every day stand in need of being washed, and whoever would a little turn over the Talmudic treatises about purifications, and the gatherings of waters for those purposes, might easily persuade himself that both Bethesda, and all the other pools in Jerusalem, did serve rather for the washing of men, and not of beasts.

I would further judge, that the Syriac interpreter, when he renders that passage, "There was at Jerusalem *a certain place of baptistery*," that he intended rather the washing unclean person than beasts.

II. "There was not any like to Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, under the second Temple. *He one day struck his foot against a dead tortoise, and went down to Siloam, where, breaking all the little particles of hail, he washed himself.....*This was on the shortest day in winter, the tenth of the month Tebeth."

I do not concern myself for the truth of this story; but must take notice what he hints that telleth it; viz. that in such a case men were wont to wash themselves in Siloam, not the fountain, but the pool.

"Simeon Sicuensis dug wells, cisterns, and caves in Jerusalem. Rabban Jochanan Ben Zacchai saith to him, 'If a woman should come to thee, and ask thee about her menstua, thou sayest to her, *Dip thyself in this well*, for the waters thereof will purify.'"

III. Those five porches, therefore, seem to be the several entrances by which the unclean went down into the waters to be washed; and in which, before washing, they might lay up their clothes, and after it put them on again, being there always protected from the rain. And perhaps they had their different entrances and descents according to the different sorts of uncleanness, that all those that were one and the same way defiled should have one and the same entrance and descent into the pool. That this was the first design and use of these porches I do not at all doubt, though afterward there was another use for them brought in. And as to the washing of the unclean in this pool, let me also superadd this one remark:

That when they allowed (and that of necessity, because of the multitudes of unclean persons) the lesser gatherings of waters, viz. forty seahs of water in a place fitted on purpose both for breadth and depth, if there was no greater plenty of water, then we must not suppose that they would by any means neglect the ponds and pools.

4. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

[*An angel went down at a certain season.*] It is hardly imaginable that these impotent people lay day and night throughout the whole year at this pool. It seems rather that the troubling of the waters and healing the sick was usual only at the solemn feasts, probably only the feast of the Passover. And so it may not be amiss to interpret the *certain season* with this restriction, "It was a feast of the Jews, and an angel went down *at that certain season* into the pool," &c.

[*And troubled the water.*] We have this story, or rather this tale, concerning a certain fountain troubled by an evil angel: "It is a story in our city concerning Abba Joses (saith R. Berechiah in the name of R. Simeon), that when he sat at the fountain and required something, there appeared to him the spirit that resided there, and said, 'You know well enough how many years I have dwelt in this place, and how yourselves and your wives have come and returned without any damage done to you. But now you must know, that an evil spirit endeavours to supply my room, who would prove very mischievous amongst you.' He saith to him, 'What must we do then?' He answered him and said, 'Go and tell the townspeople, that whoever hath a hammer and an iron pin or bolt, let him come hither tomorrow morning, and have his eyes intent upon the waters; *and when you see the waters troubled*, then let them knock with the iron, and say, 'The victory is ours': and so let them not go back, till they see *thick drops of blood upon the face of the waters.*" The Gloss is: "By this sign it will appear that the spirit was conquered and killed." And the rest of the legend tells us that they did as was commanded, and did not depart till they saw the thick drops of blood upon the waters. Let them enjoy themselves in their doughty victory.

When the time was not afar off wherein "there should be a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness," [Zechariah 13:1](#), viz. the fountain of the blood of Christ; Divine Providence would have it, that a thing of that inconceivable excellency and benefit should not want some notable prognostic and forerunner. And therefore, amongst all the fountains and pools that were in Jerusalem for washing the unclean, he chose the most noble and celebrated pool of Bethesda, or Siloam, that in that might appear some prefiguration of his blood that should heal the world. Those waters, therefore, that had been only cleansing before, were made healing now; that, by their purifying and healing quality, they might prefigure and proclaim that that true and living Fountain was not far off, who should both purge and heal mankind in the highest degree.

How many years before our Saviour's suffering this miraculous virtue of the pool discovered itself, the holy story doth not tell us: and as for the traditional books, I do not find that they once mention the thing, although I have turned over not a few of their writings (if possible) to have met with it. From what epocha, therefore, to date the beginning of it, would seem rashness in us to undertake the determining. Whether from the first structure of the sheepgate by Eliashib, as some persons of great note judge, or whether from the extinction of the Asmonean family, or the rebuilding of the Temple by Herod, or from the nativity of our Saviour, or from any other time, let the reader make his own choice. What if we should date it from that great earthquake of which Josephus hath this passage: "About that time, about the battle of Actium betwixt Caesar and Antony, the seventh year of the reign of king Herod, there was a mighty earthquake in Judea, that made an infinite slaughter of beasts in that country; and near ten thousand people slain by the fall of houses?" Perhaps in that ruin the tower of Siloam fell, of which [Luke 13:4](#); and what if then the angel made his descent first into the pool? as [Matthew 28:2](#), "There was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended," &c. But in this matter I had rather learn than dogmatize.

It might be further inquired, at what time it was first known that the healing quality followed the troubling of the waters; but this is as dark and obscure as the former: especially when the spirit of prophecy, appearance of angels, and working of miracles, had been things so long unwonted in that nation.

The masters attribute such a kind of a healing virtue *to the fountain of Miriam*, as they call it, in the sea of Tiberias.

"The story is *of a certain ulcerous man*, who went down to the sea of Tiberias that he might dip himself: *and it happened to be the time when the well of Miriam flowed, so that he swam there and was healed.*"

They have a fiction about a certain well that opened itself to the Israelites in the wilderness for the merits of Miriam, which at her departure disappeared. They suppose, also, as it should seem, that a certain well or gulf in some part of the sea of Gennesaret had obtained this medicinal virtue for her sake. It is a wonder they had not got the story of this pool by the end too, and attributed its virtue to the merits of Solomon, because this once was Solomon's pool.

There was a time when God shewed wonders upon the fountains and rivers about Jerusalem in a very different manner, that is, in great severity and judgment, as now in mercy and compassion.

These are the words of Josephus, exhorting the people to surrender themselves: "*Those springs flow abundantly to Titus, which, as to us, had dried away long before.* For you know how, before his coming, Siloam and all the springs about the city failed so much, that water was bought by the bottle: but now they bubble up afresh for your enemies, and that in such abundance, that they have sufficient, not only for themselves, but for their cattle and gardens.

Which very miracle this nation hath formerly experienced, when this city was taken by the king of Babylon."

If there was such a miracle upon the waters upon the approach of the enemy and destroyer, it is less wonder that there should be some miraculous appearance there, though in a different manner, at the approach of him who was to be our Saviour.

How long the virtue of this pool lasted for healing the impotent, whether to the destruction of Jerusalem, or whether it ceased before, or from this very time, it would be to as little business to inquire, as after the original and first appearance of it, being both so very uncertain and unintelligible.

6. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time *in that case*, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

[*Wilt thou be made whole?*] It is no question but he desired to be healed, because for that very end he had lain there so long. But this question of our Saviour hath respect to the sabbath; q.d. "Wouldst thou be healed on the sabbath day?" For that they were infinitely superstitious in this matter, there are several instances in the evangelists, not to mention their own traditions, [Mark 3:2](#); [Luke 13:14](#), [14:3](#).

8. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

[*Take up thy bed, and walk.*] He said elsewhere, "Take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house," [Mark 2:11](#). Whether this be the same with that, it is not so very clear.

I. The common distinction must be observed respecting the sabbath: that is, so that there may be a difference betwixt a *private place*, or what is any one's peculiar right, and a *public place*, or what is of more public and common right. Let nothing be carried out on the sabbath out of a private place into a public; and so on the contrary.

"Whoever on the sabbath carries out any thing either from a private place to a public, or from a public place to a private, or brings in, *if he do this unadvisedly, he is bound to offer sacrifice for his sin; but if presumptuously, he is punished by cutting off, and being stoned.*"

II. But it was lawful, within places of private propriety, such as were the porches, entries, and courts, where various families dwelling together might be joined; it was lawful for them to remove and bear from one place to another; but not all things, nor indeed any thing, unless upon very urgent necessity.

"They remove four or five chests of straw or fruits for the sakes of passengers, or want of *Beth Midrash*; but they remove not their treasure," &c. The Gloss is, "They remove these things if they have need of the place they take up, either for passengers to eat or scholars to learn in; neither are solicitous for their labour on the sabbath," &c.

But why do we speak of these things, when as, by the canons and rules of the scribes, it is forbidden them to carry any thing of the least weight or burden on the sabbath day? So that it would be plainly contrary to those rules to take his bed hither or thither in the porch

itself, much more out of the porch into the streets. It is worthy our observing, therefore, that our Saviour did not think it enough merely to heal the impotent man on the sabbath day, which was against their rules; but further commanded him to take up his bed, which was much more against that rule. From whence it is very evident that Christ had determined within himself either to try the faith and obedience of this man; or else, at this time, openly to shake the Jewish sabbath, which, ere long, he knew must be thrown off the hinges it now turned upon; or both.

17. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

[*My Father worketh hitherto.*] Our Saviour being called before the Sanhedrim, 1, asserts the Messiah to be God: and, 2, that he himself is the Messiah. 'The Son of God' and 'the Messiah' are convertible terms, which the Jews deny not; and yet have very wrong conceptions about 'filiation,' or being made a son.

St. Peter confesseth, [Matthew 16:16](#), "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." So also Caiaphas in his interrogatory, [Matthew 26:63](#), "Tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God?" But they hardly agree in the same sense and notion of sonship. Aben Ezra upon [Psalm 2:12](#), *Kiss the Son*, confesseth that this is properly spoken of the Messiah; but in *Midras Tillin* there is a vehement dispute against true filiation. The same Aben Ezra likewise confesseth, that in [Daniel 3:25](#), *one like the Son of God* is to be taken in the same sense with that of [Proverbs 31:2](#), *What, my son? and what, the son of my womb?* But Saadias and R. Solomon understand it of an angel.

"There is one who hath neither son nor brother; the Holy Blessed; who hath neither brother nor son: he hath no brother, how should he have a son? only that God loved Israel, and so called them his children."

It is not unknown with what obstinacy the Jews deny the Godhead of the Messiah. Whence the apostle, writing to the Hebrews, lays this down as his first foundation of discourse, That the Messiah is truly God, [Hebrews 1](#). Which they, being ignorant of the great mystery of the Trinity, deny; fearing lest, if they should acknowledge Messiah to be God, they should acknowledge more Gods than one. Hence they every day repeated in the recitals of their phylacteries, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord." And so, being blind as to the mystery of the Trinity, are the more hardened to deny that.

Our Saviour strenuously asserts here the Godhead of the Son, or Messiah; namely, that he hath the same power with the Father, the same honour due to him as to the Father, that he hath all things in common with the Father. And hence he makes this reply upon them about healing on the sabbath; "*My Father worketh on the sabbath day, so do I also.*"

19. Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you. The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

[*The Son can do nothing of himself.*] That is, "The *Messiah* can do nothing of himself." For he is a servant, and sent by his Father; so that he must work, not of his own will and pleasure, but his Father's, [Isaiah 42:1](#), "Behold my servant": Targum, *Behold my servant the Messiah*. So Kimchi in loc. and St. Paul, [Philippians 2:7](#).

The Jew himself, however he may endeavour to elude the sense of that phrase 'the Son of God,' yet cannot deny the truth of this maxim, 'That the *Messiah* can do nothing, but according to the will and prescription of his Father that sent him.' Which he also will expound, not of the weakness and impotency, but the perfection and obedience, of the Son that he so doeth.

25. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

[*The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear, &c.*] The Jews, as we have said before, looked for the resurrection of the dead at the coming of *Messiah*: and that truly, and with great reason, though it was not to be in their sense.

The vision of Ezekiel about the dry bones living, chapter, 37, and those words of Isaiah, "thy dead men shall live," &c., chapter 26:19, suggest to them some such thing, although they grope exceedingly in the dark as to the true interpretation of this matter.

That of R. Eliezer is well enough; *The people of the earth* [the Gentiles] *do not live*: which somewhat agrees with that of the apostle, [Ephesians 2:1](#), "Ye were dead in trespasses and sins." Nor does that of Jeremiah Bar Abba sound much differently: "The dry bones [[Eze 37](#)] are the sons of men, *in whom is not the moisture of the law.*"

It is true, "many bodies of the saints arose" when Christ himself arose, [Matthew 27:52](#): but as to those places in Scripture which hint the resurrection of the dead at his coming, I would not understand them so much of these, as the raising the Gentiles from their spiritual death of sin, when they lay in ignorance and idolatry, to the light and life of the gospel. Nor need we wholly expound Ezekiel's dry bones recovered to life, of the return of the tribes of Israel from their captivity, (though that may be included in it) but rather, or together with that, the resuscitation of 'the Israel of God' (that is, those Gentiles that were to believe in the *Messiah*) from their spiritual death.

The words in [Revelation 20:5](#), "This is the first resurrection," do seem to confirm this. Now what, and at what time, is this resurrection? When the great Angel of the covenant, Christ, had bound the old dragon with the chains of the gospel, and shut him up *that he should no more seduce the nations* by lying wonders, oracles, and divinations, and his false gods, as formerly he had done: that is, when the gospel, being published amongst the heathen

nations, had laid open all the devices and delusions of Satan, and had restored them from the death of sin and ignorance to a true state of life indeed. This was 'the first resurrection.'

That our Saviour in this place speaks of this resurrection, I so much the less doubt, because that resurrection he here intends, he plainly distinguishes it from the last and general resurrection of the dead, verses 28, 29; this first resurrection from that last: which he points therefore to, as it were, with his finger, by saying, "The hour is coming, and *now is*," &c.

27. And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

[*To execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.*] [Daniel 7:13](#): "Behold, one like *the Son of man* came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days...and there was given him dominion, and glory," &c. To this our blessed Saviour seems to have respect in these words, as the thing itself plainly shews. R. Solomon upon the place: "One like the Son of man, *this is the King, the Messiah.*" R. Saadiah, *this is the Messiah our righteousness.* When our Saviour declared before the Sanhedrim, "Ye shall see *the Son of man* sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds"; they all said, "Art thou Christ, the Son of the blessed God?" by which they imply, that the 'Son of God' and 'Christ' are convertible terms: as also are 'Christ' and *the Son of man*. And it plainly shews that their eyes were intent upon this place: "Art thou that *Son of man* spoken of in Daniel, who is the Son of God, the Messiah?" So did Christ in these words look that way.

30. I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

[*As I hear, I judge.*] He seems to allude to a custom amongst them. The judge of an inferior court, if he doubts in any matter, goes up to Jerusalem and takes the determination of the Sanhedrim; and according to that he judgeth.

35. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

[*A burning and a shining light.*] He speaks according to the vulgar dialect of that nation; who were wont to call any person famous for life or knowledge *a candle*. "Shuah" [the father-in-law of Judah, [Genesis 38](#)] "*was the candle or light of the place* where he lived." The Gloss is, "One of the most famous men in the city enlightening their eyes." Hence the title given to the Rabbins, *the candle of the law: the lamp of light.*

39. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

[*Search the Scriptures.*] This seems not to be of the imperative, but indicative mood: "*Ye search* the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."

Chapter 6

4. And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

[*And the Passover was nigh.*] "It is a tradition. They inquire and discourse about the rites of the Passover, thirty days before the feast."

From the entrance of these thirty days and so onward, this feast was in the eyes and mouth of this people, but especially in the fifteen days immediately before the Passover. Hence, perhaps, we may take the meaning of these words, *the Passover was nigh*.

From the entrance or beginning of these thirty days, viz. "From the fifteenth day of the month Adar, they repaired the ways, the streets, the bridges, the pools, and *despatched all other public business*; they painted the sepulchres, and proceeded about *matters of a heterogeneous nature*."

"*These are all the businesses of the public*: they judged all pecuniary faults, those also that were capital, and those for which the offenders were scourged. They redeemed devoted things; they made the suspected wife drink; they burnt the red heifer; they bored the ear of the Hebrew servant; they cleansed the lepers, and removed the covers from the well," that every one might be at liberty to drink.

The Gloss is, "And some that were deputed in that affair went abroad to see if the fields were sown with corn, and the vineyards planted with heterogeneous trees."

9. There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

[*Five barley loaves.*] Compare [2 Kings 4:42](#), and see *Chetub.*: where the masters enhance the number of men fed by Elisha to two thousand two hundred. "Every hundred men had their single loaf set before them." The Gloss is, "Twenty loaves, and the loaf of the first fruits, behold one-and-twenty; *the green ear*, behold two-and-twenty: these were all singly set, each of them before a hundred men; and so behold there were two thousand and two hundred fed." By the same proportion, in our Saviour's miraculous feeding the people, one single loaf must serve for a thousand.

12. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

[*The fragments that remain.*] It was a custom and rule, that when they ate together, they should leave something to those that served: which remnant was called *peah*. And it is remarked upon R. Joshua, that, upon a journey, having something provided for him by a hospitable widow, he ate all up, and left nothing to her that ministered. Where the Gloss: "Every one leaves a *little portion* in the dish, and gives it to those that serve; which is called the servitor's part."

Although I would not confound the *fragments that remain* with the *peah*, nor would affirm that what was left was in observation of this rule and custom; yet we may observe, that *the twelve baskets full of fragments* left at this time answered to the number of the twelve apostles that ministered. It is otherwise elsewhere.

24. When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

[*They also took shipping.*] They had gone afoot from Capernaum to the desert of Bethsaida, [Mark 6:33](#), by the bridge of Chammath, near Tiberias. But they sail back in ships, partly that they might follow Jesus with the greater speed; and perhaps that they might reach time enough at the synagogue: for that was the day in which they assembled in their synagogues.

27. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

[*For him hath God the Father sealed.*] The Jews speak much of *the seal of God*; which may not be impertinently remembered at this time. "*What is the seal of the holy blessed God?*" R. Bibai, in the name of R. Reuben, saith, *Truth. But what is truth?* R. Bon saith, *The living God and King eternal.* Resh Lachish saith, Aleph is the first letter of the alphabet, Mem the middle, and Tav the last: q.d. I the Lord am the first; I received nothing of any one; and beside me there is no God: for there is not any that intermingles with me; and I am with the last."

There is a story of the great synagogue weeping, praying, and fasting; "*At length there was a little scroll fell from the firmament to them, in which was written, Truth.*" R. Chaninah saith, Hence learn that truth is the seal of God."

We may easily apply all this to Christ, who is "the way, the *truth*, and the life," [John 14:6](#): he is the express image of his Father, the truth of the Father; whom the Father, by his seal and diploma, hath confirmed and ratified; as the great ruler both of his kingdom and family.

28. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

[*What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?*] Observe, first, the rule about workmen or labourers: "It is granted by the permission of the law, that the labourer shall eat of those things wherein he laboureth. If he works in the vintage, let him eat of the grapes; if in gathering the fig trees, let him eat of the figs; if in the harvest, let him eat of the ears of the corn," &c.

Nay further; "It is lawful for the workmen to eat of those things wherein he worketh; a melon, to the value of a penny; and dates, to the value of a penny," &c.

Compare these passages with what our Saviour speaks; "Labour (saith he) for that meat which endureth to everlasting life." Now, what is that work of God which we should do, that might entitle us to eat of that food? Believe in Christ, and ye shall feed on him.

31. Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

[*Our fathers did eat manna.*] I. They seek a sign of him worthy the Messiah; and in general they seem to look towards those dainties which that nation fondly dreamed their Messiah would bring along with him when he should come; but more particularly they expect manna.

"Ye seek me (saith our Saviour), not because ye did see the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." Were all these so very poor that they had need to live at another man's charge? or should follow Christ merely for bread? It is possible they might expect other kind of dainties, according to the vain musings of that nation. Perhaps he was such a kind of slave to his belly that said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God," [Luke 14:15](#).

"Many affirm that the hope of Israel is, that Messiah shall come and raise the dead; and they shall be gathered together in the garden of Eden, and shall eat and drink, and satiate themselves all the days of the world....and that there are houses built of precious stones, beds of silk, and rivers flowing with wine and spicy oil." "He made manna to descend for them, in which were all manner of tastes; and every Israelite found in it what his palate was chiefly pleased with. If he desired fat in it, he had it. In it the young men tasted bread, the old men honey, and the children oil....So it shall be in the world to come [the days of the Messiah]: he shall give Israel peace, and they shall sit down and eat in the garden of Eden; and all nations shall behold their condition; as it is said, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry, [Isaiah 65:13](#)."

Alas, poor wretches! how do you deceive yourselves! for it is to you that this passage of being hungry while others eat does directly point.

Infinite are the dreams of this kind, particularly about Leviathan and Behemoth, that are to be served up in these feasts.

II. Compare with this especially what the Jews propound to themselves about their being fed with manna: "The latter Redeemer" [that is, Messiah; for he had spoken of the former redeemer, Moses, immediately before] "shall be revealed against them, &c. And whither will he lead them? Some say into the wilderness of Judah; others, into the wilderness of Sihon and Og." [Note that our Saviour the day before, when he fed such a multitude so miraculously, was in the desert of Og, viz. in Batanea, or Bashan.] *And shall make manna descend for them.* Note that. So *Midras Coheleth*: "The former redeemer caused manna to descend for them; in like manner shall our latter Redeemer *cause manna to come down*, as it is written, 'There shall be a handful of corn in the earth,' [Psalm 72:16](#)."

32. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

[*Moses gave you not that bread from heaven.*] The Gemarists affirm that manna was given for the merits of Moses. "There were three good shepherds of Israel, Moses, Aaron, and Miriam: and there were three good things given us by their hands, a well, a cloud, and manna: the well, for the merits of Miriam; the pillar of the cloud, for the merits of Aaron; manna, *for the merits of Moses.*"

Contrary, therefore, to this opinion of theirs, it may well be said, *Moses did not give you this bread:* i.e. it was by no means for any merits of his. But what further he might intend by these words, you may learn from the several expositors.

39. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

[*Should raise it up again at the last day.*] So also verse 40 and 44, the emphasis lies in *the last day.*

I. They looked (as hath been already said) for the resurrection of the dead at the coming of the Messiah. Take one instance: "R. Jeremiah said, 'When I die, bury me in my shirt, and with my shoes on, &c.; that when Messiah comes I may be ready dressed to meet him.'"

Apply here the words of our Saviour: "Ye look for the resurrection when Messiah comes; and since ye seek a sign of me, perhaps ye have it in your minds that I should raise some from the dead. Let this suffice, that whoever comes to me and believes in me shall be raised up *at the last day.*"

II. This was the opinion of that nation concerning the generation in the wilderness. "The generation in the wilderness have no part in the world to come, neither shall they stand in judgment."

Now as to this generation in the wilderness, there had been some discourse before, verse 31; viz. of those that had eaten manna in the wilderness. "But that manna did not so feed them unto eternal life (as you yourselves confess) as that they shall live again, and have any part in the world to come. But I, the true bread from heaven, do feed those that eat of me to eternal life; and such as do eat of me, i.e. that believe in me, *I will raise them up at the last day,* so that they shall have part in the world to come."

45. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

[*And they shall be all taught of God.*] [Isaiah 54:13](#): "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord." The 'children of Israel,' 'of Jerusalem,' and 'of Zion,' are very frequently mentioned by the prophets for those Gentiles that were to be converted to the faith: *taught* before of the devil, by his idols and oracles; but they should become the children of the church, and be *taught of God.*

The Rabbins do fondly apply these words of the prophet, when by *thy children* they understand *the disciples of the wise men*. "The disciples of the wise men multiply peace in the world; as it is written, 'All thy children shall be taught of God, and great shall be the peace of thy children.' *Do not read, thy children; but thy builders.*"

But who were there among mortals that were more *taught of men* and less of *God*, being learned in nothing but the traditions of the fathers? He must be *taught of the Father* that would come to the Son; not of those sorry fathers: he must be *taught of God*, not those masters of traditions.

51. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

[*The bread that I will give is my flesh.*] He tacitly confutes that foolish conceit of theirs about I know not what dainties the Messiah should treat them with; and slights those trifles, by teaching that all the dainties which Christ had provided were himself. Let them not look for wonderful messes, rich feasts, &c.; he will give them himself to eat; bread beyond all other provisions whatever; food from heaven; and such as bringeth salvation.

As to this whole passage of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, it will be necessary to premise that of [Mark 4:11, 12](#): "I speak by parables; and all these things are done in parables; that seeing they may see, and not perceive," &c. Verse 34: "Without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples."

And what can we suppose in this place but parable wholly?

I. There was nothing more common in the schools of the Jews than the phrases of 'eating and drinking' in a metaphorical sense. And surely it would sound very harsh, if not to be understood here metaphorically, but literally. What! to drink blood? a thing so severely interdicted the Jews once and again. What! to eat man's flesh? a thing abhorrent to human nature; but above all abhorrent to the Jews, to whom it was not lawful to eat *a member of a living beast*, nor touch *the member of a dead man*.

"*Every eating and drinking* of which we find mention in the book of Ecclesiastes is to be understood of the Law and good works," i.e. by way of parable and metaphor. By the Capernaite's leave, therefore, and the Romanist's too, we will understand the *eating and drinking* in this place figuratively and parabolically.

II. *Bread* is very frequently used in the Jewish writers for *doctrine*. So that when Christ talks of *eating his flesh*, he might perhaps hint to them that he would feed his followers not only with his *doctrines*, but with *himself* too.

The whole stay of bread, [Isaiah 3:1](#). "*These are the masters of doctrine*; as it is written, 'Come, eat of my bread,' [Proverbs 9:5](#)." "*Feed him with bread*, that is, Make him take pains in the warfare of the Law, as it is written, 'Come, eat of my bread.'"

Moses fed you with doctrine and manna, but I feed you with doctrine and my flesh.

III. There is mention, even amongst the Talmudists themselves, of eating the Messiah. "Rabh saith, *Israel shall eat the years of Messiah.*" [The Gloss is, "The plenty and satiety that shall be in the days of the Messiah shall belong to the Israelites."] "Rabh Joseph saith, "True, indeed: but who shall eat thereof? *Shall Chillek and Billek* [two judges in Sodom] *eat of it?*" We must except against that of R. Hillel, who saith, *Messiah is not likely to come to Israel, for they have already devoured him in the days of Hezekiah.*" Those words of Hillel are repeated, fol. 99. 1.

Behold, here is mention of *eating the Messiah*, and none quarrel the phraseology. They excepted against Hillel, indeed, that he should say that the Messiah was so eaten in the days of Hezekiah, that he was not like to appear again in Israel; but they made no scruple of the scheme and manner of speech at all. For they plainly enough understood what was meant by *eating the Messiah*; that is, that in the days of Hezekiah they so much partook of the Messiah, they received him so greedily, embraced him so gladly, and in a manner devoured him, that they must look for him no more in the ages to come. Gloss upon the place: "Messiah will come no more to Israel, for Hezekiah was the Messiah."

IV. But the expression seems very harsh, when he speaks of "eating his flesh" and "drinking his blood." He tells us, therefore, that these things must be taken in a spiritual sense: "Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" That is, "When you shall have seen me ascending into heaven, you will then find how impossible a thing it is to eat my flesh and drink my blood bodily: for how can you eat the flesh of one that is in heaven? You may know, therefore, that I mean eating me spiritually: 'for the words that I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life.'"

V. But what sense did they take it in that did understand it? Not in a sacramental sense surely, unless they were then instructed in the death and passion of our Saviour; for the sacrament hath a relation to his death: but it sufficiently appears elsewhere that they knew or expected nothing of that. Much less did they take it in a Jewish sense; for the Jewish conceits were about the mighty advantages that should accrue to them from the Messiah, and those merely earthly and sensual. But to partake of the Messiah truly is to partake of himself, his pure nature, his righteousness, his spirit; and to live and grow and receive nourishment from that participation of him. Things which the Jewish schools heard little of, did not believe, did not think; but things which our blessed Saviour expresseth lively and comprehensively enough, by that of eating his flesh and drinking his blood.

2. Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.

[*The Jews' feast of Tabernacles.*] Tisri. Let us draw down this month from its beginning to this feast of Tabernacles:

1. "The first day of the month Tisri was the beginning of the year, for stating the years, the intermissions of the seventh year, and the jubilees."

Upon this day was the 'blowing of trumpets,' [Leviticus 23:24](#); and persons were sent out to give notice of the beginning of the year. On this day began the year of the world 3960, in the middle of which year Christ was crucified.

2. *The second day*; observed also as holy by the Jews that were in Babylon, that they might be sure not to miss the beginning of the year.

3. A fast for the murder of Gedaliah: for so they expound those words, ([Zech 8:19](#)) "the fast of the seventh month."

4. This day was the high priest in the apartment to which he then betook himself from his own house, that he might inure himself by exercise to the rites of the day of Atonement approaching, and be ready and fitted for the service of that day. "Seven days before the day of Expiation they sequestered the chief priest from his own house, and shut him up into an apartment, substituting to him another priest, lest accidentally there should some sort of uncleanness befall him."

5-8. All those seven days, after he betook himself from his own house to this chamber until the day of atonement, he sprinkles the blood of the daily sacrifice; offers the incense; snuffs the lamps; and brings the head and legs of the sacrifice to the altar, that he may be the more handy in his office upon the Expiation-day. In those seven days they send him some of the elders of the *Beth Din*, that they may read before him the office of that day. And at length those elders deliver him to the elders of the priesthood, who instruct him in handling the incense; and lead him into the apartment *abtines*; where they swear him, that he shall perform the service of that day according to rule, and not according to the Sadducees.

9. Whereas for the whole seven days they permitted him to eat according to his usual custom; the evening of this day approaching, they diet him more sparingly, lest a full stomach should occasion sleep. They spend the whole night waking; and when they find him nodding or inclining to sleepiness, then, either by words or some noise, they rouse and waken him.

10. The day of Expiation, a solemn fast. On this day began the year of jubilee, when it came about, [Leviticus 25:9](#). And indeed this year, which is now under our consideration, was the twenty-eighth jubilee, reckoning from the seventh year of Joshua, wherein the land as subdued and rested from war, [Joshua 11:23](#).

11-13. The multitude now gather together towards the feast of Tabernacles, that they might purify themselves before the feast, and prepare necessaries for it, viz. little tents, citrons, bundles of palms and willows, &c. But if any were defiled by the touch of a dead body, such

were obliged to betake themselves to Jerusalem, before the feast of Expiation, that they might undergo seven days' purification before the feast of Tabernacles.

14. They were generally cut or trimmed on the vespers of the feast for the honour of it.

15. The first day of the feast of Tabernacles, a feast-day. Thirteen young bullocks offered, &c. [Numbers 29:13](#), and so on. The preparation of the Chagigah. They lodge that night in Jerusalem.

16. The second day of the feast. Twelve young bullocks offered. The appearance of all the males in the court.

17. The third day. Eleven young bullocks.

18. The fourth day. Ten.

19. The fifth day. Nine.

20. The sixth day. Eight.

21. The seventh day. Seven.

22. The eighth day. One young bullock offered.

Upon all these days there was a pouring out of water upon the altar with wine (a thing not used at any other time); and for the sake of that, great joy, and singing, and dancing; such as was not all the year besides.

"At the close of the first day of the feast, they went down into the Court of the Women, and there prepared a great stage." [That is, benches on which the women stood above, and the men below.] "Golden candlesticks were there" fixed to the walls: "over these were golden cups, to which were four ladders set; by which four of the younger priests went up, having bottles in their hands that contained a hundred and twenty logs, which they emptied into every cup. Of the rags of the garments and girdles of the priests, they made wicks to light those lamps; and there was not a street throughout all Jerusalem that did not shine with that light."

"The religious and devout danced before them, having lighted torches in their hands, and sang songs and doxologies. The Levites with harps, psalteries, cymbals, and other instruments of music without number, stood upon those fifteen steps by which they went down from the Court of the Women, according to the fifteen psalms of degrees, and sang. Two priests also stood in the upper gate, which goes down from the Court of Israel to the Court of the Women, with two trumpets in their hands. *When the cock crew* [or the president gave his signal], the trumpets sounded: when they came to the tenth step, they sounded again: when they came to the court they sounded: when they came to the pavement they sounded: and so went on sounding the trumpets till they came to the east gate of the court. When they came thither, they turned their faces from the east to west, and said, 'Our fathers in this place, turning their backs upon the Temple, and their faces towards the east, worshipped the sun; but we turn our faces to God,'" &c.

"The Rabbins have a tradition. Some of them while they were dancing said, 'Blessed be our youth, for that they have not made our old men ashamed.' *These were the religious, and men of good works.* And some said, 'Blessed be our old men, that have made atonement for our youth.' And both one and the other said, 'Blessed be he who hath not sinned; and he who hath, let it be forgiven him.'"

As to the reason of this mirth and pleasantness, we shall see more in our notes on verse 38.

4. For *there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world.*

[*In secret; openly.*] these brethren of Christ, whoever they were, did not as yet believe; because they saw him live so obscure, and did not behave himself with that pomp and outward appearance which they expected in the Messiah. And therefore they persuade him to go into Judea, where he had baptized most disciples, [John 3:22](#), that, upon the lustre of his miracles, he might shine with greater splendour and majesty.

8. Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast: for my time is not yet full come.

[*I go not up yet unto this feast.*] That passage in St. Luke, chapter 9:51, "When the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem" must have relation to this story; as will be very evident to any one that will study the harmony of the gospel; especially if they observe, that this evangelist tells us of two journeys after this which Christ took to Jerusalem, viz. chapter 13:22, to the feast of the Dedication; and chapter 17:11, to the feast of the Passover. He had absented himself a long time from Judea, upon the account of those snares that had been laid for him; but now, when he had not above six months to live and converse in this world, he determines resolutely to give all due manifestations of himself, both in Judea, and wherever else he should happen to come. And for this cause he sent those seventy disciples before his face, into every city and place where he himself would come. [Luke 10:1](#).

When therefore he tells his unbelieving brethren, *I go not up yet, &c.*, he does not deny that he would go at all, but only that he would not go *yet*: partly, because he had no need of those previous cleansings which they had, if they had touched any dead body; partly, that he might choose the most fit season for the manifestation of himself.

But if we take notice how Christ was received into Jerusalem five days before the Passover, with those very rites and solemnities that were used at the feast of Tabernacles, viz. "with branches of palms," &c. chapter 12:13, these words may seem to relate to that time; and so the word *feast* might not denote the individual feast that was now instant, but the *kind* of feast, or festival-time. As if he had said, "You would have me go up to this feast, that

I may be received by my disciples with applause; but I do not go up to that kind of festivity; the time appointed for that affair is not yet come."

14. Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

[*About the midst of the feast.*] *On some work-day of the feast.* But was he not there on the first or second day of the feast, to perform those things that ought to have been performed, making ready the Chagigahs, and appearing in the court? If he was there the second day, he might be well enough said to be there *about the midst of the feast*, for that day was not a festival; unless perchance at that time it might have been the sabbath: and for absence the first day, there were certain *compensations* might be made.

"*The compensations that might be made for the first day* were these: if any one was obliged to offer on the first day, and did not do it, he compensated by offering upon any other day."

But that which is here said, that "he went up into the Temple and taught, *about the midst of the feast*," need not suppose he was absent from the beginning of it: nor ought we rashly to think that he would neglect any thing that had been prescribed and appointed in the law. But it may be reasonably enough questioned, whether he nicely observed all those rites and usages of the feast that had been invented by the scribes. That is, whether he had *a little tent* or *tabernacle* of his own, or made use of some friend's, which was allowed and lawful to be done. Whether he made fourteen meals in that little booth, as is prescribed. Whether he carried *bundles of palms and willows* about the altar, as also *a citron*; whether he made his tent for all those seven days his fixed habitation, and his own house only occasional; and many other things, largely and nicely prescribed in the canons and rules about this feast.

19. Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

[*Why go ye about to kill me?*] The emphasis or force of this clause lies chiefly in the word *me*: "Why go you about to kill *me*? none of you all perform the law as you ought; and yet your great design is to kill *me*, as a transgressor of it: why *me*, and not others?"

22. Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers); and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.

[*Ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.*] *They do all things that are necessary towards circumcision on the sabbath day.* "R. Akibah saith, Any work that may be done on the vespers of the sabbath must not be done on the sabbath; but circumcision, when it cannot be done on the vespers of the sabbath, may be done on the sabbath day."

"Danger of life nulleth the sabbath: *circumcision also, and its cure*, nulleth the sabbath."

But as to this matter, they distinguish in *Bereshith Rabba*: "Jacob of Nabor taught us in Tsur: *It is lawful to circumcise the son of a stranger on the sabbath day.* R. Haggai heard this, and sent to him saying, *Come and be disciplined,*" &c. And a little after; "R. Haggai saith to

him, *Lie down* [to take discipline] *and I will teach you*. If a heathen come to you, and say, I would be made a Jew, so that he would be circumcised on the sabbath day, or on the day of Expiation, will we, for his sake, profane those days? Do we ever profane those days either of the sabbath, or Expiation, for any other than one born of an Israelitess only?" We meet with the same also in *Bemidbar Rabba*, and *Midras Coheleth*.

Let us look a little into the way of Christ's arguing in this place: to me it seems thus: "Moses, therefore, gave you circumcision, that you might rightly understand the nature of the sabbath: for, I. Circumcision was to be observed by the fathers before Moses, punctually on the eighth day. II. Now, therefore, when Moses established the laws about the sabbath, he did by no means forbid the work of circumcision on the sabbath, if it happened to be the eighth day. III. *For this* did Moses give and continue circumcision among you, that you might learn from hence to judge of the nature of the sabbath day. And let us, therefore, argue it: If by Moses' institution and allowance it was lawful, for the advantage of the infant, to circumcise him on the sabbath day, is it not warrantable, by Moses' law, for the advantage of a grown man, to heal him on the sabbath day? If it be lawful to wound an infant by circumcision, surely it is equally, if not much more, lawful to heal a man by a word's speaking."

27. Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

[*When Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.*] How doth this agree with verse 42, and with [Matthew 2:5, 6](#)? They doubted not, indeed, but he should give the first manifestation of himself from Bethlehem; but then they supposed he would be hid again; and after some space of time make a new appearance, from what place no one could tell.

Jewish authors tell you, that Christ, before their times, had indeed been born in Bethlehem, but immediately snatched away they knew not whither, and so hid that he could not be found. We related the whole story before in our notes at [Matthew 2:1](#).

Their conceptions in this thing we have explained to us in *Midras Schir*: "My beloved is like a roe or a young hart," [Canticles 2:9](#). A roe appears and is hid, appears and is hid again. So our first redeemer [Moses] appeared and was hid, and at length appeared again. So our latter Redeemer [Messiah] shall be revealed to them, and shall be hid again from them; and how long shall he be hid from them?" &c. A little after; "In the end of forty-five days he shall be revealed again, and cause manna to descend amongst them."

They conceive a twofold manifestation of the Messiah; the first, in Bethlehem; but will straightway disappear and lie hid. At length he will shew himself; but from what place and at what time that will be, no one knew. In his first appearance in Bethlehem, he should do nothing that was memorable; in his second was the hope and expectation of the nation. The Jews therefore who tell our Saviour here, that "when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is," whether they knew him to have been born at Bethlehem or no, yet by his wonderful works they conceive this to have been the second manifestation of himself: and therefore

only doubt whether he should be the Messiah or no, because they knew the place [Nazareth] from whence he came; having been taught by tradition, that Messiah should come the second time from a place perfectly unknown to all men.

28. Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

[*He that sent me is true, whom ye know not.*] "The men of Judea *may be credited* as to the purity of the wine and the oil." Gloss: "Even the people of the land, the very vulgar sort, may be credited for the purity of the wine and the oil, which is dedicated by them to the altar in the time of the vintage or pressing."

Men not known by name or face to the priests, yet if they offered wine or oil, were credited as to the purity and fitness of either, from their place of habitation. There are numberless instances of men, though perfectly unknown, yet that may be credited, either as to tithes, or separating the *Trumah*, or giving their testimony, &c. To the same sense our Saviour, chapter 5:31, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true"; i.e. in your judicatories it is not of any value with you, where no one is allowed to be a witness for himself. And in this place, "'He that hath sent me,' although you know him not, yet 'is he true, or worthy belief,' however I myself may not be so amongst you."

35. Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

[*To the dispersed among the Gentiles, &c.*] I confess *Gentiles*, in the apostle's writings, does very frequently denote the *Gentiles*: to which that of the Rabbins agrees well enough, *the wisdom of the Greeks*, i.e. *the wisdom of the Gentiles*. But here I would take *Gentiles* in its proper signification for the *Greeks*. It is doubtful, indeed, whether by the *dispersed among the Gentiles* ought to be understood the *dispersed Greeks*, or the *Jews dispersed amongst the Greeks*. There was no nation under heaven so dispersed and diffused throughout the world as both Greeks and Jews were.

In the very heart of all the barbarous nations the Greeks had their cities, and their language spoken amongst the Indians and Persians, &c.

And into what countries the Jews were scattered, the writings, both sacred and profane, do frequently instance. So that if the words are to be taken strictly of the *Greeks*, they bear this sense with them; "Is he going here and there amongst the *Greeks*, so widely and remotely dispersed in the world?"

That distinction between the Hebrews and the Hellenists explains the thing. The Jews of the first dispersion, viz. into Babylon, Assyria, and the countries adjacent, are called *Hebrews*, because they used the *Hebrew*, or Transeuphratensian language: and how they

came to be dispersed into those countries we all know well enough, viz. that they were led away captive by the Babylonians and Persians. But those that were scattered amongst the *Greeks* used the *Greek* tongue, and were called *Hellenists*: and it is not easy to tell upon what account, or by what accident, they came to be dispersed amongst the *Greeks*, or other nations about. Those that lived in Palestine, they were *Hebrews* indeed as to their language, but they were not of *the dispersion*, either to one place or another, because they dwelt in their own proper country. The Babylonish dispersion was esteemed by the Jews the more noble, the more famous, and the more holy of any other. "The land of Babylon is in the same degree of purity with the land of Israel." "The Jewish offspring in Babylon is more valuable than that among the *Greeks*, even purer than that in Judea itself." Whence for a Palestine Jew to go to the Babylonish dispersion, was to go to a people and country equal, if not superior, to his own: but to go to the dispersion among *the Greeks*, was to go into unclean regions, where the very dust of the land defiled them: it was to go to an inferior race of Jews, and more impure in their blood; it was to go into nations most heathenized.

37. In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

[*In the last day, that great day of the feast.*] The evangelist speaks according to a received opinion of that people: for from divine institution it does not appear that *the last day of the feast* had any greater mark set upon it than the first: nay, it might seem of lower consideration than all the rest. For on the first day were offered thirteen young bullocks upon the altar; on the second, twelve; and so fewer and fewer, till on the seventh day it came to seven; and on this eighth and *last day of the feast* there was but one only. As also for the whole seven days there were offered each day fourteen lambs, but on this eighth day seven only, [Numbers 29](#). So that if the numbers of the sacrifices add any thing to the dignity of the day, this *last day*, will seem the most inconsiderable, and not like the *great day* of the feast.

I. But what the Jews' opinion was about this matter and this day, we may learn from themselves:

"*There were seventy bullocks, according to the seventy nations of the world. But for what is the single bullock? It is for the singular nation [the Jewish].* A parable. It is like a great king that said to his servants, 'Make ready a great feast'; but the last day said to his friend, 'Make ready some little matter, *that I may refresh myself with thee.*'" The Gloss is, "I have no advantage or refreshment in that great feast with them, but in this little one with thee."

"On the eighth day it shall be a holy day; for so saith the Scripture, 'For my love they are my adversaries, but my prayer is for them,' [Psalm 109](#). Thou seest, O God, that Israel, in the feast of tabernacles, offers before thee seventy bullocks for the seventy nations. Israel, therefore, say unto thee, O eternal Lord, behold we offer seventy bullocks for these; it is but reasonable, therefore, that they should love us; but on the contrary, as it is written, 'For our love they are our adversaries.' The holy blessed God, therefore, saith to Israel, 'Offer for

yourselves on the eighth day." A parable. "This is like a king, who made a feast for seven days, and invited all the men in that province, for those seven days of the feast: but when those seven days were past, he saith to his friend, 'We have done what is needful to be done towards these men; let thee and me return to enjoy together whatever comes to hand, be it but one pound of flesh, or fish, or herbs.' So the holy blessed God saith to Israel, 'The eighth day shall be a feast or holy day,'" &c.

"They offer seventy bullocks for the seventy nations, to make atonement for them, that the rain may fall upon the fields of all the world; for, in the feast of tabernacles, *judgment is made as to the waters*": i.e. God determines what rains shall be for the year following.

Hence, therefore, this *last day of the feast* grew into such esteem in that nation above the other days; because, on the other seven days they thought supplications and sacrifices were offered not so much for themselves as for the nations of the world, but the solemnities of the eighth day were wholly in their own behalf. And hence the determination and finishing of the feast when the seven days were over, and the beginning, as it were, of a new one on the eighth day. For,

II. They did not reckon the eighth day as included within the feast, but a festival day separately and by itself.

The eighth day is a feast by itself, according to these letters, by which are meant,

1. *The casting of lots.* Gloss: "As to the bullocks of the seven days, there were no lots cast to determine what course of priests should offer them, because they took it in order, &c.; but on the eighth day they cast lots."

2. *A peculiar benediction by itself.*

3. *A feast by itself.* Gloss: "For on this day *they did not sit in their tents.*" Whence that is not unworthy our observation out of Maimonides; "If any one, either through ignorance or presumption, have not made a booth for himself on the first day of the feast [which is holy], let him do it on the next day; nay, at the very end of the seventh day." Note that, "at the very end of the seventh day"; and yet there was no use of booths on the eighth day.

4. *A peculiar sacrifice.* Not of six bullocks, which ought to have been, if that day were to have been joined to the rest of the feast, but one only.

5. *A song by itself.* Otherwise sung than on other days.

6. *The benediction of the day by itself;* or as others, the *royal blessing*; according to that [1 Kings 8:66](#), "On the eighth day Solomon sent the people away: and they blessed the king." But the former most obtains.

To all which may be added what follows in the same place about this day; "A man is bound to sing the Hallel" [viz. [Psalms 113-118](#)].

He is bound to rejoice; that is, to offer thank-offerings for the joy of that feast.

And he bound is to honour that last day, the eighth day of the feast, as well as all the rest.

On this day they did not use their *booths*, nor their *branches of palms*, nor their *pome-citrons*: but they had their *offering of water* upon this day as well as the rest.

38. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

[*Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*] To this offering of water, perhaps, our Saviour's words may have some respect; for it was only at this feast that it was used, and none other. You have the manner of this service described in the place above quoted, to this purpose:

After what manner is this offering of water? "They filled a golden phial containing three logs out of Siloam. When they came to the water gate" [a gate of the Temple so called, as some would have it, because that water which was fetched from Siloam was brought through it], "they sounded their trumpets and sang. Then a priest goes up by the ascent of the altar, and turns to the left. There were two silver vessels, one with water, the other with wine: he pours some of the water into the wine, and some of the wine into the water, and so performs the service."

"R. Judah saith, They offer one log every of those eight days: and they say to him that offered it, 'Lift up thy hand': for upon a certain time there was one that offered it upon his feet" [Gemar. He was a Sadducee. Gloss: The Sadducees do not approve the offering of water], "and the whole congregation pelted him with their citrons. That day a horn of the altar was broke."

"Whoever hath not seen the rejoicing that was upon the drawing of this water, hath never seen any rejoicing at all."

This offering of water, they say, was a tradition given at mount Sinai: and that the prophet Jonah was inspired by the Holy Ghost upon this offering of water.

If you ask what foundation this usage hath, Rambam will tell us, "*There are some kind of remote hints of it in the law.* However, those that will not believe the traditional law, will not believe this article about the sacrifice of water."

I. They bring for it the authority of the prophet Isaiah, *the house of drawing*; for it is written, "With joy shall ye draw water," &c. [Isaiah 12:3](#).

This rejoicing (which we have described before) they called *the rejoicing of the law*, or *for the law*: for by *waters* they often understand the *law*, [Isaiah 55:1](#), and several other places; and from thence the rejoicing for these waters.

II. But they add moreover, that this drawing and offering of water signifies the pouring out of the Holy Spirit.

"Why do they call it *the house of drawing*? Because thence they draw the Holy Spirit." Gloss in *Succah*, ubi supr.: "In the Jerusalem Talmud it is expounded, that they draw there the Holy Spirit, for a divine breathing is upon the man through joy."

Another Gloss: "*The flute also sounded* for increase of the joy." Drawing of water, therefore, took its rise from the words of Isaiah: they rejoiced over the waters as a symbol and figure of the law; and they looked for the holy Spirit upon this joy of theirs.

III. But still they add further: "Why doth the law command, saying, Offer ye water on the feast of Tabernacles? The holy blessed God saith, Offer ye waters before me on the feast of Tabernacles, *that the rains of the year may be blessed to you.*" For they had an opinion, that God, at that feast, decreed and determined on the rains that should fall the following year. Hence that in the place before mentioned, "In the feast of Tabernacles it is determined concerning the waters."

And now let us reflect upon this passage of our Saviour, "He that believeth in me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." They agree with what he had said before to the Samaritan woman, chapter 4:14; and both expressions are upon the occasion of drawing of water.

The Jews acknowledge that the latter Redeemer is to procure water for them, as their former redeemer Moses had done. But as to the true meaning of this, they are very blind and ignorant, and might be better taught by the Messiah here, if they had any mind to learn.

I. Our Saviour calls them to a belief in him from their own boast and glorying in the law: and therefore I rather think those words, *as the Scripture hath said*, should relate to the foregoing clause, "Whosoever believeth in me, as the Scripture hath spoken about believing, [Isaiah 28:16](#), 'I lay in Sion for a foundation a tried stone: he that believeth,' &c.: [Habakkuk 2:4](#). 'The just shall live by his faith.'" And the Jews themselves confess, that six hundred and thirteen precepts of the law may all be reduced to this, "The just shall live by faith"; and to that of [Amos 5:6](#), "Seek the Lord, and ye shall live."

II. Let these words, then, of our Saviour be set in opposition to this right and usage in the feast of Tabernacles of which we have been speaking: "Have you such wonderful rejoicing at drawing a little water from Siloam? He that believes in me, whole rivers of living waters shall flow out of his own belly. Do you think the waters mentioned in the prophets do signify the law? They do indeed denote the Holy Spirit, which the Messiah will dispense to those that believe in him: and do you expect the Holy Spirit from the law, or from your rejoicing in the law? The Holy Spirit is of faith, and not of the law," [Galatians 3:2](#).

39. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

[*For the Holy Ghost was not yet.*] These words have relation to that most received opinion of the Jews about the departure of the Holy Spirit after the death of Zechariah and Malachi. To this also must that passage be interpreted, when those of Ephesus say, [Acts 19:2](#), "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost": that is, We have indeed heard of the Holy Ghost's departure after the death of our last prophets, but of his return and redonation of him we have not yet heard. *O Lord, revive thy work in the midst*

of the years, in the midst of the years make known, [Habakkuk 3:2](#). He calls the seventy years of captivity *the midst of the years*: for, on the one hand, it had been seven times seventy years from the birth of Samuel, the first of the prophets, to the captivity, and, on the other hand, it was seven times seventy years from the end of the captivity to the death of Christ. The prayer is, that the gift of prophecy might not be lost, but preserved, whiles the people should live exiled in a heathen country. And according to the twofold virtue of prophecy, the one of working miracles, the other of foretelling things to come, he uses a twofold phrase, *revive thy work*, and *make known*. Nor indeed was that gift lost in the captivity, but was very illustrious in Daniel, Ezekiel, &c. It returned with those that came back from the captivity, and was continued for one generation; but then (the whole canon of the Old Testament being perfected and made up) it departed, not returning till the dawn of the gospel, at what time it appeared in inspiring the blessed Virgin, John Baptist and his parents, &c.: and yet "the Holy Ghost was not yet come," that is, not answerably to that large and signal promise of it in [Joel 2:28](#).

49. But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

[*This people, &c.*] *The people of the earth*, in common phrase, opposed to *the disciples of the wise men*, whom they call *the holy people*; but the former they call *the accursed*.

52. They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

[*Art thou also of Galilee?*] It seems to be spoken scoffingly: "Art thou of those Galileans that believe in this Galilean?"

Chapter 8

Expositors, almost with one consent, do note that this story of the woman taken in adultery, was not in some ancient copies; and whiles I am considering upon what accident this should be, there are two little stories in Eusebius that come to mind. The one we have in these words, *He [Papias] tells us also another history concerning a woman accused of many crimes before our Lord, which history indeed the Gospel according to the Hebrews makes mention of*. All that do cite that story do suppose he means this adulteress. The other story he tells us in his *Life of Constantine*: he brings in Constantine writing thus to him: "I think good to signify to your prudence, that you would take care that fifty volumes of those Scriptures, whose preparation and use you know so necessary for the church, and which beside may be easily read and carried about, may, by very skilful penmen, be written out in fair parchment."

So indeed the Latin interpreter: but may we not by the word *volumes of those Scriptures* understand the Gospels compacted into one *body* by way of harmony? The reason of this

conjecture is twofold: partly those Eusebian canons formed into such a kind of harmony; partly because, cap. 37, he tells us that, having finished his work, he sent to the emperor *threes and fours*: which words if they are not to be understood of the evangelists, sometimes three, sometimes four, (the greater number including the less,) embodied together by such a harmony, I confess I cannot tell what to make of them.

But be it so that it must not be understood of such a harmony; and grant we further that the Latin interpreter hits him right, when he supposes Eusebius to have picked out here and there, according to his pleasure and judgment, some parts of the Holy Scriptures to be transcribed; surely he would never have omitted the evangelists, the noblest and the most profitable part of the New Testament.

If therefore he ascribed this story of the adulteress to the trifler Papias, or at least to the Gospel according to the Hebrews only, without doubt he would never insert it in copies transcribed by him. Hence possibly might arise the omission of it in some copies after Eusebius' times. It is in copies before his age, viz. in Ammonius, Tatianus, &c.

1. Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.

[*Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.*] But whether to the town of Bethany, or to some booth fixed in that mount, is uncertain. For because of the infinite multitude that had swarmed together at those feasts, it is probable many of them had made themselves tents about the city, that they might not be too much straitened within the walls, though they kept within the bounds still of a sabbath day's journey.

"And thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents,' [Deuteronomy 16:7](#). The first night of the feast they were bound to lodge within the city: after that it was lawful for them to abide without the walls; but it must be within the bounds of a sabbath day's journey. Whereas therefore it is said, 'Thou shalt go unto thy tents'; this is the meaning of it. Thou shalt go into thy tents that are without the walls of Jerusalem, but by no means into thine own house."

It is said, chapter 7:53, that "every man went unto his own house"; upon which words let that be a comment that we meet with, *After the daily evening sacrifice, the fathers of the Sanhedrim went home.*

The eighth day therefore being ended, the history of which we have in chapter 7, the following night was out of the compass of the feast; so that they had done the dancings of which we have spoken before. The evangelist, therefore, does not without cause say that "every man went unto his own house"; for otherwise they must have gone to those dancings, if the next day had not been the sabbath.

3. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst.

[*A woman taken in adultery.*] Our Saviour calls the generation *an adulterous generation*, [Matthew 12:39](#): see also [James 4:4](#), which indeed might be well enough understood in its literal and proper sense.

"From the time that murderers have multiplied amongst us, the beheading of the heifer hath ceased: and since the increase of adultery, the bitter waters have been out of use."

"*Since the time that adultery so openly prevailed* under the second Temple, the Sanhedrim abrogated that way of trial by the bitter water; grounding it upon what is written, 'I will not visit your daughters when they shall go a whoring, nor your wives when they shall commit adultery.'"

The Gemarists say, That Rabban Jochanan Ben Zacchai was the author of this counsel: he lived at this very time, and was of the Sanhedrim; perhaps present amongst those that set this adulterous woman before Christ. For there is some reason to suppose that the "scribes and Pharisees" here mentioned were no other than the fathers of the Sanhedrim.

5. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

[*That such should be stoned.*] *Such*. Who? what, all adulteresses? or all taken in adultery, *in the very act*? There is a third qualification still: for the condition of the adulteress is to be considered, whether she was a married woman, or betrothed only.

God punisheth adultery by death, [Leviticus 20:10](#). But the masters of traditions say, that "wherever death is simply mentioned in the law," [that is, where the kind of death is not expressly prescribed,] "there it is to be supposed no other than strangling." Only they except; "*a daughter of an Israelite, if she commit adultery after she is married, must be strangled; if only betrothed, she must be stoned.* A priest's daughter, if she commit adultery when married, must be stoned; if only betrothed, she must be burnt."

Hence we may conjecture what the condition of this adulteress was: either she was an Israelitess not yet married, but betrothed only; or else she was a priest's daughter, married: rather the former, because they say, "Moses in the law hath commanded us that such should be stoned." See [Deuteronomy 22:21](#). But as to the latter, there is no such command given by Moses.

6. This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

[*Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground.*] *Feigning as though he heard them not*, had of old crept into some books: and it is plain enough that it did creep in. For when Christ had given proof enough that he took cognizance of the matter pro-

pounded to him by those words, "He that is without sin among you," &c., yet did he stoop down again, and write upon the earth.

Many have offered their conjectures why he used this unusual gesture at this time; and, with the reader's leave, let me also offer mine.

I. The matter in hand was, judging a woman taken in adultery: and therefore our Saviour in this matter applies himself conformably to the rule made and provided for the trial of an adulteress by the bitter water, [Numbers 5](#).

II. Among the Jews, this obtained in the trial of a wife suspected: "If any man shall unlawfully lie with another woman, the bitter water shall not try his wife: for it is said, *If the husband be guiltless from iniquity*, then shall the woman bear her iniquity."

"When the woman hath drunk the bitter water, if she be guilty, her looks turn pale, her eyes swell up, &c. So they turn her out of the Court of the Women; and first her belly swells, then her thigh rots, and she dies. The same hour that she dies, the adulterer also, upon whose account she drank the water, dies too, wherever he is, being equally seized with a swelling in his belly, rottenness in his thigh, or his pudenda. *But this is done only upon condition that the husband hath been guiltless himself: for if he have lain with any unlawfully himself, then this water will not try his wife.*

"If you follow whoring yourselves, the bitter waters will not try your wives."

You may see by these passages how directly our Saviour levels at the equity of this sentence, willing to bring these accusers of the woman to a just trial first. You may imagine you hear him thus speaking to them: "Ye have brought this adulterous woman to be adjudged by me: I will therefore govern myself according to the rule of trying such by the bitter waters. You say and you believe, according to the common opinion of your nation, that the woman upon whom a jealousy is brought, though she be indeed guilty, yet if the husband that accuseth her be faulty that way himself, she cannot be affected by those waters, nor contract any hurt or danger by them. If the divine judgment proceeded in that method, so will I at this time. Are you that accuse this woman wholly guiltless in the like kind of sin? Whosoever is so, 'let him cast the first stone,' &c. But if you yourselves stand chargeable with the same crimes, then your own applauded tradition, the opinion of your nation, the procedure of divine judgment in the trial of such, may determine in this case, and acquit me from all blame, if I condemn not this woman, when her accusers themselves are to be condemned."

III. It was the office of the priest, when he tried a suspected wife, to stoop down and gather the dust off the floor of the sanctuary; which when he had infused into the water, he was to give the woman to drink: he was to write also in a book the curses or adjurations that were to be pronounced upon her, [Numbers 5:17, 23](#). In like manner our Saviour stoops down; and making the floor itself his book, he writes something in the dust, doubtless against these accusers whom he was resolved to try, in analogy to those curses and adjurations written in a book by the priest, against the woman that was to be tried.

IV. The priest after he had written these curses in a book blots them out with the bitter water, [Numbers 5:23](#). For the matter transacted was doubtful. *They do not make the suspected woman drink, unless in a doubtful case.*

The question is, Whether the woman was guilty or not? If guilty, behold the curses writ against her: if not guilty, then behold they are blotted out. But Christ was assured, that those whom he was trying were not innocent: so he does not write and blot out, but writes and writes again.

V. He imitates the gesture of the priest, if it be true what the Jews report concerning it, and it is not unlikely, viz. that he first pronounced the curses; then made the woman drink; and after she had drunk, pronounced the same curses again. So Christ first stoops down and writes; then makes them as it were drink, in that searching reflection of his, "He that is without sin among you"; and then stoops down again and writes upon the earth.

9. And they which heard it, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

[*Being convicted by their own conscience.*] Our Saviour had determined to shame these wicked men before the common people: and therefore adds that peculiar force and energy to what he said that they could not stand it out, but with shame and confusion drawing off and retiring, they confess their guilt before the whole crowd. A thing little less than miracle.

12. Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

[*I am the light of the world.*] "R. Biba Sangorius saith, *Light is the name of the Messiah.* As it is written, *Light dwells with him,*" [Daniel 2:22](#). We have the same passage in *Bereshith Rabba*; saving that the author of these words there is R. Abba Serongianus.

They were wont to adorn their Rabbins and doctors with swelling and magnificent titles of *Lights*.

"A tradition. His name is not R. Meir, but Nehorai. Why therefore is he called R. Meir? *Because he enlightens the eyes of wise men by the traditions.* And yet his name is not Nehorai neither, but R. Nehemiah. Why then is he called R. Nehorai? *Because he enlightens the eyes of wise men by the traditions.*" O blessed luminaries without light! Begone, ye shades of night! for "the Sun of righteousness" hath now displayed himself.

13. The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

[*Thou bearest record of thyself.*] This and the following passages uttered in dispute, whether Christ was the light or no, bring to mind what was wont to be transacted amongst

them in their witnessing about *the appearance* of the new moon. We have it in *Rosh Hashanah*.

I. It was to be attested before the Sanhedrim by *two* persons that they saw the new moon. So Christ mentions *two* witnesses attesting him to be the light, viz. the Father and himself, verse 18.

II. They did not allow the testimony about the new moon, unless from persons known to the Sanhedrim: or if they were unknown, there were those sent along with them from the magistracy of that city where they lived, that should attest their veracity. Compare verses 18, 19: "I bear witness of myself, and ye know me not. My Father also bears witness of me; but ye have not known my Father."

III. *One witness is not to be believed in his own cause.* So the Pharisees, verse 13, "Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true."

IV. The father and the son, or any sort of relatives, are fit and credible witnesses: verse 18; "I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me."

20. These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

[*In the treasury.*] *In the treasury*, that is, in the Court of the Women; where he had transacted the matter about the woman taken in adultery. It was called *the treasury* upon the account of thirteen corban chests placed there. Of which we have spoken in another tract.

25. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.

[*The same that I said unto you from the beginning.*] I. Amongst the several renderings of this place, this seems the most proper; *The same that I said unto you from the beginning.* So [Genesis 43:18](#): *The money returned.....at the first time*": and verse 20, *We came indeed down at the first time to buy food.*

The words thus rendered may refer to that full and open profession which our Saviour made of himself before the Sanhedrim, that he was 'the Son of God,' or 'the Messiah,' chapter 5: "Do you ask me who I am? I am *the same that I told you from the beginning*, when I was summoned to answer before the Sanhedrim."

II. However, I cannot but a little call to mind the common forms of speech used so much in the Jewish schools, *the beginning* and *the end*. Where, by *the beginning* they meant any thing that was chiefly and primarily to be offered and taken notice of: by *the end* what was secondary, or of less weight.

The question is, whether it were lawful for the priests to sleep in their holy vestments. *The end* or the secondary question was, whether it was lawful for them to sleep in them. But

the beginning, or the thing chiefly and primarily to be discussed, was, whether it was lawful for them to have them on at all but in divine service. Hence the Gemarists, *The tradition is, that they must not sleep in them, if you will explain the end* [or secondary question]: but let them put them off and fold them up, and lay them under their heads [when they sleep]: *this, 'the beginning'* [or chief matter in hand] *determines*: that is, that it is not lawful for the priest so much as to wear his holy garments but when he is in holy service.

"It is a tradition of the Rabbins. If one, in walking near any city, see lights in it, if the greatest number in that city be Cuthites, let him not bless them; if they be most Israelites, let him bless it. *They teach 'the beginning,' when they say, Most Cuthites. They teach 'the end,' when they say, Most Israelites.*" For the chief and principal scruple was, whether they should pronounce a blessing upon those lights when there might be most Cuthites in the city that lighted them up: the lesser scruple was, whether he should bless them if there were most Israelites in that city.

"There is a dispute upon that precept, [Leviticus 17:13](#), If any one kill a beast or bird upon a holy day, the Shammmean school saith, Let him dig with an instrument and cover the blood. The school of Hillel saith, Let him not kill at all, if he have not dust ready by him to cover the blood."

The end, or the secondary question, is about covering the blood if a beast should be killed. *The beginning*, or the principal question, is about killing a beast or a fowl at all upon a holy day, merely for the labour of scraping up dust, if there be none at hand.

There are numberless instances of this kind: and if our Saviour had any respect to this form or mode of speaking, we may suppose what he said was to this purpose: "You ask who I am? *The beginning*. That is the chief thing to be inquired into, which I now say, viz. That I am the light of the world, the Messiah, the Son of God, &c. But what works I do, what doctrines I teach, and by what authority, this is an inquiry of the *second* place, in comparison to that first and chief question, who I am."

26. I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

[*But he that sent me is true.*] "I have many things to say and judge of you; *but he that sent me* hath of old said and judged of you; 'and he is *true*,' and they are true things which he hath said of you." Of this kind are those passages, [Isaiah 11:10](#), "Make the heart of this people fat," &c.; and 29:10, "The Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep," &c.: and from such kind of predictions it is, that Christ concludes this concerning them, verse 21, "Ye shall die in your sins."

33. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

[*We be Abraham's seed, &c.*] They were wont to glory of being *Abraham's seed* beyond all measure. Take one instance of a thousand:

"It is storied of R. Jochanan Ben Matthias, that he said to his son, 'Go out and hire us some labourers.' He went out and hired them for their victuals. When he came home to his father, his father said to him, 'My son, though thou shouldst make feasts for them, as gaudy as the feasts of Solomon, thou wouldst not do enough for them, because they are the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.'" And yet they confess "*the merits of our fathers* Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, *ceased* from the days of Hosea the prophet, as saith Rabh; or as Samuel, from the days of Hazael."

But how came they to join this, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man?" Is it impossible that one of Abraham's seed should be in bondage? The sense of these two clauses must be distinguished: "We are of the seed of Abraham, who are very fond and tenacious of our liberty; and as far as concerns ourselves, we never were in bondage to any man." The whole nation was infinitely averse to all servitude, neither was it by any means lawful for an Israelite to sell himself into bondage, unless upon the extremest necessity.

"It is not lawful for an Israelite to sell himself for that end merely, that he might treasure up the money, or might trade with it, or buy vessels, or pay a creditor; but barely if he want food and sustenance. Nor may he sell himself, unless when nothing in the world is left, not so much as his clothes, then let him sell himself. And he whom the Sanhedrim sells, or sells himself, must not be sold *openly, nor in the public way*, as other slaves are sold, but privately."

37. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

[*But ye seek to kill me.*] From this whole period it is manifest that the whole tendency of our Saviour's discourse is to shew the Jews that they are the seed of that serpent that was to bruise the heel of the Messiah: else what could that mean, verse 44, "Ye are of your father the devil," but this, viz. "Ye are the seed of the serpent?"

43. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

[*Because ye cannot hear my word.*] You may here distinguish between *the manner of speaking*, or *phrases used in speech* and *the matter or thing spoken*. [Isaiah 11:4](#); "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth." But they could not bear the smart of his rod; they would not therefore understand the phraseology or way of speech he used.

44. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

[*A murderer from the beginning.*] For so the Hebrew idiom would render *he was a murderer from the days of the creation*. And so Christ, in saying this, speaks according to the vulgar opinion, as if Adam fell the very first day of his creation.

[*He abode not in the truth.*] I. *He abode not in the truth*: i.e. he did not continue true, but found out the way of lying.

II. He did not persist in the will of God which he had revealed concerning man. For the revealed will of God is called *truth*; especially his will revealed in the gospel. Now when God had pleased to make known his good will towards the first man, partly fixing him in so honourable and happy a station, partly commanding the angels that they should minister to him for his good, [Hebrews 1:14](#); the devil did not abide in this truth, nor persisted in this will and command of God. For he, envying the honour and happiness of man, took this command of God concerning the angels' ministering to him, in so much scorn and contempt, that, swelling with most envenomed malice against Adam, and infinite pride against God, he chose rather to dethrone himself from his own glory and felicity, than he would bear Adam's continuance in so noble a station, or minister any way to the happiness of it. An angel was incapable of sinning either more or less than by pride or malice.

48. Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

[*Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil.*] But what, I pray you, hath *a Samaritan* to do with the court of your Temple? For this they say to Christ whiles he was yet standing in the Treasury, or in the Court of the Women, verse 20. If you would admit *a Samaritan* into the court of the Gentiles, where the Gentiles themselves were allowed to come, it were much, and is indeed very questionable; but who is it would bear such a one standing in the Treasury? Which very thing shews how much this was spoken in rancour and mere malice, they themselves not believing, nay, perfectly knowing, that he was no *Samaritan* at that time when they called him so. And it is observable, that our Saviour made no return upon that senseless reproach of theirs, because he did not think it worth the answering: he only replies upon them, "that he hath not a devil," that is, that he was not mad.

57. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

[*Thou art not yet fifty years old.*] Apply these words to the time of superannuating the Levites, [Numbers 4](#), and we shall find no need of those knots and difficulties wherewith

some have puzzled themselves. *Thou art not yet fifty years old*, that is, Thou art not yet come to the common years of superannuation: and dost thou talk that "thou hast seen Abraham?"

58. Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

[*Before Abraham was, I am.*] They pervert the question. Christ had said, 'Abraham saw my day': on the contrary, they ask him, 'Hast thou seen Abraham?'

This phrase, *I am*, sometimes is rendered from the single word *I*. So the Greek interpreters in the Books of Judges and Ruth: for you seldom or never meet with it elsewhere.

Judges 6:18; "*I will tarry or sit here.*" Ibid. chapter 11:27; *Wherefore I have not sinned against thee.* Ibid. verse 35; *For I have opened my mouth.* Ibid. verse 37; *I and my fellows.* Ruth 4:4; *I will redeem it.*

As to this form of speech, let those that are better skilled in the Greek tongue be the judges.

59. Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

[*Then took they up stones, &c.*] Would you also murder another prophet in the very court of the Temple, O ye murderous generation? Remember but Zacharias, and surely that might suffice. But whence could they get stones in the court of the Temple? Let the answer be made from something parallel:

"It is storied of Abba Chalpatha, who, going to Rabban Gamaliel at Tiberias, found him sitting at the table of Jochanan the moneychanger, with the Book of Job in his hand Targumized [that is, rendered into the Chaldee tongue], and reading in it. Saith he to him, 'I remember your grandfather Rabban Gamaliel, how he stood upon Gab in the mountain of the Temple, and they brought unto him the Book of Job Targumized. He calls *to the architect*, saying, Ram him under the foundation.' R. Jose saith, They whelmed him under a heap of clay. *Is there any clay in the mountain of the Temple?*" Gloss: "There was mortar which they used in building."

It may be noted, by the by, that they were building in the Temple in the days of the first Gamaliel, who sat president in the Sanhedrim about the latter days of our Saviour; which confirms what I already have noted in chapter 2:20; and further teaches us whence they might have stones in readiness; for they were now building, and they might have pieces of stone enough there.

2. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

[*Who did sin, this man, or his parents?*] I. It was a received doctrine in the Jewish schools, that children, according to some wickedness of their parents, were born lame, or crooked, or maimed and defective in some of their parts, &c.; by which they kept parents in awe, lest they should grow remiss and negligent in the performance of some rites which had respect to their being clean, such as washings and purifyings, &c. We have given instances elsewhere.

II. But that the infant should be born lame or blind, or defective in any part, for any sin or fault of his own, seems a riddle indeed.

1. Nor do they solve the matter who fly to that principle of the *transmigration of souls*, which they would have the Jews tainted with; at least if we will admit Josephus as a just interpreter and judge of that principle. For thus he:

It is the opinion of the Pharisees that "the souls of all are immortal, and do pass into another body; that is, those of the good only [*observe this*]; but those of the wicked are punished with eternal torments." So that unless you will say that the soul of some good man passing into the body of this man was the cause of his being born blind (a supposition that every one would cry shame of), you say nothing to the case in hand. If the opinion of the transmigration of souls amongst the Jews prevailed only so far, that they supposed 'the souls of good men only' passed into other bodies, the very subject of the present question is taken away; and all suspicion of any punishment or defect happening to the infant upon the account of transmigration wholly vanisheth, unless you will say it could happen upon a good soul's passing out of the body of a good man.

2. There is a solution attempted by some from the soul's preexistence; which, they would pretend, the Jews had some smatch of, from what they say about *those souls which are in Goph*, or *Guph*.

"R. Jose saith, The Son of David will not come *till the souls that are in Goph are consummated*." The same passage is recited also in *Niddah*, and *Jevamoth*, where it is ascribed to R. Asi.

"There is a repository (saith R. Solomon), the name of which is *Goph*: and from the creation, all the souls that ever were to be born were formed together and there placed."

But there is another Rabbin brought in by another commentator, that supposeth a twofold *Goph*, and that the souls of the Israelites and of the Gentiles are not in one and the same *Goph*. Nay further, he conceives that in the days of the Messiah there will be a third *Goph*, and a new race of souls made.

R. Jose deduceth his opinion from *Isaiah 57:16*, miserably wresting the words of the prophet to this sense, "My will shall hinder for the souls which I have made." For so Aruch and the commentators explain his mind.

Grant now that what I have quoted might be sufficient confirmation that the Jews did entertain the opinion of the soul's preexistence, yet what concern the preexistence of souls hath with this place, I confess I have not so quick an apprehension as any way to imagine.

III. I would therefore seek to untie this knot some other way.

I. I would have that passage observed which we have in *Vajicra Rabba*: "And the days draw nigh, in the which thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them," [Ecclesiastes 12:1](#). "*Those are the days of the Messiah, wherein there shall be neither merit nor demerit*": that is, if I mistake not, wherein neither the good deserts of the parents shall be imputed to the children for their advantage, nor their deserts for their fault and punishment. They are the words of R. Akibah *in locum*, and they are his application of that passage in Ecclesiastes, and indeed his own invention: but the opinion itself, that *there shall be neither merit nor demerit in the days of the Messiah*, is what is commonly received amongst the Jews. If so, then let me a little enlarge this question of our Saviour's disciples, by way of paraphrase, to this purpose: "Master, we know that thou art the Messiah, and that these are the days of the Messiah; we have also learned from our schools, that there is no imputation of merit or demerit from the parents in the days of the Messiah; whence then is it that this man is born blind? that in these days of the Messiah he should bring into the world with him some mark and imputation of fault or blame somewhere? What, was it his parents' fault? This seems against the received opinion. It seems therefore that he bears some tokens of his own fault: is it so, or not?"

2. It was a conceit amongst the Jews, that the infant, when formed and quickened in the womb, might behave itself irregularly, and do something that might not be altogether without fault.

In the treatise last mentioned, a woman is brought in complaining in earnest of her child before the judge, *that it kicked her unreasonably in the womb*. In *Midras Coheleth* and *Midras Ruth*, cap. iii. 13, there is a story told of Elisha Ben Abujah, who departed from the faith, and became a horrible apostate; and, amongst other reasons of his apostasy, this is rendered for one:

"There are which say, that his mother, when she was big with child of him, passing through a temple of the Gentiles, smelt something very strong, and they gave to her of what she smelt, and she did eat; *and the child in the womb grew hot, and swelled into blisters, as in the womb of a serpent.*"

In which story his apostasy is supposed as originally rooted and grounded in him in the womb, upon the fault of his mother eating of what had been offered to idols. It is also equally presumed, that an infant may unreasonably and irregularly kick and punch in the womb of its mother beyond the rate of ordinary infants. The infants in the womb of Rebecca may be for an instance; where the Jews indeed absolve Jacob from fault, though he took Esau by the heel; but will hardly absolve Esau for rising up against his brother Jacob.

"Antoninus asked R. Judah, 'At what time evil affections began to prevail in the man? *Whether in the first forming of the foetus in the womb, or at the time of its coming forth?*' The Rabbi saith unto him, 'From the time of its first coming.' 'Then,' saith Antoninus, 'it will kick in the mother's womb and rush out.' The Rabbi saith, 'This I learned of Antoninus; and the scripture seems to back it when it saith, *Sin lieth at the door.*'"

It appears from this dispute, whether true or feigned, that the ancient opinion of the Jews was, that the infant, from its first quickening, had some stain of sin upon it. And that great doctor, R. Judah the Holy, was originally of that opinion himself, but had lightly changed his mind upon so paltry an argument. Nay, they went a little further, not only that the infant might have some stain of sin in the womb, but that it might, in some measure, actually sin, and do that which might render it criminal. To which purpose this passage of the disciples seems to have some relation; "Did this man sin, that he was born blind?" That is, Did he, when his mother carried him in her womb, do any foul or enormous thing that might deserve this severe stroke upon him, that he should bring this blindness with him into the world?

6. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

[*He spat on the ground, &c.*] I. How far *spittle* was accounted wholesome for weak eyes, we may learn from this ridiculous tale:

"R. Meir sat, and was teaching in the evening of the sabbath day. There was a woman stood by hearing him preach; after he had done she went home and found her candle gone out. Her husband saith to her, 'Where hast thou been?' 'I have been,' saith she, 'standing and hearing the voice of a preacher.' Her husband saith to her, 'Thou shalt not enter in till thou hast gone and spat in the face of him that taught.' After three weeks, her neighbouring women persuading and heartening her to it, she goes to the chapel. Now the whole matter was already made known to R. Meir. He saith therefore to them, '*Is there ever a woman among you skilled in muttering charms over eyes?*' [for he feigned a grievous ailment in his eyes:] The woman said, 'R., I am skilled': 'However,' saith he, 'do you spit seven times upon my eyes, and I shall be healed'; which she did." Gloss: "Whenever they muttered any charms over the eyes, it was necessary that they should spit upon them."

II. It was prohibited amongst them to besmear the eyes with spittle upon the sabbath day upon any medicinal account, although it was esteemed so very wholesome for them.

"They do not squirt wine into the eyes on the sabbath day, but they may wash the eyebrows with it: *but as to fasting spittle*" [which was esteemed exceedingly wholesome], "*it is not lawful to put it so much as upon the eyelids.*" "One saith, that wine is prohibited so far that it may not be injected into the middle of the eyes; upon the eyebrows it may. Another saith that *spittle* is forbidden so much as upon the eyelids."

So that in this action of our Saviour's we may observe,

I. That he does not heal this sick man with a word, as he did others; but chooseth to do a thing which was against their canonical observation of the sabbath; designing thereby to make a trial of the man, whether he was so superstitious, that he would not admit such things to be done upon him on the sabbath day. He made an experiment not much unlike this upon the man at Bethesda, as we have before observed.

II. Whiles he mingles *spittle* with dust, and of that makes a clay to anoint the eyes of the blind man, he thereby avoideth the suspicion of using any kind of charm, and gives rather a demonstration of his own divine power, when he heals by a method contrary to nature; for clay laid upon the eyes, we might believe, should rather put out the eyes of one that sees, than restore sight to one that had been blind. Yea and further, he gave demonstration of the divine authority he himself had over the sabbath, when he heals upon that day by the use of means which had been peculiarly prohibited to be used in it.

The connexion of this chapter with the former is such, that the stories in both seem to have been acted on one and the same day. [*Going through the midst of them, and so passed by. And as he passed by, he saw a man which was blind.*] If it be so, (which I will not much contend about,) then do they bring the adulterous woman before Christ, yea, and attempt to stone him too, on the sabbath day. *Jesus hid himself*; or perhaps the sense is, *he was hidden*; that is, by the multitude that had a favour for him, and compassed him about, lest his enemies should have wreaked their malice and displeasure against him.

7. And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

[*Which is by interpretation, Sent.*] We have already shewn that the spring of Siloam discharged itself by a double stream into a twofold pool; the *Upper* pool, which was called *the pool of Siloah*; and the *Lower*, which was called *the pool of Shelah*; [Nehemiah 3:15](#). Now *the pool of Siloah*, plainly and properly signifies *Sent*; but *Shelah* not so, as we have already noted. Probably the evangelist added this parenthesis on purpose to distinguish which of the pools the blind man was sent to wash in; viz. not in the pool *Shelah*, which signifies *fleeces*, but in the pool of *Siloah*, which signifies *Sent*.

8. The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

[*That sat and begged.*] This may be opposed to another sort of beggars, viz. *those that beg from door to door*.

The words used by the beggars were generally these:

Vouchsafe something to me: or rather, according to the letter, *Deserve something by me*; i.e. Acquire something of merit to yourself by the alms you give me.

O you whoever have a tender heart, do yourself good by me.

Look back and see what I have been; look upon me now, and see what I am.

13. They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

[*They brought him to the Pharisees.*] *The Pharisees*, in this evangelist, are generally to be understood *the Sanhedrim*: nor indeed do we find in St. John any mention of the Sadducees at all. Consult [John 1:24](#), [4:1](#), [8:3](#), [11:46](#), &c.

The Pharisees have such a sway amongst the people, that if they should say any thing against the king or high priest, they would be believed. And a little after,

"*The Pharisees have given out many rules to the people from the traditions of the fathers which are not written in the laws of Moses: and for that very reason the Sadducees rejected them, saying, They ought to account nothing as law or obligatory but what is delivered by Moses; and what hath no other authority but tradition only ought not to be observed. And hence have arisen questions and mighty controversies; the Sadducees drawing after them the richer sort only, while the multitude followed and adhered to the Pharisees.*"

Hence we may apprehend the reason why the whole Sanhedrim is sometimes comprehended under the name of the *Pharisees*; because the common people and the main body of that nation were wholly at the management of the Pharisees, governed by their decrees and laws. But there was once a Sanhedrim that consisted chiefly of the sect of the Sadducees, and what was done then? R. Eliezer Ben Zadok saith, There was a time when they burnt a priest's daughter for whoredom, compassing her about with bundles of young twigs. But the answer is, *There was not a Sanhedrim at that time that was well skilled.* Rabh Joseph saith, "*that Sanhedrim was made up of Sadducees.*" It is worth our taking notice of this passage.

22. These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

[*He should be put out of the synagogue.*] So chapter 16:2: Granting that this is spoken of excommunication, the question may be, Whether it is to be understood of the ordinary excommunication, that is, from this or that synagogue; or the extraordinary, that is, a cutting off *from the whole congregation of Israel*.

"Whoever is excommunicated by *the president* of the Sanhedrim is cut off from the whole congregation of Israel": and if so, then much more if it be by the vote of the whole Sanhedrim. And it seems by that speech, *they cast him out*, verse 34, that word *out*, was added for such a signification.

But suppose we, it might be understood of the ordinary excommunication; among all the four-and-twenty reasons of excommunication, which should it be for which this was decreed, viz. that "if any man did confess that Jesus was the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue?" The elders of the Sanhedrim, perhaps, would answer, what upon other occasions is frequently said and done by them, "It is decreed *for the necessity of the time.*"

28. Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

[*We are Moses' disciples.*] The man, as it should seem, had in gentle and persuasive terms asked them, "Will ye also be his disciples?" as if he heartily wished they would. But they as ruggedly, "Be you so: *we are Moses' disciples.*"

"They delivered two disciples of the wise men into the hands of the chief priest" [that they might instruct him about the rites and usages of the day of expiation]; *they were of the disciples of Moses.* And who are these *disciples of Moses*? it follows, *the very phrase excludes the Sadducees.*

The reader may observe, by the way, these *disciples of Moses*, with what reverence they treat him.

"Moses was angry about three things, and the tradition was accordingly hid from him: I. About the sabbath, [Exodus 16:20](#): while he was angry he forgot to recite to them the traditions about the sabbath. II. About the vessels of metal, [Numbers 31:14](#): while he was angry, he forgot to recite to them the traditions about the vessels of metal. III. About the mourner, [Leviticus 10:16](#): while he was wrath, the tradition was hid from him, which forbade the mourner to eat of the holy things."

Did Moses think it unlawful for the mourner to have eaten of the holy things, when he spake to Eleazar and Ithamar, while they were in the very act of bewailing the death of their two brethren, "Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin offering in the holy place?" Yes, but in his passion he forgot both the tradition and himself too. Excellent disciples indeed! that can thus chastise your great master at pleasure, as a man very hasty, apt to be angry, and of a slender memory! Let him henceforward learn from you to temperate his passions and quicken his memory. You have a memory indeed that have recovered the tradition which he himself had forgot.

34. They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

[*And they cast him out.*] I shall note something of this kind of phrase at chapter 16:2. Thus doth this man commence the first *confessor* in the Christian church, as John the Baptist had been the first *martyr* in it. He suffered excommunication, and that from the whole congregation of Israel, for the name of Christ. It seems something strange that they did not excommunicate Jesus himself: but they were contriving more bloody things against him.

Chapter 10

Amongst all the places in the Old Testament which mention this great Shepherd, there is no one doth so exactly describe him and his pastoral work, as chapter 11 of the prophet

Zechariah. We will fetch a few things from thence, that may serve to explain the passage now in hand:

I. He describes this great Shepherd manifesting himself, and applying himself to his great pastoral office, when the nation was now upon the brink of destruction: the prophet had foretold their ruin, and brings in this Shepherd undertaking the care of his sheep, lest they should perish too.

As to the first verse, "Open thy doors, O Lebanon"; take the Jews' own comment upon it, who yet do, by all the skill they can, endeavour to take off the whole prophecy from those proper hinges upon which it turns.

"Forty years before the destruction [*of Jerusalem*], the gates of the Temple opened themselves of their own accord. Rabban Jochanan Ben Zacchai declaimed upon it, saying, 'O Temple, Temple, why dost thou terrify thyself? I know thy end will be destruction; for so Zechariah, the son of Iddo, hath prophesied concerning thee; Open thy doors, O Lebanon,'" &c.

The rest that follows doth plainly enough speak out desolation and ruin, verses 2, 3: but particularly that is remarkable, verse 6, "I will deliver the men every one into his neighbour's hand": how manifestly doth it agree with those intestine broils and discords, those horrid seditions, stirred up amongst them! "And into the hand of his king"; i.e. of Caesar, concerning whom they may remember they once said, "We have no king but Caesar."

II. He describes the evil shepherds of the people under a triumvirate, verse 8: "Three shepherds also I cut off in one month," &c.; i.e. the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes; which interpretation though it cannot but sound very unpleasingly in Jewish years, yet is it what seems abundantly confirmed, both from the context and the history of things. They therefore would turn the edge of the prophecy another way, the Gemarists understanding the *three shepherds* of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam: Jarchi would have it the house of Ahab, the house of Ahaziah, and his brethren: Kimchi, the sons of Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah. Aben Ezra saith, "Perhaps they are the high priest Joshua, the person anointed to the wars, and the sagan; or perhaps Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi," &c.

But what can be more clear than that the prophet speaks of those *shepherds* that had wasted and corrupted the flock, and who, when the true Shepherd of the sheep should reveal himself, would do the like again? and who should these be but the principals and chief heads of sects, and the leaders of the people, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes?

Object. But how can these properly be said to be cut off by the great Shepherd when he should come, whereas it is well enough known that these sects lived even after the death of Christ, nay, after the ruins of Jerusalem; not to say that Pharisaism hath its being amongst the Jews to this very day?

Ans. So indeed it is said, that under the gospel, the nations should not learn war any more, [Isaiah 2:4](#); and that there should not be an infant in age, or one under age, in the new

Jerusalem, [Isaiah 65:20](#): whereas we find enough of war in every generation, and that infancy or ignorance in divine things abounds still. But nevertheless God had done his part towards the accomplishment of such prophecies; namely, he had brought in the gospel of peace and the gospel of light, that nothing should be wanting on his side that peace might reign on the earth, and infancy in divine things should be no more. So did this great Shepherd bring in the evangelical doctrine, the oracle of truth and religion, which did so beat down and confound all the vain doctrines and institutions of those sects, that, as to what related to the doctrine of Christ, there was nothing wanting to have cut off those heresies and vanities.

III. This great Shepherd broke that covenant that had been made and confirmed with that people, verse 10: "I took my staff, even *Beauty*, and cut it asunder, that I might break my covenant which I had made with all the people." *With all the people*; i.e. with all Israel, the ten and the two tribes too. And in verse 14, the affinity and kin which was betwixt Judah and Israel is dissolved; which it would not be amiss for those to take serious notice of, who as yet expect a universal conversion of the whole nation of the Jews. Let them say by virtue of what covenant; if the covenant of grace, that makes no difference betwixt the Jew and the Greek, nor knows any one after the flesh. If by virtue of the covenant peculiarly made with that people, that was broken and dissolved, when God had gathered his flock out of that people. For,

IV. The great Shepherd, when he came, found that there must be a flock gathered in that nation, as [Romans 11:5](#), *A remnant according to the election of grace*; and these he took care to call and gather before Jerusalem should be destroyed. Zechariah himself calls it *the flock of slaughter*; and *the poor of the flock*, verse 7. Where, by the way, whoever compares the Greek version in this place must needs observe, that *so the poor* is, by those interpreters, jumbled and confounded into one word. For, instead of *and so the poor of the flock knew*, they read it, *the Canaanites shall know the sheep*, &c. So instead of *for this*, or *for you*, *O poor of the flock*, verse 7, they read, *unto the land of Canaan*...I have some suspicion that these interpreters might have had an eye upon the reduction of the dispersed captivity into the land of Canaan, according to the common expectation of that nation. But this only by the by.

That of the apostle ought to be strictly heeded; *Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace*. Which indeed is, as it were, the gnomon to that chapter, and, above all other things, does interpret best the apostle's mind. For he propounds to discourse not concerning the universal call of the Jews, but of their not being universally rejected: which may very easily be collected from the very first verse of this chapter, "Hath God cast away his people?" that is, so cast them away that they are universally rejected. "God forbid!" for I myself am an Israelite, and am not cast away. This argument he pursues, and illustrates from the example of those most corrupted times, the age wherein Elijah lived, when they threw down the altars of God, slew his prophets, and not a few

worshipped *Baal of the Sidonians*, whom Ahab had introduced; and almost the whole nation worshipped *that golden calf* or *cow* which Jeroboam had set up. And yet, even in that worst state of affairs, saith God, "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee *to that golden calf*," the common and universal error of that nation, much less *to Baal of the Sidonians*. "Even so" (saith the apostle), "at this present time also there is a remnant"; plainly intimating, that he does not assert or argue for the calling of the whole nation, but of that *remnant* only; and that he discourses concerning the present calling of that remnant, and not about any future call of the whole nation.

V. That is a vast mystery the apostle is upon, verse 25 of that chapter; "*Blindness hath severally happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*" I render *severally*, or *by parts*, not without warrant from grammar, and according to the meaning and intention of St. Paul. For the mystery mentioned by him is, that blindness *severally*, and at *several times*, happened to the Israelites: first, the ten tribes were blinded through idolatry, and, after many ages, the two tribes, through traditions; and yet both those and these reserved together to that time, wherein the Gentiles, who had been blinded for a longer space, are called, and then both Israelites and Jews and Gentiles, being all called together, do close into one body. It is observable that the apostle, throughout this whole chapter, doth not so much as once make mention of the Jews, but of Israel, that he might include the ten tribes with the two within his discourse.

And, indeed, this great Shepherd had his flock, or his sheep, within the ten tribes, as well as within the two: and to me it is without all controversy that the gospel, in the times of the apostles, was brought and preached as well to the one as the other. Doubtless St. Peter, whilst he was in Babylon, preached to the Israelites dispersed in those countries as well as to the Jews.

VI. Some of the Gemarists do vehemently deny any conversion of the ten tribes under the Messiah: let them beware lest there be not a conversion of their own.

"The ten tribes shall never return, as it is written, 'And he cast them into another land, as it is this day,' [Deuteronomy 29:28](#). 'As this day passeth and shall never return, so they are gone and shall not return again.' They are the words of R. Akibah."

"It is a tradition of the Rabbins, that the ten tribes shall not have a part in the world to come; as it is written, 'The Lord rooted them out of their land in anger and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them out into another land. He rooted them out of their own land in this world, and cast them out into another land in the world to come.' They are the words of Rabbi."

But, in truth, when the true Messiah did appear, the ten tribes were more happily called (if I may so speak), that is, with more happy success than the Jews; because amongst those Jews that had embraced the gospel, there happened a sad and foul apostasy, the like to which we read not of concerning the ten tribes that were converted.

1. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

[*By the door into the sheepfold, &c.*] The sheepfold amongst the Talmudists is some *enclosure* or *pen*: wherein,

I. The sheep were all gathered together in the night, lest they should stray; and where they might be safe from thieves or wild beasts.

II. In the day time they were milked: as,

The Trojans, as the rich man's numerous flocks,
Stand milked in the field.

III. There the lambs were tithed.

"How is it that they tithe the lambs? *They gather the flock into the sheepfold*; and making a little door at which two cannot go out together, they number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and the tenth that goes out they mark with red, saying, 'This is the tithe.' The ewes are without and the lambs within; and at the bleating of the ewes the lambs get out."

So that there was in the sheepfold one larger *door*, which gave ingress and egress to the flock and shepherds; and a lesser, by which the lambs passed out for tithing.

[*Is a thief and a robber.*] In Talmudic language: "*Who is a thief?* He that takes away another man's goods when the owner is not privy to it: as when a man puts his hand into another man's pocket, and takes away his money, the man not seeing him; but if he takes it away openly, publicly, and by force. *This is not a thief, but a robber.*"

3. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

[*The porter.*] I am mistaken if the servants that attend about the flock under the shepherd are not called by the owner of them, [Ecclesiastes 12:11](#), *those that fold the sheep*: at least if the sheepfold itself be not so called. And I would render the words by way of paraphrase thus: "The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by those *that gather the flock into the fold*: *goads*, to drive away the thief or the wild beast; and *nails*, to preserve the sheepfold whole and in good repair: which *goads* and *nails* are furnished by the chief shepherd, the master of the flock, for these uses." Now one of these servants that attended about the flock was called *the porter*. Not that he always sat at the *door*; but the key was committed to his charge, that he might look to it that no sheep should stray out of the fold, nor any thing hurtful should get or be let in.

7. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

[*I am the door.*] Pure Israelitism among the Jews was *the fold*, and *the door*, and all things. For if any one was of the seed of Israel, and the stock of Abraham, it was enough (themselves being the judges) for such a one to be made a sheep, admitted into the flock,

and be fed and nourished to eternal life. But in Christ's flock the sheep had another original, introduction, and mark.

8. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

[*All that ever came before me are thieves.*] Our Saviour speaks agreeably with the Scripture; where, when there is any mention of the coming of this great Shepherd to undertake the charge of the flock, the evil shepherds that do not feed but destroy the flock are accused, [Jeremiah 23:1](#), &c. [Ezekiel 34:2](#), &c. [Zechariah 11:16](#). And our Saviour strikes at those three shepherds before mentioned, that hated him, and were hated by him, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and Essenes, under whose conduct the nation had been so erroneously led for some ages.

I should have believed that those words, *All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers*, might be understood of those who, having arrogated to themselves the name of the Messiah, obtruded themselves upon the people; but that we shall hardly, or not at all, find an instance of any that ever did so before the true Messiah came. After his coming (it is true) there were very many that assumed the name and title; but before it hardly one. Judas the Galilean did not arrive to that impudence, as you have his story in Josephus. Nor yet Theudas, by any thing that may be gathered from the words of Gamaliel, [Acts 5](#).

An argument of no mean force, which we may use against the Jews, that the time when our Jesus did appear was the very time wherein the nation looked for the coming of Messiah. For why did no one arrogate that name to himself before the coming of our Jesus? Because they knew the fore-appointed and the expected time of the Messiah was not yet come. And why, after Jesus had come, did so many give themselves out for Messiah, according to what our Saviour foretold, [Matthew 24](#)? Because the agreeableness of the time, and the expectation of the people, might serve and assist their pretences.

9. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

[*Find pasture.*] *How far is the beasts' pasture? Sixteen miles.* The Gloss is, "The measure of the space that the beasts go when they go forth to pasture." A spacious pasture indeed!

13. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

[*The hireling fleeth.*] The Rabbins suppose that some such thing may be done by the *hireling*, when they allot a mulct, if a sheep should happen to perish through the neglect of its keeper.

"How far is *the keeper for hire* bound to watch his flock? Till he can say truly, 'In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night.'"

"But if, whilst he is going to the city or any ways absent, the wolf or the lion should come and tear the flock, what then?...*He ought to have met them with shepherds and clubs,*" and not to have fled.

15. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

[*I lay down my life, &c.*] *I deliver, or I give, my life for the flock. Judah gave up his life for Benjamin. Hur gave his life for the holy blessed God.* For they have a tradition, that Hur underwent martyrdom, because he opposed the golden calf.

22. And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

[*It was the feast of the Dedication.*] I. The rise and original of this feast must be fetched from the story, [1 Maccabees 4:52](#), &c., of which we have noted something already. The Jewish masters have these passages about it:

"They were seized with such infinite pleasure in the restoration of their sacred rites, being, after so long a time, so unexpectedly possessed of their religion again, *that they bound it by a law to posterity, that they should celebrate the restitution of their sacred rites by a feast of eight days' continuance. And from that time to this do we still celebrate this feast, calling it by the name of 'Lights':* giving that name to this feast, as I suppose, because we obtained such a liberty so much beyond all hope."

One would believe that the name only of *lights*, or *candles*, was given to this feast: I say a name only; for we have no mention here of the 'lighting of candles.' One would believe also that the eight days decreed for the celebration of this feast was done after the pattern of the eight days' feast of Tabernacles: but you will find in the Talmudic authors that it is far otherwise, and they have a cunning way of talking concerning it.

"The Rabbins have a tradition: From the five-and-twentieth day of the month Chisleu there are eight days of the *Encaenia* [or feast of Dedication], in which time it is not lawful either to weep or fast. For when the Greeks entered into the Temple, they defiled all the oil that was there. But when the kingdom of the Asmoneans had conquered them, they sought and could not find but one single vial of oil that had been laid up under the seal of the chief priest; nor was there enough in it but to light for one day. There was a great miracle: for they lighted up the lamps from that oil for eight days together: so that, the year after, they instituted the space of eight days for the solemnizing that feast."

Maimonides relates the same things, and adds more: "Upon this occasion the wise men of that generation appointed, that eight days from the 25th of the month Chisleu should be set apart for days of rejoicing and the Hallel: and that they should light up candles at the doors of every house each evening of those days, to keep up the memory of that miracle. Those days are called *Dedication*; and it is forbidden upon all those days either to weep or fast, as in the days of Purim," &c.

Again: "How many candles do they light? It is commanded that every house should set up at least one, let the inhabitants there be more or one only. But he that does honour to the command sets up his candles according to the number of the persons that are in the house. And he again that does more honour to it still sets up one candle for every person in the house the first night, and doubles it the second night. For example, if there be ten persons in the house, the first night there are ten candles lighted; the second night, twenty; the third night, thirty; so that on the eighth night it comes to fourscore."

It would be too tedious to transcribe what he relates about singing the *Hallel* upon that feast: the place where the candle is fixed, which ordinarily is without doors, but in time of danger or persecution it is within, &c. Let what I have already quoted suffice, with the addition of this one instance more:

"The wife of Tarchinus (whose bones may they be crushed!) brought forth a son the evening of the ninth day of the month Ab, and then all Israel mourned. *The child died upon the feast of Dedication.* Then said the Israelites, 'Shall we light up candles, or not?' They said, 'We will light them, come what will come.' So they lighted them. Upon which, there were some that went and accused them before the wife of Tarchin, saying, 'The Jews mourned when thou broughtest forth a son; and when that son died they set up candles.'" Who this *Tarquinus* or *Tarquinius* was, whether they meant the emperor Trajan or some other, we will not make any inquiry, nor is it *tanti*. However, the story goes on and tells us, that the woman, calling her husband, accused the Jews, stirring him up to revenge, which he executed accordingly by a slaughter amongst them.

[*The feast of the Dedication.*] In the title of the thirtieth Psalm, the Greek interpreters translate *Dedication*: by which the Jewish masters seem to understand *the dedication of the Temple*: whereas really it was no other than the lustration and cleansing of David's house after Absalom had polluted it by his wickedness and filthiness: which indeed we may not unfitly compare with the purging again of the Temple after that the Gentiles had polluted it.

[*At Jerusalem.*] *It was at Jerusalem the feast of the Dedication.* Not as the Passover, Pentecost, and feast of Tabernacles, were wont to be at Jerusalem, because those feasts might not be celebrated in any other place: but the *Encaenia* was kept everywhere throughout the whole land.

They once proclaimed a fast within the feast of Dedication at Lydda.

The feast of Dedication at Lydda? this was not uncustomary, for that feast was celebrated in any place: but the fast in the time of that feast, this was uncustomary.

"One upon his journey, upon whose account they set up a candle at his own house, hath no need to light it for himself in the place where he sojourneth": for in what country soever he sojourns, there *the feast of Dedication* and lighting up of candles is observed; and if those

of his own household would be doing that office for him, he is bound to make provision accordingly, and take care that they may do it.

Maimonides goes on; "The precept about the lights in *the feast of Dedication* is very commendable; and it is necessary that every one should rub up his memory in this matter, that he may make known the great miracle, and contribute towards the praises of God, and the acknowledgment of those wonders he doth amongst us. If any one hath not wherewithal to eat, unless of mere alms, let him beg, or sell his garments to buy oil and lights for this feast. If he have only *one single farthing*, and should be in suspense whether he should spend it in *consecrating the day*, or setting up lights, let him rather spend it in oil for the candles than in wine for consecration of the day. For when as they are both the prescription of the scribes, it were better to give the lights of the *Encaenia* the preference, because you therein keep up the remembrance of the miracle."

Now what was this miracle? It was the multiplication of the oil. The feast was instituted in commemoration of their Temple and religion being restored to them: the continuance of the feast for eight days was instituted in commemoration of that miracle: both by the direction of the scribes, when there was not so much as one prophet throughout the whole land.

"There were eighty-five elders, above thirty of which were prophets too, that made their exceptions against the feast of Purim, ordained by Esther and Mordecai, as some kind of innovation against the law." And yet that feast was but to be of two days' continuance. It is a wonder then how this *feast of Dedication*, the solemnity of which was to be kept up for eight days together, that had no other foundation of authority but that of the scribes, should be so easily swallowed by them.

Josephus, as also the Book of Maccabees, tells us, that this was done about the hundred and forty-eighth year of the Seleucidae: and at that time, nay, a great while before, the doctrine of traditions and authority of the traditional scribes had got a mighty sway in that nation. So that every decree of the Sanhedrim was received as oracular, nor was there any the least grudge or complaint against it. So that, though the traditional masters could not vindicate the institution of such a feast from any tradition exhibited to Moses upon mount Sinai, yet might they invent something as traditional to prove the lawfulness of such an institution.

Who had the presidency in the Sanhedrim at this time cannot be certainly determined. That which is told of Joshua Ben Perachiah, how he fled from Janneus the king, carries some probability along with it, that Joses Ben Joezer of Zeredai, and Joses Ben Jochanan of Jerusalem, to whom Joshua Ben Perachiah and Nittai the Arbelite succeeded in their chairs, sat president and vice-president at that time in the Sanhedrim. But this is not of much weight, that we should tire ourselves in such an inquiry.

The masters tell us (but upon what authority it is obscure), *that the work of the tabernacle was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Chisleu* (that is, the very day of the month

of which we are now speaking); "but it was folded up till the first day of the month Nisan, and then set up."

[*And it was winter.*] The eight days begun from the 25th of the month Chisleu fell in with the *winter* solstice. Whence, meeting with that in the Targumist upon [1 Chronicles 11:22](#), I question whether I should render it *the shortest day*, or *a short day* (i.e. one of the short winter days), viz. *the tenth of the month Tebeth*: if he did not calculate rather according to our than the Jewish calendar.

The Rabbins (as we have already observed upon chapter 5:35) distinguish their winter months into *winter* and *mid-winter*: intimating, as it should seem, the more remiss and more intense cold. Half Chisleu, all Tebeth, and half Shebat was *the winter*. Ten days therefore of the winter had passed when on the 25th of the month Chisleu *the feast of the Dedication* came in.

It was winter, and Jesus walked in the porch. He *walked* there because it was *winter*, that he might get and keep himself warm: and perhaps he chose Solomon's porch to walk in, either that he might have something to do with the fathers of the Sanhedrim who sat there; or else that he might correct and chastise the buyers and sellers who had their shops in that place.

24. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

[*How long dost thou make us to doubt?*] It is not ill rendered, *How long dost thou suspend our mind?* although not an exact translation according to the letter. But what kind of doubt and suspension of mind was this? Was it that they hoped this Jesus was the Messiah? or that they rather feared he was so? It seems, they rather feared than hoped it. For whereas they looked for a Messiah that should prove a mighty conqueror, should deliver the people from the heathen yoke, and should crown himself with all earthly glory; and saw Jesus infinite degrees below such pomp; yet by his miracles giving such fair specimens of the Messiah; they could not but hang in great suspense, whether such a Messiah were to be wished for or no.

31. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

[*Then the Jews took up stones again.*] *The blasphemer* by judicial process of the Sanhedrim was to be stoned; which process they would imitate here without judgment.

"These are the criminals that must be stoned; he that lieth with his own mother, or with the wife of his father. He that blasphemeth or commits idolatry." Now, however, the Rabbins differed in the definition of blasphemy or a blasphemer, yet this all of them agreed in, as unquestionable blasphemy, that which *denies the foundation*. This they firmly believed Jesus did, and none could persuade them to the contrary, when he affirmed, "I and my Father are

one." A miserable besotted nation, who, above all persons or things, wished and looked for the Messiah, and yet was perfectly ignorant what kind of a Messiah he should be!

35. If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

[*If he called them gods, &c.*] The Jews interpret those words of the Psalmist, "I have said, Ye are gods," to a most ridiculous sense.

"Unless our fathers had sinned, we had never come into the world; as it is written, I have said, 'Ye are gods, and the children of the Most High: but ye have corrupted your doings; therefore ye shall die like men.'" And a little after; "Israel had not received the law, only that the angel of death might not rule over them; as it is said, 'I have said, Ye are gods: but ye have corrupted your doings; therefore ye shall die like men.'"

The sense is, If those who stood before mount Sinai had not sinned in the matter of the golden calf, they had not begot children, nor had been subject to death, but had been like the angels. So the Gloss: "If our fathers had not sinned by the golden calf, we had never come into the world; for they would have been like the angels, and had never begot ten children."

The Psalmist indeed speaks of the magistracy, to whom the word of God hath arrived, ordaining and deputing them to the government by an express dispensation and diploma, as the whole web and contexture of the psalm doth abundantly shew. But if we apply the words as if they were spoken by our Saviour according to the common interpretation received amongst them, they fitly argue thus: "If he said they were angels or gods, to whom the law and word of God came on mount Sinai, as you conceive; is it any blasphemy in me then, whom God in a peculiar manner hath sanctified and sent into the world that I might declare his word and will, if I say that I am *the Son of God?*"

40. And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.

[*Where John at first baptized.*] That is, Bethabara: for the evangelist speaks according to his own history: which to the judicious reader needs no proof.

1. Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

[*Lazarus.*] So in the Jerusalem Talmud, *R. Lazar* for *R. Eleazar*. For in the Jerusalem dialect, it is not unusual in some words that begin with Aleph, to cut off that letter.

[*Martha.*] This name of *Martha* is very frequent in the Talmudic authors. "Isaac Bar Samuel, Bar *Martha*." "Abba Bar *Martha*, the same with Abba Bar Minjomi." "Joshua Ben Gamla married *Martha the daughter of Baithus*." She was a very rich widow.

She is called also *Mary the daughter of Baithus*, with this story of her: "Mary the daughter of Baithus, whom Joshua Ben Gamla married, he being preferred by the king to the high priesthood. She had a mind, upon a certain day of Expiation, to see how her husband performed his office. So they laid tapestry all along from the door of her own house to the Temple, that her foot might not touch the ground. R. Eleazar Ben R. Zadok saith, '*So let me see the consolation* [of Israel], as I saw her bound to the tails of Arabian horses by the hair of her head, and forced to run thus from Jerusalem to Lydda. I could not but repeat that versicle, The tender and delicate woman, in thee,'" &c. [Deuteronomy 28:56](#).

Martha the daughter of Baisuth (whether *Baisuth* and *Baithus* were convertible, or whether it was a mistake of the transcriber, let him that thinks fit make the inquiry), whose son was a mighty strong man among the priests.

2. (It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

[*It was that Mary which anointed, &c.*] That is, *which had anointed the Lord formerly*. For,

I. It is fit the Aorist should have its full force. Whoever will not grant this, let him give a reason why Bethany, which was Lazarus' town, should not be called by his name; but by the name of Mary and her sister Martha. Was it not because those names had been already well known in the foregoing story, whereas till now there had not been one word mentioned of their brother Lazarus? So that *anointed* respects a noted story that was past, viz. that which is related [Luke 7:37](#).

II. There can be no reason given why the evangelist should say this proleptically, as if he had respect to that passage in chapter 12:3, when he was to relate that story so soon after this. But there may be a sufficient one given why it should have relation to an *anointing* that had been formerly done: and that is, that it might appear how that familiarity arose betwixt Christ and the family of Lazarus, so far that they could so confidently send for Jesus when Lazarus was sick: for Mary, Lazarus' sister, had some time before *anointed* his feet.

11. These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

[*Sleepeth.*] The apostles having heard the report that Lazarus was sick, and that Christ told them now that he was fallen asleep; they apprehend that the edge of the disease which had hitherto taken away all rest from him was now taken off; so that they say, "If he sleep, he shall do well": having not rightly understood the word our Saviour used. The fallacy of the word is not unpleasantly expressed in *Bereshith Rabba*; "Rachel said to Leah, '*He shall sleep with thee tonight,*' **Genesis 30:19**: *He shall sleep with thee, he shall not sleep with me; i.e. Thou and he shall lie together in one sepulchre, so shall not he and I.*"

18. Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:

[*About fifteen furlongs.*] That is, two miles. For the Jewish miles did not hold out full eight furlongs, as other miles do, but seven and a half.

One of those seven and a half which make up a mile is a furlong.

"They do not lay the net for pigeons any less distance from the houses than *thirty furlongs,*" i.e. four miles.

"What is *furlong*? It is a flight-shot. And why is *furlong* called a flight-shot? It is according to the numeral value of the letters, which is two hundred sixty-six: for two hundred sixty-six [cubits] make a flight shot. Now count, and you will thus find it: Seven times [Resh] two hundred make one thousand four hundred. Seven times [Samek] sixty make four hundred and twenty. Number them together, and they mount to one thousand eight hundred and twenty. Seven times [Vav] six make forty-two: half a *furlong* one hundred thirty-three: number them together, and the whole amounts to one thousand nine hundred ninety-five. Behold two thousand cubits excepting five."

19. And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

[*To comfort them.*] "When they return from the burial *they stand about* weeping, and say [a little prayer] comforting the mourner, and accompanying him to his own house."

"When they return from the grave they stand in a circle about the mourner comforting him." Gloss: "The circle about him consists of ten at least." But usually it is very crowded and numerous. Hence that passage:

"As to those that stood about in that circle, those that were on the inside of it were not obliged to repeat the phylacteries; but those that were on the outside were bound."

"The Rabbins deliver: The seven standings and sittings for the dead must not be diminished." Where the Gloss is; "When they returned from the grave, they went forward a little, and then sat down; partly to comfort the mourners, partly to weep themselves, and partly to meditate upon the subject of mortality. Then they stood up again, and went on a little, and sat down again, and so for seven times. But I have seen it written, that they did this

upon the account of the evil spirits who accompanied them from the grave. They ordained these standings and sittings, that within that time the evil spirits might depart."

So that we see they were wont to comfort the mourners in the way as they were returning from the grave, and they would bring them back to their own house the day that the party deceased was interred. They comforted them also all the remaining days of mourning, which we find done in this place.

Thirty days were allotted for the time of mourning: but, "*We must not weep for the dead beyond the measure. The three first days are for weeping; seven days for lamentation: thirty days for the intermission from washing their clothes, and shaving themselves.*"

I. When *those that were to comfort* the mourners came, they found all *the beds* in the house *taken down*, and laid upon the ground. "*From what time do they take their beds lower?*" R. Eleazar saith, 'From the time that the deceased party is carried out of the court gate.' R. Joshua saith, 'From the time that the cover of the coffin is shut down.' When Rabban Gamaliel died, and the corpse was carried out of the court gate, saith R. Eleazar to his disciples, 'Take down the beds.' But when the coffin was closed, R. Joshua said, 'Take down the beds.' On the evening of the sabbath they set up their beds; at the going out of the sabbath they take them down."

What is to be understood by taking down their beds we may conjecture by what follows. "Whence came the custom of taking down the beds? R. Crispa in the name of R. Jochanan saith, From what is written, *And they sat with him near the ground*. It is not said, *upon* the ground, but *near* the ground; that is, not far off from the earth. Hence is it that they sat upon *beds taken lower*."

But Rabbenu Asher saith thus; "Rabh saith, Those that comfort ought to sit nowhere but upon the floor."

II. The mourner himself sits chief. A custom taken from these words, [Job 29:25](#), "I chose out their way and sat chief....like him who comforts the mourners."

III. It was not lawful for the comforters to speak a word till the mourner himself break silence first. The pattern taken from Job's friends, [Job 2](#).

IV. "R. Jochanan saith, *If the mourner nod his head, the comforters are to sit by him no longer*." The Gloss is, "If, by nodding his head, he signify to them that he hath comforted himself." Hence that frequently said of some, *They would not receive comfort*; that is, they gave signs by nodding their head that they had sufficiently comforted themselves.

These and many other things about this matter do occur in *Moed Katon*; and Rabbenu Asher: as also in *Massecheth Semacoth*; where, by the way, take notice, that that treatise, which hath for its subject the mourners for the dead, is called *A treatise of gladness*. So the sepulchres of the dead are often called, *The houses of the living*.

Let us take a little taste of the way of consolation they used: "The Rabbins deliver. When the sons of R. Ishmael died, four of the elders went in to him to comfort him; viz. R. Tarphon,

and R. Jose the Galilean, and R. Eliezer Ben Azariah, and R. Akibah. R. Tarphon saith unto them, 'Ye must know that this is a very wise man, well skilled in exposition. Let not any of you interrupt the words of his fellow.' Saith R. Akibah, 'I am the last.' R. Ishmael began and said" [the mourner here breaks silence], "'His iniquities are multiplied, his griefs have bound him, and he hath wearied his masters.' Thus he said once and again. Then answered R. Tarphon and said, 'It is said, And your brethren of the house of Israel shall bewail the burning, [Leviticus 10:6](#). May we not argue from the less to the greater? If Nadab and Abihu, who never performed but one command, as it is written, And the sons of Aaron brought blood to him; then much more may the sons of R. Ishmael be bewailed.' R. Jose the Galilean answered, saying, 'All Israel shall mourn for him and bury him,' [1 Kings 14:13](#). And must we not argue from the greater to the less? If they wept so for Abijah the son of Jeroboam, who did but one good thing, as it is said, Because in him there is found some good thing; how much more for the sons of R. Ishmael!" Of the same nature are the words of R. Eliezer and R. Akibah: but this is enough, either to raise laughter, or make a man angry. In the same page we have several forms of speech used by the women, that either were the mourners or the comforters. As,

The grave is as the robe of circumcision to an ingenuous man, whose provisions are spent.

The death of this man is as the death of all, and diseases are like putting money to usury.

He ran, and he fell in his passage, and hath borrowed a loan. With other passages very difficult to be understood.

The first three days of weeping were severer than the other: because "on the first day it was not lawful for the mourner to wear his phylacteries, to eat of holy things, nor indeed to eat any thing of his own. All the three days he might do no servile work, no, not privately: and if any one saluted him, he was not to salute him again."

"The first seven days let all the beds in the house be laid low. Let not the man use his wife. Let him not put on his sandals. Let him do no servile work publicly. Let him not salute any man. Let him not wash himself in warm water, nor his whole body in cold. Let him not anoint himself. Let him not read in the Law, the Misna, or the Talmud. Let him cover his head."

"All the thirty days let him not be shaved. Let him not wear any clothing that is white, or whitened, or new. Neither let him sew up those rents which he made in his garments for the deceased party," &c.

25. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

[*I am the resurrection.*] Be it so, O Jew (if you will, or it can be), that the little bone *luz*, in the backbone, is the seed and principle of your resurrection: as to us, our blessed Jesus, who hath raised himself from the dead, is the spring and principle of ours.

"Hadrian (whose bones may they be ground, and his name blotted out!) asked R. Joshua Ben Hananiah, 'How doth a man revive again in the world to come?' He answered and said, 'From *luz* in the backbone.' Saith he to him, 'Demonstrate this to me.' Then he took *luz*, a little bone out of the backbone, and put it in water, and it was not steeped: he put it into the fire, and it was not burnt: he brought it to the mill, and that could not grind it: he laid it on the anvil, and knocked it with a hammer, but the anvil was cleft, and the hammer broken," &c. Why do ye not maul the Sadducees with this argument?

31. The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

[*Followed her.*] "It is a tradition. Let no man follow a woman upon the way, no, not his own wife." If this grain of salt may be allowed in the explication of this passage, then, either all that followed Mary were women: or if men, they followed her at a very great distance: or else they had a peculiar dispensation at such solemn times as these, which they had not in common conversation. But the observation indeed is hardly worth a grain of salt.

39. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days.

[*For he hath been dead four days.*] The three days of *weeping* were now past, and the four days of *lamentation* begun: so that all hope and expectation of his coming to himself was wholly gone.

"They go to the sepulchres, *and visit the dead for three days. Neither are they solicitous lest they should incur the reproach of the Amorites.*" The story is, They visited a certain person, and he revived again, and lived five-and-twenty years, and then died. They tell of another that lived again, and begot children, and then died.

"It is a tradition of Ben Kaphra's: The very height of mourning is not till the third day. For three days the spirit wanders about the sepulchre, expecting if it may return into the body. But when it sees that the form or aspect of the face is changed, then it hovers no more, but leaves the body to itself."

"They do not certify of the dead" [that this is the very man, and not another] 'but within the three days after his decease': for after three days his countenance is changed."

44. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

[*With graveclothes, &c.*] The evangelist seems so particular in mentioning the *graveclothes*, wherewith Lazarus was bound hand and foot, and also the *napkin* that had covered his face, on purpose to hint us a second miracle in this great miracle. The dead man came forth, though bound hand and foot with his graveclothes, and blinded with the napkin.

48. If we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

[*And the Romans shall come.*] I could easily believe that the fathers of the Sanhedrim had either a knowledge or at least some suspicion that Jesus was the true Messiah.

I. This seems plainly intimated by the words of the vine-dressers in the parable, [Mark 12:7](#): "This is the heir; come, let us kill him." They knew well enough he was the heir: and it was come to this in the struggle betwixt them, Either he will inherit with his doctrine, or we will with ours: come therefore, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

II. They could not but know that *Daniel's weeks* were now fully accomplished, and that the time of the Messiah's appearing was now come. This that conflux of Jews from all nations into Jerusalem, [Acts 2](#), doth testify, being led by Daniel's prophecy, and the agreeableness of the time, to fix their residence there, in expectation of the Messiah now ready to be revealed. Compare also [Luke 19:2](#).

III. When therefore they saw Jesus working miracles so very stupendous, and so worthy the character of the Messiah, and that in the very time wherein the manifestation of the Messiah had been foretold, they could not but have a strong suspicion that this was He. But then it is a wonderful thing that they should endeavour his death and destruction. What! destroy the Messiah, the expectation and desire of that nation!

Such mischiefs could religious zeal persuade.

But it was a most irreligious religion, made up of traditions and human inventions; a strange kind of bewitchery rather than religion; that they should choose rather that the Messiah should be cut off than that religion be changed. They had been taught, or rather seduced by their traditions to believe, 1. That the kingdom of the Messiah should be administered in all imaginable pomp and worldly glory. 2. That their Judaism, or the religion properly so called, should be wonderfully promoted by him, confirmed, and made very glorious. 3. The whole nation should be redeemed from the heathen yoke. But when he, who by the force of his miracles asserted himself so far to be the Messiah, that they could not but inwardly acknowledge it, appeared notwithstanding so poor and contemptible, that nothing could be less expected or hoped for of such a one than a deliverance from their present mean and slavish state; and so distant seemed he from it, that he advised to pay tribute to Caesar, taught things contrary to what the scribes and Pharisees had principled them in, shook and seemed to abrogate the religion itself, and they had no prospect at all of better things from him; let Jesus perish, though he were the true Messiah, for any thing that they cared, rather than Judaism and their religion should be abolished.

Obj. But it is said, that what they did was through ignorance, [Luke 23:34](#); [Acts 3:17](#), [13:17](#); [1 Corinthians 2:8](#).

Ans. True indeed, through ignorance of the person: for they did not know and believe the Messiah to be God as well as man; they apprehended him mere man. Though they sus-

pected that Jesus might be the Messiah, yet did they not suspect that this Jesus was the true God.

Let it then be taken for granted, that the fathers of the Sanhedrim, under some strong conviction that this was the true Messiah, might express themselves in this manner, "All men will believe on him, and the Romans will come," &c. and so what Caiaphas said, "It is expedient that one man should die," &c. But where does the consequence lie in all this? "All men will believe on him"; ergo, "the Romans will come," &c.

I. It is not altogether wide of the mark, what is commonly returned upon this question: The Romans will come against our nation, taking us for rebels to the emperor, in that, without his consent, our people have entertained this Jesus for the King Messiah.

II. Nor is it impertinent to this purpose what was the ancient observation of the Jews from that of the prophet Isaiah, chapter 10:34, 11:1: "Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one-- and there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse," viz. That the coming of the Messiah, and the destruction of the Temple, should be upon the heels one of another.

The story is of an Arabian telling a certain Jew, while he was at plough, that the Temple was destroyed, and the Messiah was born; which I have already told at large upon [Matthew 2:1](#). But the conclusion of it is, "R. Bon saith; 'What need we learn from an Arabian? is it not plainly enough written, Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one? And what follows immediately? There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse.'"

If, therefore, the Sanhedrim suspected Jesus to be the Messiah, they might, by the same reason, from thence also gather that the destruction of the city and nation was not far off; especially when they see the people falling off from Judaism to the religion of Jesus.

III. The fathers of the Sanhedrim judge that the nation would contract hereby an unspeakable deal of guilt, such as would subject them to all those curses mentioned [Deuteronomy 28](#); particularly that their turning off from Judaism would issue in the final overthrow of the whole nation; and if their religion should be deserted, neither the city nor the commonwealth could possibly survive it long. So rooted was the love and value they had for their wretched traditions.

Let us therefore frame their words into this paraphrase: "It does seem that this man can be no other than the true Messiah; the strange wonders he doth, speak no less. What must we do in this case? On the one hand, it were a base and unworthy part of us to kill the Messiah: but then, on the other hand, it is infinitely hazardous for us to admit him: for all men will believe on him; and then our religion is at an end; and when that is once gone, what can we look for less than that our whole nation should perish under the arms and fury of the Romans?"

"I beg your pardon for that," saith Caiaphas; "you know nothing, neither consider; for, be he the Messiah or be he not, it is expedient, nay, it is necessary, he should die rather than the whole nation should perish," &c.

51. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

[*He prophesied.*] Is Caiaphas among the prophets? There had not been a prophet among the chief priests, the priests, the people, for these four hundred years and more; and does Caiaphas now begin to prophesy? It is a very foreign fetch that some would make, when they would ascribe this gift to the office he then bore, as if by being made high priest he became a prophet. The opinion is not worth confuting. The evangelist himself renders the reason when he tells us *being high priest that same year*. Which words direct the reader's eye rather to the *year* than to the *high priest*.

I. That was the year of pouring out the Spirit of prophecy and revelation beyond whatever the world had yet seen, or would see again. And why may not some drops of this great effusion light upon a wicked man, as sometimes the children's crumbs fall from the table to the dog under it; that a witness might be given to the great work of redemption from the mouth of our Redeemer's greatest enemy. There lies the emphasis of the words *that same year*; for Caiaphas had been high priest some years before, and did continue so for some years after.

II. To say the truth, by all just calculation, the office of the high priest ceased this very year; and the high priest prophesies while his office expires.

What difference was there, as to the execution of the priestly office, between the high priest and the rest of the priesthood? None certainly, only in these two things: 1. Asking counsel by Urim and Thummim. 2. In performing the service upon the day of Expiation. As to the former, that had been useless many ages before, because the spirit of prophecy had so perfectly departed from them. So that there remained now no other distinction, only that on the day of Expiation the high priest was to perform the service which an ordinary priest was not warranted to do. The principal ceremony of that day was, that he should enter into the Holy of Holies with blood. When, therefore, our great High Priest should enter, with his own blood, into the Holiest of all, what could there be left for this high priest to do? When, at the death of our great High Priest, the veil that hung between the Holy and the Holy of Holies was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, there was clear demonstration that all those rites and services were abolished; and that the office of the high priest, which was distinguished from the other priests only by those usages, was now determined and brought to its full period. The pontificate therefore drawing its last breath prophesies concerning the redemption of mankind by the great High Priest and Bishop of souls, "that he should die for the people," &c.

That of the apostle, [Acts 23:5](#), "I wist not that he was the high priest," may perhaps have some such meaning as this in it, "I knew not that there was any high priest at all"; because the office had become needless for some time. For grant indeed that St. Paul did not know the face of Ananias, nor that Ananias was the high priest, yet he must needs know him to have been a magistrate, because he had his seat amongst the fathers of the Sanhedrim. Now

those words which he quoted out of the law, "Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people," forbade all indecent speeches towards any magistrate, as well as the high priest. The apostle, therefore, knowing Ananias well enough, both who he was, and that he sat there under a falsely assumed title of the high priest, does on purpose call him 'whited wall,' because he only bore the colour of the high priesthood, when as the thing and office itself was now abolished.

Caiaphas, in this passage before us, speaketh partly as Caiaphas and partly as a prophet. As Caiaphas, he does, by an impious and precipitate boldness, contrive and promote the death of Christ: and what he uttered as a prophet, the evangelist tells us, he did it not of himself; he spoke what himself understood not the depth of.

The greatest work of the Messiah, according to the expectation of the Jews, was *the reduction or gathering together the captivities*. The high priest despaired that ever Jesus, should he live, could do this. For all that he either did or taught seemed to have a contrary tendency, viz. to seduce the people from their religion, rather than recover them from their servile state of bondage. So that he apprehended this one only remedy left, that care might be taken, so as by the death of this man the hazard of that nation's ruin might blow over: "If he be the Messiah (which I almost think even Caiaphas himself did not much question), since he can have no hope of redeeming the nation, let him die for it himself, that it perish not upon his account."

Thus miserably are the great masters of wisdom deceived in almost all their surmises; they expect the gathering together of the children of God in one by the life of the Messiah, which was to be accomplished by his death. They believe their traditional religion was the establishment of that nation; whereas it became its overthrow. They think to secure themselves by the death of Christ, when by that very death of his their expected security was chiefly shaken. O blind and stupid madness!

55. And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

[*To purify themselves.*] "R. Isaac saith, *Every man is bound to purify himself for the feast.*" Now there were several measures of time for purifying. He that was unclean by the touch of a dead body required a whole week's time, that he might be sprinkled with the water of purification mixed with the ashes of the red heifer, burnt the third and the seventh days.

Other purifyings were speedilier performed: amongst others, shaving themselves and washing their garments were accounted necessary, and within the laws of purifying. "These shave themselves within the feast: he who cometh from a heathen country, or from captivity, or from prison. Also he who hath been excommunicated, but now absolved by the wise men. These same also wash their garments within the feast."

It is supposed that these were detained by some necessity of affairs, that they could not wash and be shaved before the feast; for these things were of right to be performed before,

lest any should, by any means, approach polluted unto the celebration of this feast; but if, by some necessity, they were hindered from doing it before, then it was done *on a common day of the feast*, viz. after the first day of the feast.

Chapter 12

2. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

[*They made him a supper.*] If we count the days back from the Passover, and take notice that Christ suffered the next day after the eating of the Passover, which is our Friday; it will appear that this supper was on the evening of the sabbath, that is, the sabbath now going out.

Let us measure the time in this scheme:

Nisan 9. The sabbath.--Six days before the Passover Jesus sups with Lazarus at the going out of the sabbath, when, according to the custom of that country, their suppers were *more liberal*.

10. *Sunday.*--Five days before the Passover Jesus goes to Jerusalem, sitting on an ass; and on the evening returns to Bethany, [Mark 11:11](#). On this day the lamb was taken and kept till the Passover, [Exodus 12](#); on which day this Lamb of God presented himself, which was the antitype of that rite.

11. *Monday.*--Four days before the Passover he goes to Jerusalem again; curseth the unfruitful fig tree, [Matthew 21:18](#); [Mark 11:12](#): in the evening he returns again to Bethany, [Mark 11:19](#).

12. *Tuesday.*--Three days before the Passover he goes again to Jerusalem. His disciples observe how the fig tree was withered, [Mark 11:20](#). In the evening, going back to Bethany, and sitting on the mount of Olives, he foretelleth the destruction of the Temple and city, [Matthew 24](#), and discourses those things which are contained in [Matthew 25](#).

This night he sups with 'Simon the leper,' [Matthew 26:1](#), &c.; [John 13](#).

13. *Wednesday.*--This day he passeth away in Bethany. At the coming in of this night the whole nation apply themselves to put away all leaven.

14. *Thursday.*--He sends two of his disciples to get ready the Passover. He himself enters Jerusalem in the afternoon; in the evening eats the Passover, institutes the eucharist; is taken, and almost all the night had before the courts of judicature.

15. *Friday.*--Afternoon, he is crucified.

16. *Saturday.*--He keeps the sabbath in the grave.

17. *The Lord's day.*--He riseth again.

3. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

[*Then Mary, &c.*] In that contest, whether Mary the sister of Lazarus was the same with Mary Magdalene, this passage will help a little towards the affirmative, that there was a town called Magdala very near Jerusalem.

"A clerk or scribe at Magdala set his candles in order every evening of the sabbath, went up to Jerusalem, prayed there, returned and lighted up his candles when the sabbath was now coming in."

It seems plain by this, that Magdala and Jerusalem were not very far distant from one another, when all this was done so quickly, and in so short a space of time. Only we may learn this from the Gloss, that that Magdala was *Magdala Zebaim*: concerning which that sad and direful passage is related, that "it was destroyed for its adulteries."

"There were three cities whose customs were carried to Jerusalem": Gloss: "In wagons, because of their great weight. The names of these three cities were Cabul, Sichin, and Magdala. Why was *Cabul* destroyed? Because of their discords. Why was *Sichin* destroyed? Because of the magic arts they used. And why was Magdala destroyed? *Because of their whoredoms.*" The *Hierosol.* say it was *Magdala Zabaia*. To this place it was that R. Jonathan once betook himself for some cure to his baldness.

Now therefore what should hinder but that Mary the sister of Lazarus of Bethany might be called Magdalene, both for the nearness of the town, where perhaps she was married, and also for the lascivious manners of the townfolks, with which spot it is commonly believed Mary Magdalene had been tainted?

[*Anointed the feet of Jesus.*] In this passage there were two things very unusual:

I. It was indeed a very common thing to anoint the feet with oil; but to do it with aromatical ointment, this was more rarely done. And it is charged by the Gemarists as a great crime, that the Jerusalem women of old anointed their shoes with perfumed ointment, to entice the young men to wantonness.

"*Make a tinkling with their feet, Isaiah 3:16.* R. Isaac saith, that by this is intimated that they put myrrh and balsam in their shoes; and when they met the young men of Israel, they kicked with their feet, and so stirred up in them evil and loose affections."

II. It was accounted an immodest thing for women to dishevel and unloose their hair publicly: *The priest unlooseth the hairs* of the women suspected of adultery, when she was to be tried by the bitter water, which was done for greater disgrace.

"Kamitha had seven sons, who all performed the office of high priest: they ask of he how she came to this honour? She answered, "The rafters of my house never saw the hairs of my head."

[*And wiped them with her hair.*] Did she not wash his feet before she anointed them? I do not ask whether she did not wash them with her *tears*, as before, [Luke 7](#): for as to that, the evangelist is silent; but did she not wash his feet *at all*? I ask this, because the custom of the country seems to persuade she should do so.

"The maid brought him *a little vessel of warm water*, with which he washed his hands and his feet: then she brought a golden vessel of oil, in which he dipped his hands and his feet." There was first washing, then anointing.

Either therefore this word *she wiped* must relate to some previous washing of his feet: or if it ought to refer to the ointment, it scarcely would suppose wiping off the ointment now laid on; but rather, that with the hairs of her head she rubbed and chafed it. Which brings to mind that passage, "If a woman in labour should have need of oil [on the sabbath day], let her neighbour bring it her in the hollow of her hand; but if that should not be sufficient, *let her bring it in the hairs of her head.*" The Gloss is, "Let her dip her own hair in oil, and when she comes to the woman in travail, let her rub it upon her, and by that action she doth not break the sabbath."

[*And the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.*] "A good name is better than precious ointment. *Good ointment* [by its smell] *passeth out of the bed into the dining room*; but a good name, from one end of the world unto the other."

6. This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

[*The bag.*] We meet with this word in the Greek interpreters, [2 Chronicles 24](#); and it is set there for a *chest* or *corban box*, verse 8: *let a purse or bag be made*. The Hebrew is, *they shall make a chest*. So verses 10, 11, &c. Amongst the Talmudists we meet with *gloskema* [that is the word the Syriac useth in this place], and *dloskema*. For as the Aruch, *gloskema* is the same with *dloskema*, and is a Greek word. It is used commonly for a *coffin*.

"As Phrynichus writes it, a case of wood to keep relics in; a coffin, a chest, a box, a purse, or rather a coffer (*note that*) in which they used to lay up their money. It is used, [John 12](#), to signify a *purse*." And why may it not be read there also for a *chest* or *coffer*? for Judas is not said *to carry the bag*; but that *he had the bag, and bare what was put therein*. So that nothing hinders but that, even in this place, may signify a *chest* or *coffer of money*, fixed at home; the keys of which were in Judas' keeping, and he carried *the gifts that were to be put into it*.

7. Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

[*Against the day of my burying hath she kept this.*] Baronius proves from this place that this Mary was Mary Magdalene, because she is named amongst those that anointed Christ for his interment; and Christ saith in this place, that she reserved some of this ointment for this use: which I have had occasion to mention elsewhere. If this exposition do not take, then add this clause, "Let her alone": for this may be an argument and sign that she hath not

done this vainly, luxuriously, or spent so costly an ointment upon me upon any delicacy; because she hath reserved it for this time, wherein I am so near my grave and funeral, and poured it not on me before.

12. On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

[*Much people that were come to the feast.*] It is not greatly to our present purpose to enlarge in counting the multitude that flocked to the Passover. However, let the reader take this story in his way, and judge of it as he thinks fit:

"King Agrippa, desirous to know how great a multitude was at Jerusalem at the Passover, commanded the priests, saying, 'Lay me aside one kidney of every lamb.' They laid him aside six hundred thousand pair of kidneys: double the number to those that went out of Egypt. Now there was not any paschal lamb but was divided among more than ten persons. R. Chaija saith, 'Forty, nay fifty persons.' One time they went into the Mountain of the Temple, and it could not contain them. But there was a certain old man amongst them whom they trod under their feet. Wherefore they called that Passover the Crowded Passover."

Although this be an account (according to the loose Rabbinical way of talking) that exceeds all belief or modesty, yet might the reader, without a monitor, take notice of something in it not unworthy observation. It is true, indeed, that the multitude of those that celebrated the Passover at every feast could hardly be numbered, it was so great; yet had Jerusalem hardly ever seen such a conflux of people as was at this very feast which we are now upon, they being gathered thither from all nations of the world, [Acts 2](#): for that they were at the Passover as well as at Pentecost, there are hardly any, I believe, but will suppose.

13. Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

[*Took branches of palm trees.*] We have made our notes upon this part of the story in [Matthew 21](#): but because here is mention of *branches of palm trees*, let us add only in this place, what is discoursed by the Rabbins concerning the 'ivy of the palm trees,' much used in the Passover. "I have heard from him *that they perform their service by Arkablin*. But what is *Arkablin*? Resh Lachish saith, *A twig twined about*." Gloss: "A thick sprig that grows up about the palm tree, folds about it, and runs upon it." I could not tell better how to render this than by the 'ivy of the palm tree.' They used, as it should seem, the leaves of that frequently amongst, or instead of, the bitter herbs which they were to eat with the paschal lamb. So far they had to do with the palm tree in all other Passovers, viz. to crop the ivy off of them: but here they use the palm branches themselves, as in the feast of Tabernacles. A matter not to be passed over without wonder, and cannot but bring to mind [Zechariah 14:16](#), and [John 7:8](#).

19. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

[*The world is gone after him.*] The Talmudists would say, *All the world is gone after him.*

20. And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:

[*There were certain Greeks.*] That these *Greeks* were *Gentiles*, as the Vulgar renders it, I do not question; and perhaps they were *Syro-Grecians*; and those either of Decapolis, or Gadara, or Hippos: the reason of this conjecture is, partly, that they apply themselves to Philip of Bethsaida, as known to them, because of his neighbourhood; partly, which is more probable, that those *Greeks* that bordered upon Galilee and the places where Christ wrought his miracles, might seem more prone both to embrace the Jewish religion, and also to see Jesus, than those that lived further off.

However be they other *Gentiles*, and not *Greeks*; or be they *Greeks* come from more remote countries, what had the one or the other to do with the feast, or the religion of the Jews? As to this, let the Jewish writers inform us.

I. "If a heathen send a burnt offering out of his own country, and withal send drink offerings, the drink offerings are offered: but if he send no drink offerings, drink offerings are offered at the charge of the congregation." Observe that. We have the same elsewhere. And it is every where added, that this is one of the seven things that were ordained by the great council; and that the sacrifice of a Gentile is only a whole burnt offering, *The thank offerings of a Gentile are whole burnt offerings.* And the reason is given, *The mind of that Gentile is towards heaven.* Gloss: "He had rather that his sacrifice should be wholly consumed by fire to God, than [as his thank offerings] be eaten by men."

That of Josephus is observable; "Eleazar, the son of Ananias, the high priest, a bold young man, persuaded those that ministered in holy things, *that they should accept of no sacrifice at the hands of a stranger. This was the foundation of the war with the Romans.*" For they refused a sacrifice for Caesar.

The elders, that they might take off Eleazar and his followers from this resolution of theirs, making a speech to them, among other things, say this, "That their forefathers had greatly beautified and adorned the Temple, *from things devoted by the Gentiles: always receiving the gifts from foreign nations,* not having ever made any difference in the sacrifices of any whomsoever; for that would be irreligious," &c. When they had spoken this and many more things to this purpose, "they produced several priests skilled in the ancient customs of their forefathers, who shewed *that all their ancestors received offerings from the Gentiles.*"

II. Nor did the *Gentiles* only *send* their gifts and sacrifices, but came themselves personally sometimes to the Temple, and there worshipped. Hence the outward court of the Temple was called the *Court of the Gentiles*, and *the Common Court*; to which that in the Book of the Revelation alludes, chapter 11:2, "But the court which is without the Temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the *Gentiles.*" And of those there shall innumerable

numbers come and worship. "And the holy city shall they tread forty and two months." It is not *they shall tread it under foot* as enemies and spoilers, but *they shall tread it* as worshippers. So [Isaiah 1:12](#).

The Syrians, and those that are unclean by the touch of a dead body, entered into the Mountain of the Temple.

"Rabban Gamaliel, walking in the *Court of the Gentiles*, saw a heathen woman, and blessed concerning her."

"They would provoke the Roman arms, espouse a war with them, introduce a new worship, and persuade an impiety with the hazard of the city, *if not stranger, but the Jews only, may be allowed to sacrifice or worship.*"

Hence that suspicion about Trophimus being brought by Paul into the Temple, is not to be supposed to have been with reference to this court, but to the Court of the Women, in which Paul was purifying himself.

There is a story of a certain *Gentile* that ate the Passover at Jerusalem; but when they found him out to be a heathen, they slew him; for the Passover ought not to be eaten by any one that is uncircumcised. But there was no such danger that an uncircumcised person could run by coming into the *Court of the Gentiles*, and worshipping there.

24. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

[*Except a corn of wheat.*] How doth this answer of our Saviour's agree with the matter propounded? Thus: "Is it so indeed? do the *Gentiles* desire to see me? The time draws on wherein I must be glorified in the conversion of the *Gentiles*; but as a corn of wheat doth not bring forth fruit, except it be first thrown into the ground and there die; but if it die it will bring forth much fruit; so I must die first and be thrown into the earth: and then a mighty harvest of the *Gentile* world will grow up, and be the product of that death of mine."

[Isaiah 26:19](#): "Thy dead men shall live, *together with my dead body shall they arise*": so our translation, with which also the French agrees, *They shall rise with my body*. But it is properly, *They shall arise my body*: so the Interlineary version. "The *Gentiles* being dead in their sins shall, with my dead body, when it rises again, rise again also from their death: nay, they shall rise again my body, that is, as part of myself, and my body mystical."

28. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

[*I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.*] This petition of our Saviour's, "Father, glorify thy name," was of no light consequence, when it had such an answer from heaven by an audible voice: and what it did indeed mean we must guess by the context. Christ, upon the *Greeks'* desire to see him, takes that occasion to discourse about his death, and to exhort his followers, that from his example they would not love their life, but by losing it preserve

it to life eternal. Now by how much the deeper he proceeds in the discourse and thoughts of his approaching death, by so much the more is his mind disturbed, as himself acknowledgeth, verse 27.

But whence comes this disturbance? It was from the apprehended rage and assault of the devil. Whether our Lord Christ, in his agony and passion, had to grapple with an angry God, I question: but I am certain he had to do with an angry devil. When he stood, and stood firmly, in the highest and most eminent point and degree of obedience, as he did in his sufferings, it doth not seem agreeable that he should then be groaning under the pressures of divine wrath; but it is most agreeable he should under the rage and fury of the devil. For,

I. The fight was now to begin between the serpent and the seed of the woman, mentioned [Genesis 3:15](#), about the glory of God and the salvation of man. In which strife and contest we need not doubt but the devil would exert all his malice and force to the very uttermost.

II. God loosed all the reins, and suffered the devil without any kind of restraint upon him to exercise his power and strength to the utmost of what he either could or would, because he knew his champion Christ was strong enough, not only to bear his assaults, but to overcome them.

III. He was to overcome, not by his divine power, for how easy a matter were it for an omnipotent God to conquer the most potent created being; but his victory must be obtained by his obedience, his righteousness, his holiness.

IV. Here then was the rise of that trouble and agony of Christ's soul, that he was presently to grapple with the utmost rage of the devil; the divine power in the mean time suspending its activity, and leaving him to manage the conflict with those weapons of obedience and righteousness only.

It was about this, therefore, that that petition of our Saviour and the answer from heaven was concerned: which may be gathered from what follows, verse 31, "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out."

"Now is my soul troubled (saith he), and what shall i say? It is not convenient for me to desire to be saved from this hour; for this very purpose did I come: that therefore which I would beg of thee, O Father, is, that thou wouldst glorify thy name, thy promise, thy decree, against the devil, lest he should boast and insult."

The answer from heaven to this prayer is, "I have already glorified my name in that victory thou formerly obtaindest over his temptations in the wilderness; and I will glorify my name again in the victory thou shalt have in this combat also."

[Luke 4:13](#); "When the devil had ended all the temptations, he departed from him for a season." He went away baffled then: but now he returns more insolent, and much more to be conquered.

And thus now, the third time, by a witness and voice from heaven, was the Messiah honoured according to his kingly office; as he had been according to his priestly office when

he entered upon his ministry at his baptism, [Matthew 3:17](#); and according to his prophetic office when he was declared to be he that was to be heard, [Matthew 17:5](#), compared with [Deuteronomy 18:15](#).

31. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

[*The prince of this world.*] *The prince of this world*: a sort of phrase much used by the Jewish writers; and what they mean by it we may gather from such passages as these: "When God was about to make Hezekiah the Messiah, *saith the prince of the world* to him, 'O eternal Lord, perform the desire of this just one.'" Where this Gloss is; "*The prince of this world* is the angel into whose hands the whole world is delivered."

Who this should be, the masters tell out: "When the law was delivered, God brought the angel of death, and said unto him, *The whole world is in thy power*, excepting this nation only [the Israelites], which I have chosen for myself. R. Eliezer, the son of R. Jose the Galilean, saith, 'The angel of death said before the holy blessed God, I am made in the world in vain. The holy blessed God answered and said, I have created thee that thou shouldst *overlook* the nations of the world, excepting this nation over which thou hast no power.'"

"If the nations of the world should conspire against Israel the holy blessed God saith to them, *Your prince could not stand before Jacob*," &c.

Now the name of the angel of death amongst them is Samael. "And the women saw *Samael, the angel of death*, and she was afraid," &c. The places are infinite where this name occurs amongst the Rabbins, and they account him the prince of the devils.

The wicked angel Samael is the prince of all Satans. The angel of death, *he that hath the power of death, that is, the devil*, [Hebrews 2:14](#). They call indeed *Beelzebub the prince of the devils*, [Matthew 12](#); but that is under a very peculiar notion, as I have shewn in that place.

They conceive it to be *Samael* that deceived Eve. So the Targumist before. And so *Pirke R. Eliezer*: "The serpent, what things soever he did, and what words soever he uttered, he did and uttered all from the suggestion of *Samael*."

Some of them conceive that it is he that wrestled with Jacob. Hence that which we have quoted already: "The holy blessed God saith to the nations of the world, *Your prince could not stand before him*." *Your prince*, that is, the prince of the nations, whom the Rabbins talk of as appearing to Jacob *in the shape of Archilatro, or a chief robber*. And R. Chaninah Bar Chama saith, *he was the prince of Esau*, i.e. the prince of Edom. Now "the prince of Edom was *Samael*."

They have a fiction that the seventy nations of the world were committed to the government of so many angels [they will hardly allow the Gentiles any good ones]: which opinion the Greek version favours in [Deuteronomy 32:8](#); "When the Most High divided the nations" [into seventy, say they], "when he separated the sons of Adam, *he set the bounds of the nations*"

according to the number of the angels of God." Over these princes they conceive one monarch above them all, and that is *Samael, the angel of death*, the arch-devil.

Our Saviour therefore speaks after their common way when he calls the devil *the prince of this world*: and the meaning of the phrase is made the more plain, if we set it in opposition to that Prince 'whose kingdom is not of this world,' that is, the Prince of the world to come. Consult [Hebrews 2:5](#).

How far that prince of the nations of the world had exercised his tyranny amongst the Gentiles, leading them captive into sin and perdition, needs no explaining. Our Saviour therefore observing at this time some of the Greeks, that is, the Gentiles, pressing hard to see him, he joyfully declares, that the time is coming on apace wherein this prince must be unseated from his throne and tyranny: "And I, when I shall be lifted up upon the cross, and by my death shall destroy him who hath the power of death, then will I draw all nations out of his dominion and power after me."

34. The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

[*We have heard out of the law.*] *Out of the law*; that is, as the phrase is opposed to the words of the scribes. So we often meet with *This is out of the law*, or Scripture, to which is opposed *This is out of the Rabbins*.

"That Christ abideth for ever." How then came the Rabbins to determine his time and years? some to the space of forty years, some to seventy, and others to three generations? After the days of Messiah, they expected that eternity should follow.

39. Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

[*Therefore they could not believe, &c.*] They were not constrained in their infidelity, because Isaiah had said, "Their heart is waxen gross," &c.; but because those things were true which that prophet had foretold concerning them: which prophecy, if I understand them aright, they throw off from themselves, and pervert the sense of it altogether.

"R. Jochanan saith, Repentance is a great thing; for it rescinds the decree of judgment determined against man: as it is written, "The heart of this people is made fat, their ears heavy, and their eyes are closed, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart: *but they shall be converted and healed*," For to that sense do they render these last words, diametrically contrary to the mind of the prophet.

They have a conceit that Isaiah was cut in two, either by the saw or the axe, by Manasseh the king, principally for this very vision and prophecy:

"It is a tradition. Simeon Ben Azzai saith, I found a book at Jerusalem.....in which was written how Manasses slew Isaiah. Rabba saith he condemned and put him to death upon this occasion: he saith to him, Thy master Moses saith, 'No man can see God and live': but

thou sayest, 'I have seen the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up.' Thy master Moses saith, 'Who is like our God in all things that we call upon him for?' [Deuteronomy 4:7](#): but thou sayest, 'Seek ye the Lord while he may be found,' [Isaiah 55:6](#). Moses thy master saith, 'The number of thy days I will fulfil,' [Exodus 13:26](#): but thou sayest, 'I will add unto thy days fifteen years,' [Isaiah 38:5](#). Isaiah answered and said, 'I know he will not hearken to me in any thing I can say to him: if I should say any thing to the reconciling of the Scriptures, I know he will deal contemptuously in it.' He said therefore, '*I will shut myself up in this cedar.*' They brought the cedar, and sawed it asunder. *And when the saw touched his mouth, he gave up the ghost.* This happened to him because he said, 'I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.'"

Manasseh slew Isaiah, and, as it should seem, the Gemarists do not dislike the fact, because he had accused Israel for the uncleanness of their lips. No touching upon Israel by any means!

41. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

[*When he saw his glory.*] [Isaiah 6:1](#): "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne." Where the Targum, *I saw the Lord's glory*, &c. So [Exodus 24:10](#): "They saw the God of Israel." Targum, "*They saw the glory* of the God of Israel." And verse 11; "And they saw God." Targum, "*And they saw the glory* of God." So the Targumists elsewhere very often: commended therefore by their followers for so rendering it, Because no man could see God.

It might be therefore thought that our evangelist speaks with the Targumist and the nation when he saith, that "Isaiah saw his glory"; whereas the prophet himself saith, "He saw the Lord."

But there is a deeper meaning in it: nor do I doubt but this *glory* of our Saviour which Isaiah saw was that kind of *glory* by which he is described when he was to come to avenge himself and punish the Jewish nation. As when he is said, "to come in his kingdom," and "in his glory," and "in the clouds," &c. viz. in his vindictive glory. For observe,

1. The prophet saw "the posts of the door shaken and removed," as hastening to ruin.
2. "The Temple itself filled with smoke": not with the cloud as formerly, the token of the divine presence, but with smoke, the forerunner and prognostic of that fire that should burn and consume it.
3. He saw the seraphim, angels of fire, because of the predetermined burning.
4. He heard the decree about blinding and hardening the people till the cities be wasted, and the land desolate.

1. Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

[*Now before the feast of the Passover.*] The Vulgar, Beza, and the Interlinear read, *Now before the feast day of the Passover*: but by what authority they add *day* it concerns them to make out. For,

I. In the common language of the Jews, *the whole festivity and time of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles*, no part of that time being excepted; nor does the word *feast*, occur anywhere throughout the whole Bible in another signification.

II. It is something harsh to exclude the paschal supper out of the title of *the feast of the Passover*, because the name of the whole feast takes its original from it. This they do who imagine this supper mentioned in this place to have been the paschal supper, and yet it was *before the feast of the Passover*.

We have therefore shewn, by many arguments in our notes upon [Matthew 26:2,6](#), that the supper here mentioned was the same with that at Bethany, in the house of 'Simon the leper,' two days before the Passover.

2. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

[*And supper being ended.*] I acknowledge the aorist, and yet do not believe the supper was now *ended*. We have the very same word in the story of the same supper, [Matthew 26:6](#); *and Jesus being in Bethany*: which in St. Mark is *and being in Bethany*, chapter 14:3: so that *supper being ended* is no more than '*being*' supper.

Let us join the full story together. While Jesus was at supper in the house of Simon the leper two days before the Passover, a woman comes and pours very precious ointment upon his head. When some murmured at the profuseness of the expense, he defends the woman and the action by an apology: and having finished his apology, he rises immediately from the table, as it were, in the very midst of supper, and girds himself to wash his disciples' feet: so that while they are grumbling at the anointing of his head, he does not disdain to wash their feet.

The reason of this extraordinary action of his we may in some measure spell out from those little prefaces the evangelist uses before he tells the story.

I. "When Jesus knew that his hour was come *that he should depart out of this world, &c.*" [There is an expression not unlike this in *Bemidbar Rabba*; "Abraham said, 'I am flesh and blood, *tomorrow I shall go out of this world.*'"]

It had a little rubbed up the memory of his departure out of this world, that the woman had as it were anointed him for his funeral: and therefore he riseth immediately from the table, that he might give them some farewell token of his humility and charity, and leave them an example for the practice of these virtues one amongst another.

II. "The devil having now put into the heart of Judas to betray him," it was but seasonable for him to shew his disciples that he would strengthen and vindicate them against the wolf who had now stolen, I will not say a *sheep*, but a *goat*, and that out of his own flock. It must not pass unobserved, that 'his disciples' murmured at the lavish use of the ointment, [Matthew 26:8](#); as if the murmuring humour was crept in amongst others also as well as Judas; which perhaps moved Christ the more earnestly to meet the beginnings of that distemper by this action.

III. "Knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands," verse 3, he gave the traitor over to Satan, and confirms the rest to himself: signifying, by the external washing, that his should be secured from the devil by the washing of Christ. Whosoever shall attempt the determination, whether he washed the feet of Judas or not, let him see how he will free himself of this dilemma:

If he washed Judas' feet, why had not he his part in Christ, as well as the rest of his disciples? For supposing that true, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me," why should not this be so too, "If I do wash thee, thou hast a part with me?"

If he did not wash Judas with the rest, but left him out, how could the rest be ignorant who was the unclean person? verse 10, which they were altogether ignorant of.

5. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.

[*Into a basin.*] "On that day, [when they made R. Eleazar Ben Azariah president of the council] the votes were numbered; and they determined *concerning the basin wherein they were to wash their feet*, that it should contain from two *logs* to ten."

[*He began to wash the feet, &c.*] As to this action of our Saviour's *washing his disciples' feet*, it may be observed,

I. It was an unusual thing for superiors to *wash* the feet of inferiors. Amongst the duties required from a wife towards a husband this was one, that she should *wash* his face, his hands, and his feet. The same was expected by a father from his son. The same from a servant towards his master, but not *vice versa*. Nor, as I remember, was it expected from the disciple towards his master, unless included in that rule, "That the disciple is to honour his master more than his father."

II. The *feet* were never *washed* merely under the notion of legal purification. The *hands* were wont to be *washed* by the Pharisees merely under that notion, but not the *feet*: and the hands and the feet by the priests, but the feet not merely upon that account. That what was said before, *concerning the basin wherein the feet were to be washed*, must not be understood as if the *feet* were to be *washed* upon any score of a legal cleansing; but only care was taken by that tradition, lest through defect of a just quantity of water the feet and the person should contract some sort of uncleanness whilst they were washing.

So that by how much distant this action of Christ's was from the common usage and custom, by so much the more instructive was it to his followers, propounded to them not only for example, but doctrine too.

III. As to the manner of the action. It is likely he *washed their feet* in the same manner as his own were, [Luke 7:38](#); viz. while they were leaning at the table (as the Jewish custom of eating was) *he washed their feet*, as they were stretched out behind them. And if he did observe any order, he began with Peter, who sat in the next place immediately to himself. This Nonnus seems to believe; to which opinion also there are others that seem inclined; and then the words *he began to wash*, must be taken in some such sense as if he made ready and put himself into a posture to wash. But perhaps this way of expression may intimate, as if he began to wash some of his disciples, but did not wash them all; which for my own part I could easily enough close with. For whereas Christ did this for example and instruction merely, and not with any design of cleansing them, his end was answered in *washing* two or three of them, as well as all. And so indeed I would avoid being entangled in the dilemma I lately mentioned, by saying, he did not only leave Judas unwashed, but several others also. What if he *washed* Peter and James and John only? And as he had before made some distinction betwixt these three and the rest of his disciples by admitting them into his more inward privacies, so perhaps he distinguisheth them no less in this action. These he foretold how they were to suffer martyrdom: might he not, therefore, by this *washing*, prefigure to them that they must be baptized with the same baptism that he himself was to be baptized with? and as the woman had anointed him for his burial, so he, by this action, might have washed them for that purpose.

13. Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

[*Master and Lord.*] *Rabbi*, and *Mar*, are titles amongst the doctors very frequently used, both those of Jerusalem and those of Babylon.

23. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

[*Leaning on Jesus' bosom.*] "They were wont to eat *leaning* on the left side, with their feet to the ground, every one singly, upon their distinct beds."

"But *when there were two beds*, he that was chief sat highest: *and he that was second to him sat above him.*" Gloss: "The bed of him that sat second *was by the bolster of him that sat first.*"

"*When there were three*, the worthiest person lay in the middle; and the second lay above him; and the third below him." Gloss: "The third lay at the feet of him that was first."

"*And if he would talk with him, he raised himself, and sitting upright* talks with him." Gloss: "If he that sits chief would talk with him that is second to him, he raiseth himself and sits upright: for so long as he leans, or lies down, he cannot talk with him; because he that lies second lies behind the head of him that lies first, and the face of him that lies first is turned from him: so that it were better for the second to sit below him, because then he may

hear his words while he sits leaning." So Lipsius writes of the Roman custom. "This was the manner of their sitting at table: they lay with the upper part of their body leaning on the left elbow; the lower part stretched at length, the head a little raised, and the back had cushions under. The first lay at the head of the bed, and his feet stretched out at the back of him that sat next," &c. To all which he adds, "That the Jews had the very same way of lying down at meals in Christ's time, appears evidently from John, Luke," &c.

So that while Christ and his disciples were eating together, Peter lay at the back of Christ, and John in his bosom: John in the bosom of Christ, and Christ in the bosom of Peter. Christ, therefore, could not readily talk with Peter in his ear (for all this discourse was by way of whispering). Peter, therefore, looking over Christ's head towards John, nods to him; and, by that, signs to him to ask Christ about this matter.

So the Gemara concerning the Persians (I suppose he means the Jews in Persia); when they could not, because of their way of leaning at meals, discourse amongst themselves, they talked by signs either with their hands or upon their fingers.

We must not omit what the Gloss said, that they were wont to sit at table leaning on their left side, with their "feet upon the ground"; this is to be understood when one sat alone, or two at the table only. And the Gemara tells us, that the order was otherwise when but two sat down: for then he that was the second sat below him that was the chief, and not at his pillow.

There was also a diversity of tables: for the ordinary table of the Pharisee, or one of the disciples of the wise men, was but little, where three at most could sit down; and there were tables which would hold more.

The ordinary table is described in *Bava Bathra*: "What kind of table is that of the disciples of the wise men? *Two thirds of the table were spread with a tablecloth; and one third was uncovered, and on this were set the dishes and the herbs.*"

The ring of the table was on the outside. Gloss: "They were wont to put a ring upon the edge of the table to hang it by." That hanging up the table when they had done using it, seems to have been only to set it out of danger of contracting any defilement; and argues it was but small and light. Now the ring of the table was *ab extra*, when that part of the table where the ring was was naked, not covered with a tablecloth: so that it was not amongst the guests, but *without*, viz. in that void place where nobody sat down. We have more in the same place about the ring being placed *within* or *without*. Gloss: "If a child sit at table with his father, the ring was without, not among the guests, lest the child, playing with the ring, should shake the table." If a servant be waiting at the table, then the table is so placed (especially if it be night), that the ring is *within*, lest the servant, in moving to and fro, should happen to touch upon it.

[*Whom Jesus loved.*] We have touched upon this phrase before in our notes upon [Mark 10:21](#); where, upon those words, "Jesus looking upon him loved him," let us add something

omitted there. [2 Chronicles 18:2](#): *and persuaded him to go up to Ramoth-Gilead*. Greek: where he *loved* him is put for "he *persuaded* him to go up with him to Ramoth in Gilead": and so the Complutensian Bible hath it. Where Nobilius, "He loved him, that is, did him all good offices, and shewed him tokens of great kindness." So Jesus, earnestly beholding this young man, *persuaded him, encouraged him*, used all mild and gentle words and actions towards him, that he might urge and stir him up to the ways of godliness.

26. Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

[*And when he had dipped the sop.*] This was a very unusual thing, to dip a sop and reach it to any one: and what could the rest of the disciples think of it? It is probable they took it as if Christ had said to Judas, "What thou doest, do quickly: do not stay till the supper be done and the tables withdrawn; but take this sop to make up your supper, and begone about the business you are to despatch." So they might apprehend the matter; only John, indeed, understood what it meant: unless perhaps Peter, being not ignorant of the question John asked our Saviour, might not be ignorant of what Christ answered him by that action.

27. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

[*And after the sop, &c.*] Satan knew well enough what Christ meant by it: for when he saw that by giving the sop Christ had declared which of them should betray him, the devil makes his entry. For as he had entered into the serpent that deceived the first Adam, so he knew the second Adam could not be betrayed but by one into whom he should first enter.

[*That thou doest, do quickly.*] I would take this expression for a tacit severe threatening pronounced, not without some scorn and indignation against him: q.d. "I know well enough what thou art contriving against me; what thou doest, therefore, do quickly: else thy own death may prevent thee, for thou hast but a very short time to live, thy own end draws on apace." So [Psalm 109:8](#), "Let his days be few." And, indeed, within two days and three nights after this, Judas died.

30. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.

[*Went immediately out: and it was night.*] So the traitor goes forth to his work of darkness under the conduct of the devil, the shelter of the night. He was to go two miles, viz. from Bethany to Jerusalem; then was he to seek out and get the chief priests together, to make his bargain with them for betraying Christ. Whether he did all this this very night or the day following, as the holy Scripture saith nothing of it, so is it of no great moment for us to make a business of inquiring about it. It is not so difficult to shew how many difficulties they involve themselves in that would have all this done the very same night wherein the paschal supper

was celebrated, as it is a wonder that the favourers of this opinion should take no notice thereof themselves.

33. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

[*Little children.*] "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me,' [Isaiah 8:18](#). Were they indeed his sons, or were they not rather his disciples? Hence you may learn *that any one's disciple is called his son.*" Nor is it unlikely but that Christ in calling his disciples here *My little children* might have an eye to that place in Isaiah: for when the traitor, the son of perdition, had removed himself from them, he could then properly enough say, "Behold, I and the children which thou hast given me."

38. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

[*The cock shall not crow.*] We must not understand this as if the cock should not crow at all before Peter had denied Christ thrice: this had not been true, because the cock had crowed twice before Peter had denied him. But we must understand it, The cock shall not have finished his crowing, &c. Nor indeed was that time above half over before Peter had denied his Master.

The Jewish doctors distinguished the cockcrowing into the first, second, and third. The first they call *the cockcrowing*. The second, *when he repeats it*. The third, *when he does it a third time*. The distinction also amongst other nations is not unknown. When the time indeed was near, and the very night wherein this was to happen, then Christ saith, This very night *the cock shall not crow his second time*, &c. But here, two days before this night, he only saith, *The cock shall not crow*, that is, shall not have done all his crowing, before thou deny me. And thus our Saviour meets with the arrogance of Peter, foretelling him that he should not have the courage he so confidently assumed to himself, but should within the time and space of cockcrowing deny him thrice.

Chapter 14

1. Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

[*Let not your heart be troubled.*] They could not but be exceedingly concerned at the departure of their Master drawing on so very near. But there were other things beside his departure that grieved and perplexed their minds.

I. They had run along with their whole nation in that common expectation, that the kingdom should be restored unto Israel through the Messiah, [Acts 1:8](#). They had hoped to have been rescued by him from the Gentile yoke, [Luke 24:21](#). They had expected he would have entertained his followers with all imaginable pomp and magnificence, splendour and

triumph, [Matthew 20:20](#). But they found, alas! all things fall out directly contrary; they had got little hitherto by following him but poverty, contempt, reproach, and persecution: and now that their Master was to leave them so suddenly, they could have no prospect or hope of better things. Is this the kingdom of the Messiah?

Against this depression and despondency of mind he endeavours to comfort them, by letting them know that in his Father's house in heaven, not in these earthly regions below, their mansions were prepared for them; and there it was that he would receive and entertain them indeed.

II. Christ had introduced a new rule and face of religion, which his disciples embracing did in a great measure renounce their old Judaism; and therefore they could not but awaken the hatred of the Jews, and a great deal of danger to themselves, which now (they thought) would fall severely upon them when left to themselves, and their Master was snatched from them.

That was dreadful, if true, which we find denounced: "Epicurus" (that is, one that despises the disciples and doctrine of the wise men) "has no part in the world to come, and those that separate themselves from the customs of the synagogue go down into hell, and are there condemned for all eternity."

These are direful things, and might strangely affright the minds of the disciples, who had in so great a measure bid adieu to the customs of the synagogues and the whole Jewish religion: and for him that had led them into all this now to leave them! What could they think in this matter?

To support the disciples against discouragements of this nature:

I. He lays before them his authority, that they ought equally to believe in him as in God himself: where he lays down two of the chief articles of the Christian faith: 1. Of the divinity of the Messiah, which the Jews denied: 2. As to true and saving faith, wherein they were blind and ignorant.

II. He tells them that in his Father's house were many mansions; and that there was place and admission into heaven for all saints that had lived under different economies and administrations of things. Let not your heart be troubled for this great change brought upon the Judaic dispensation, nor let it disquiet you that you are putting yourselves under a new economy of religion so contrary to what you have been hitherto bred up in; for "in my Father's house are many mansions"; and you may expect admission under this new administration of things, as well as any others, either before or under the law.

2. In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

[*I go to prepare a place for you.*] Compare this with [Numbers 10:33](#); "And the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them, to search out a resting place for them."

6. Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

[*I am the way, the truth, and the life.*] Why is this superadded of *truth* and *the life*, when the question was only about the *way*?

I. It may be answered that this was perhaps by a Hebrew idiosyncrasy; by which *the way, the truth, and the life*, may be the same with *the true and living way*.

Jeremiah 29:11: *To give you an end and hope, or expectation:* that is, a hoped or expected end. So Kimchi in loc.; "A good end even as you expect."

II. Our Saviour seems to refute that opinion of the Jews concerning their law, as if it were the way, the truth, and the life, and indeed every thing: and to assert his own authority and power of introducing a new rule of religion, because himself is *the way, the truth, and the life*, in a sense much more proper and more sublime than the law could be said to be.

It had been happier for the Jew if he could have discerned more judiciously concerning the law; if he could have distinguished between coming to God *in* the law and coming to God *by* the law: as also between living *in* the law and living *by* the law. It is beyond all doubt, there is no way of coming to God but *in* his law: for what outlaw, or one that still wanders out of the paths of God's commandments, can come unto him? So also it is impossible that any one should have life but *in* the law of God. For who is it can have life that doth not walk according to the rule of his laws? But to obtain admission to the favour of God *by* the law, and to have life *by* the law; that is, to be justified by the works of the law; this sounds quite another thing: for it is *by* Christ only that we live and are justified; by him alone that we have access to God.

These are the fictions of the Rabbins: "There was one shewed a certain Rabbin the place where Corah and his company were swallowed up, and, 'Listen,' saith he, 'what they say.' So they heard them saying, *Moses and his law are the truth*. Upon the calends of every month hell rolls them about, as flesh rolls in the caldron, hell still saying, *Moses and his law are truth*."

It is, indeed, a great truth, what is uttered in this most false and ridiculous legend, that "the law of Moses is truth." But the Jews might (if they would) attain to a much more sound way of judging concerning the truth of it, and consider that the law is not the sum and ultimate of all truth, but that Christ is the very truth of the truth of Moses: John 1:17, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

7. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

[*If ye had known me, &c.*] It was a very difficult thing to spell out the knowledge of the Messiah from the law and the prophets under the first Temple; but it was doubly more difficult under the second. For, under the first Temple, Moses had only his own veil over him, and the prophets only their own proper and original obscurity: but under the second Temple,

the obscurity is doubled by the darkness and smoke of traditions; which had not only beclouded the true doctrines of faith and religion, but had also brought in other doctrines diametrically contrary to the chief and principal articles of faith: those for instance concerning justification, the person, reign, and office of the Messiah, &c.

With what measures of darkness these mists of tradition had covered the minds of the apostles, it is both difficult, and might be presumptuous, to determine. They did indeed own Jesus for the true Messiah, [John 1:41](#); [Matthew 16:16](#): but if in some things they judged amiss concerning his office, undertaking, and government, we must put it upon the score of that epidemical distemper of the whole nation which they still did in some measure labour under. And to this may this clause have some reference, "*If ye had known me, and had judged aright concerning the office, undertaking, and authority of the Messiah, ye would, in all these things which I teach and do, have known the will, command, and authority of the Father.*"

[*And from henceforth ye know him.*] We may render it, *Henceforward therefore know him*: "Henceforward acknowledge the Father in all that I have done, brought in, and am to introduce still, and set your hearts to rest in it: believing that you see the Father in me, and in the things that I do."

8. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

[*Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.*] "When the law was given to Moses, the Israelites saw God in his glory: do thou, therefore, now that thou art bringing in a new law and economy amongst us, do thou *shew us the Father*, and his glory, *and it will suffice us*; so that we will have no more doubt about it."

16. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

[*He shall give you another Comforter.*] I. Amongst all the names and titles given to the Messiah in the Jewish writers, that of *Menahem*, or the *Comforter*, hath chiefly obtained; and the days of the Messiah amongst them are styled *the days of 'consolation.'* The names of Messiah are reckoned up, viz. Shiloh, Jinnon, Chaninah, Menahem. And in *Jerusalem Berac.* we are told how the Messiah had been born in Bethlehem under the name of *Menahem.*

[Luke 2:25](#); "Waiting for the consolation of Israel." Targumist upon [Jeremiah 31:6](#): "Those that desire or long for the years of consolation to come." This they were wont to swear by, viz. the desire they had of seeing this consolation. *So let me see the consolation.*

Now, therefore, bring these words of our Saviour to what hath been said: q.d. "You expect, with the rest of this nation, the consolation in the Messiah and in his presence. Well; I must depart, and withdraw my presence from you; but I will send you in my stead 'another *Comforter.*'"

II. The minds of the disciples at present were greatly distressed and troubled, so that the promise of a *Comforter* seems more suitable than that of an *Advocate*, to their present state and circumstances.

17. Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

[*The Spirit of truth.*] Let us but observe how the whole world at this time lay in falsehood and error: the Gentiles under a spirit of delusion; the Jews under the cheat and imposture of traditions: and then the reason of this title of *the Spirit of truth* will appear; as also how reasonable and necessary a thing it was that such a *Spirit* should be sent into the world.

26. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

[*He shall teach you all things.*] So chapter 16:13: "He shall lead you into all truth." Here it might be very fitly inquired, whether any ever, besides the apostles themselves, were "taught all things," or "led into all truth." It is no question but that every believer is led into all truth necessary for himself and his own happiness; but it was the apostles' lot only to be led into all truth necessary both for *themselves* and the whole *church*.

30. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

[*The prince of this world cometh.*] Seeing this kind of phrase, *the prince of this world*, was, in the common acceptation of the Jewish nation, expressive of the devil ruling among the Gentiles, it may very well be understood so in these words; because the very moment of time was almost come about, wherein Christ and the devil were to enter the lists for the dominion and government, which of those two should have the rule over the Gentiles.

31. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

[*Arise, let us go hence.*] These words plainly set out the time and place wherein our Saviour had the discourse which is contained in this fourteenth chapter. The place was Bethany; the time, the very day of the Passover, when they were now about to walk to Jerusalem.

Those things which Christ had discoursed in chapter 13 were said two nights before the Passover; and that at Bethany, where Christ supped at the house of 'Simon the leper.' He abode there the day following, and the night after; and now, when the feast day was come, and it was time for them to be making towards Jerusalem to the Passover, he saith, *Arise, let us go hence*. What he did or said the day before the Passover, while he stayed at Bethany, the evangelist makes no mention. He only relates what was said in his last farewell before

the paschal supper, and upon his departure from Bethany. All that we have recorded in chapters 15, 16, and 17, was discoursed to them after the paschal supper, and after that he had instituted the holy eucharist.

Chapter 15

1. I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

[*I am the true vine.*] We may take these words in opposition to what is spoken concerning Israel. Israel is called *a vine*, [Psalm 80:8](#); [Isaiah 5:7](#); [Jeremiah 2:21](#), &c. In *Vajicra Rabba*, the parallel is drawn between Israel and a vine; and the similitude is carried on to sixteen particulars, for the most part improper and unsuitable enough.

But that which is principally to be regarded in this place is this, that hitherto, indeed, Israel had been *the vine*, into which every one that would betake himself to the worship of the true God was to be set and grafted in. But from henceforward they were to be planted no more into the Jewish religion, but into the profession of Christ. To which that in [Acts 11:26](#) hath some reference, where the disciples were first called 'Christians,' that is, no longer Jews or Israelites.

Our Saviour, as we have said before, discoursed these things immediately after that he had instituted the holy eucharist: while he was ordaining that holy sacrament he had said, "This is the new testament in my blood"; and from thence immediately adds, *I am the true vine*: so that for the future the church is to be under the administration of a new testament, and not, as the Jewish church, under that of the old; and from henceforward *I am the true vine*, into which all the branches of the church must be ingrafted, and not into the Israelitish vine any more.

3. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

[*Now ye are clean.*] Christ having discoursed of the vine and of the branches, these words seem to have an allusion to that law concerning *the circumcision* of the tree when first planted, [Leviticus 19:23](#). For the first three years the fruit was to be accounted as uncircumcised, unclean, and not to be eaten; "But you, O my branches, now are clean through my word; that word which I have been preaching to you for these three years."

4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

[*Abide in me.*] Indeed, a true fixing and abiding in Christ is by a true faith. But may we not suppose our Saviour here more peculiarly warning them against apostasy, or falling back from the gospel into Judaism, a plague likely to rage exceedingly in the church?

6. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

[*As a branch.*] See [Ezekiel 15:2](#), where D. Kimchi paraphrases in this manner: "O Son of man, I do not ask thee concerning the vine that beareth fruit (for so it ought to be accounted), but concerning *the branch* which is amongst the trees of the wood, unfruitful, even as the trees themselves are." Where, by *branch* (for so it is commonly rendered), we are to understand *the wild vine*. So R. Solomon in loc.: "I do not speak (saith God) of the vine in the vineyard that bears fruit, but of *the branch* of the wild vine that grows in the woods." So that the sense of the prophet is, "O son of man, what is the vine tree more than any tree?" viz. a *branch* of the wild vine which grows amongst the trees of the forest, which is unfruitful, even as they are.

And this is our Saviour's meaning; "Every *branch* in me that bringeth not forth fruit is cast forth like the *branch* in the vine that grows wild in the forest, which is good for nothing but to be burned"...

12. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

[*That ye love one another.*] "Every sabbath they added that blessing towards that course of priests who, having performed their service the last week, were gone off. Let him who dwells in this house plant among you *brotherhood, love, peace, and friendship.*"

Our Saviour once and again repeats that command, "Love one another": he calls it 'a new commandment,' chapter 13:34: for their traditions had in a great measure put that command of loving one another out of date; and that particularly by very impious vows they would be making. We have a little hint of it, [Matthew 15:5](#), and more in the treatise *Nedarim*. See also [Matthew 5:43](#), "Thou shalt hate thine enemy": this rule obtained in the Jewish schools. And upon that precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," let us see the mighty charitable Gloss in *Chetubb*. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," that is, *decree him to an easy death*: namely, when he is adjudged by the Sanhedrim to die.

When you consider the frequent repetition of this precept, "Love one another," consider also that passage, [Matthew 10:34](#), "I came not to send peace, but a sword": and then having reflected on those horrid seditions and mutual slaughters, wherewith the Jewish nation, raging with itself in most bloody discords and intestine broils, was, even by itself, wasted and overwhelmed, you will more clearly see the necessity and reasonableness of this command of *loving one another*, as also the great truth of that expression, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

15. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

[*But I have called you friends, for all things, &c.*] Thus is it said of Abraham the 'friend of God,' [Genesis 18:17](#).

16. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

[*Ye have not chosen me.*] For it was a custom amongst the Jews that the disciple should choose to himself his own master. "Joshua Ben Perachiah said, '*Choose to thyself a master, and get a colleague.*'"

22. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.

[*They had not had sin.*] So also verse 24: in both places the passage is to be understood of that peculiar sin of rejecting the Messiah: "If I had not spoken to them, and done those things that made it demonstrably evident that I was the Messiah, they had not had sin, that is, they had not been guilty of this sin of rejecting me. But when I have done such things amongst them, it is but too plain that they do what they do in mere hatred to me and to my Father." Our Saviour explains what sin he here meaneth in chapter 16:9.

Chapter 16

2. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

[*They shall put you out of the synagogues.*] This, I presume, must be understood of a casting out from the whole congregation of Israel, because I know the Jews always proceeded in that manner against the Samaritans; and certainly the disciples of Jesus were full as hateful to them as the Samaritans could be. Nay, they often call the Christians by the name of *Cuthites*, as well as those.

Those that were cast out of the church they despoiled of all their goods, according to [Ezra 10:8](#): which they also did to those that were *shammatized*. Whence it may be a question, whether *shammatizing* did not cast out of the whole congregation; and again, whether one cast out of the whole congregation might be ever readmitted.

We may take notice of what is said in *Avodah Zarah*. *No one that relapseth may be received again for ever.* The Gloss tells us that the passage concerns the plebeians or laics, who having taken upon themselves any religious rule of life, go back again from that profession: they do not admit them *into that order and society* again. Whether therefore those that fell

off from the gospel, returning to their Judaism again, were ever admitted into the Jewish church after they had voluntarily forsaken it, might be an inquiry. But these things only by the by.

There was, in truth, a twofold epocha of the persecution of the apostolical church, namely, both before that apostasy of which we have such frequent mention, and also after it. Our Saviour had foretold the apostasy in that tremendous parable about the unclean spirit cast out, and returning again with seven worse. "So shall it be also (saith he) unto this wicked generation," [Matthew 12:45](#). The footsteps of this we may discern almost in every epistle of the apostles.

It is worthy observation, that of [2 Thessalonians 2:3](#): "The day of the Lord shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed." The day of the Lord here spoken of was that wherein Christ should come and reveal himself in that remarkable vengeance against Jerusalem and the Jewish nation, of which kind of expression we shall say more on chapter 21:22. The 'apostasy' or 'falling away,' and revelation of 'the man of sin,' was to precede that day: which might be easily made out by a history of those times, if I were to do the business either of a historian or a chronologer.

When therefore the severe and cruel persecution was first raised by the unbelieving Jews before this falling away of Christians, it must needs be greatly increased afterward by them and the apostates together: which distinction we may easily observe out of this verse.

[*Will think that he doeth God service.*] So the *zealots*, of whom we have mention in *Sanhedrim; the zealots kill him*. Gloss: "These are those good men who are endued with zeal in the cause of God." Such who with their own hands immediately slew the transgressor, not staying for the judgment of the Sanhedrim. So in the place before quoted, "The priest that ministers at the altar in his uncleanness, they do not bring before the Sanhedrim; but they bring him out into the court, and there brain him with the pieces of wood" provided to maintain the fire upon the altar.

What infinite mischiefs and effusion of blood such pretexts of *zeal* towards God might occasion, it is easy to imagine, and very direful instances have already witnessed to the world. Hence was it that they so often went about to have stoned our Saviour. Hence those forty and more that had conspired against St. Paul. And those *zealots* whose butcherly cruelties are so infamous in the Jewish story took the occasion of their horrid madness first from this liberty.

From such kind of villains as these the disciples of Christ could have little safeguard: indeed, they were greatly endangered upon a threefold account: I. From the stroke of excommunication, by which they were spoiled of their goods and estates, [Hebrews 10:34](#). II. From the sentence of the Sanhedrim, dooming them either to be scourged or slain. III. From these *assassins*; for by this name (a name too well known in Europe) we will call them. We pro-

nounce *assassin* and *assassination*; Gul. Tyrius calls them *assysins*, whom it may be worth the while to consult about the original of that name.

8. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

[*He will reprove the world of sin, &c.*] The Holy Spirit had absented himself from that nation now for the space of four hundred years, or thereabout: and therefore, when he should be given and poured out in a way and in measures so very wonderful, he could not but evince it to the world that "Jesus was the true Messiah," the Son of God, who had so miraculously poured out the Holy Spirit amongst them; and consequently could not but *reprove* and redargue *the world of sin*, because they believed not in him.

10. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

[*Of righteousness, &c.*] That this *righteousness* here mentioned is to be understood of the righteousness of Christ, hardly any but will readily enough grant: but the question is, what sort of righteousness of his is here meant? whether his personal and inherent, or his communicated and justifying righteousness? We may say that both may be meant here.

I. Because he went to the Father, it abundantly argued him a *just* and righteous person, held under no guilt at all, however condemned by men as a malefactor.

II. Because he poured out the Spirit, it argued the *merit* of his righteousness; for otherwise he could not, in that manner, have given the Holy Spirit. And, indeed, that what is chiefly meant here is that righteousness of his by which we are justified, this may persuade us, that so many and so great things are spoken concerning it in the Holy Scriptures. [Isaiah 56:1](#), "My salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed": [Daniel 9:29](#), "To bring in everlasting righteousness": [Jeremiah 23:6](#), "This is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our *Righteousness*." And in the Epistles of the apostles, especially those of St. Paul, this righteousness is frequently and highly celebrated, seeming, indeed, the main and principal subject of the doctrines of the gospel.

In the stead of many others, let this serve for all; [Romans 1:17](#), "For therein" [viz. in the gospel] "is the righteousness of God revealed *from faith to faith*": which words may be a good comment upon the foregoing clause.

I. The law teacheth faith; that is, that we believe in God. But the gospel directs us to proceed 'from faith to faith,' viz. from faith in God to faith in Christ: for true and saving faith is not a mere naked recumbency immediately upon God, which faith the Jews were wont to profess, but faith in God by the mediation of faith in Christ.

II. In the law the righteousness of God was revealed *condemning*, but in the gospel it was revealed *justifying* the sinner. And this is the great mystery of the gospel, that sinners are justified not only through the grace and mere compassion and mercy of God, but through

divine justice and righteousness too, that is, through the righteousness of Christ, who is Jehovah, "the Lord our Righteousness."

And the Spirit of truth when he came did *reprove* and instruct *the world* concerning these two great articles of faith, wherein the Jews had so mischievously deceived themselves; that is, concerning true saving faith, faith in Christ; and also concerning the manner or formal cause of justification, viz. the righteousness of Christ.

But then, how can we form the argument? "I go unto the Father; therefore the world shall be convinced of my justifying righteousness."

I. Let us consider that the expression, "I go unto the Father," hath something more in it than "I go to heaven." So that by this kind of phrase our Saviour seems to hint, "That work being now finished, for the doing of which my Father sent me into the world, I am now returning to him again." Now the work which Christ had to do for the Father was various: the manifestation of the Father; preaching the gospel; vanquishing the enemies of God, sin, death, and the devil: but the main and chief of all, and upon which all the rest did depend, was, that he might perform a perfect obedience or obediential righteousness to God.

God had created man, that he might obey his Maker: which when he did not do, but being led away by the devil grew disobedient, where was the Creator's glory? The devil triumphs that the whole human race in Adam had kicked against God, proved a rebel, and warred under the banners of Satan. It was necessary, therefore, that Christ, clothing himself in the human nature, should come into the world and vindicate the glory of God, by performing an entire obedience due from mankind and worthy of his Maker. He did what weighed down for all the disobedience of all mankind, I may say, of the devil's too; for his obedience was infinite. He fulfilled a righteousness by which sinners might be justified, which answered that justice that would have condemned them; for the righteousness was infinite. This was the great business he had to do in this world, to pay such an obedience, and to fulfil such a righteousness; and this righteousness is the principal and noble theme and subject of the evangelical doctrine, [Romans 1:17](#): of this the world must primarily and of necessity be convinced and instructed to the glory of him that justifieth, and the declaration of the true doctrine of justification. And this righteousness of his was abundantly evidenced by his going to the Father, because he could not have been received there, if he had not fully accomplished that work for which he had been sent.

II. It is added, not without reason, "and ye see me no more"; i.e. "Although you are my nearest and dearest friends, yet you shall no more enjoy my presence on earth; by which may be evinced, that you shall partake of my merits; especially when the world shall see you enriched so gloriously with the gifts of my Spirit."

11. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

[*Of judgment, because the prince, &c.*] It is well known that *the prince of this world was judged* when our Saviour overcame him by the obedience of his death, [Hebrews 2:14](#): and

the first instance of that judgment and victory was when he arose from the dead: the next was when he loosed the Gentiles out of the chains and bondage of Satan by the gospel, and bound him himself, [Revelation 20:1,2](#): which place will be a very good comment upon this passage.

And both do plainly enough evince that Christ will be capable of judging the whole world, viz. all those that believe not on him, when he hath already judged the prince of this world. This may call to mind the Jewish opinion concerning the judgment that should be exercised under the Messiah, that he should not judge Israel at all, but the Gentiles only; nay, that the Jews were themselves rather to judge the Gentiles, than that they were to be judged. But he that hath judged the prince of this world, the author of all unbelief, will also judge every unbeliever too.

12. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

[*Ye cannot bear them now.*] Those things which he had to say, *and they could not bear yet*, were the institution of the Christian sabbath, and the abolishing of the Jewish (the reason and foundation of which, viz. his resurrection, they yet understood not); the rejection of the Jewish nation, when they expected 'that the kingdom should be restored to Israel,' [Acts 1:6](#); the entire change of the whole Mosaic dispensation, and the bringing in of all nations in common within the pale of the church: these and such like things as these belonging to the kingdom of God, [Acts 1:3](#), they could not yet bear. For though he had plainly enough discoursed to them the destruction of Jerusalem, [Matthew 24](#), yet it is a question, whether they apprehended either that their whole nation must be utterly cast off, or that the rites of Moses should be antiquated, although he had hinted something of this nature to them more than once.

13. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

[*Whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak.*] And verse 14, *he shall receive of mine*. He speaks according to the dialect and custom of the nation, and so to the capacity of his auditors: *If they have heard, they teach*: it is spoken of a judge in the lower Sanhedrim consulting a higher court, first, that of the triumvir: *and if they hear, they teach*; if not, then he goes to the supreme court of all.

The latter clause, *he shall receive of mine*, seems taken from [Isaiah 11:2](#). And it should seem he inclined rather to this sense, because he does not say, *he shall receive of mine and give*; but *he shall receive and shew* it unto you: by which the Jew would understand *he shall receive of my doctrine, or from my instructions*. For the Holy Spirit is sent as an instructor from the Son, as the Son is sent as a Redeemer from the Father.

16. A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.

[*And ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.*] "A little while, and ye shall not see me, because I go to the Father; and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father"; i.e. "Ye shall not see me personally, but virtually." It is true, they did not see him when he lay in the grave; and they did see him when he rose again: but I question whether these words ought to be taken in this sense, because it would sound somewhat harshly here what is added, "Ye shall see me, because I go to the Father." I would therefore rather understand it of his ascending into heaven; after which they saw him, indeed, no more personally, but they did see him in the influences and gift of his Holy Spirit. And so what follows agrees well enough with this sense of the words, verse 23; "In that day ye shall ask me nothing" [as ye were now about to inquire of me, verse 19]: "ask the Father in my name; and he shall reveal to you whatever you shall ask of him."

24. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

[*Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name.*] Understand this clause of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and then all things will be easy. All the faithful did pray in the name of the Messiah; and these disciples, acknowledging Jesus to be the Messiah, did pray in the name of Jesus the Messiah. But *hitherto they had asked nothing extraordinary in his name*: not the power of working miracles; not the revelation of mysteries and of future things; not the spirit of prophecy, &c.: for it was not necessary for them, as yet, to ask these things in his name whilst he was present with them, who could dispense it to them according to their instant necessities; but for the future, when himself should be gone from them, whatsoever they should ask the Father in his name, he would give it them. That prayer of the apostle's, [Acts 4:29,30](#), is a good comment upon these words: "Ask such things as these in my name; and whatsoever you ask you shall receive, that your joy may be full, when you shall find by experience that I am still present with you when gone from you."

Those things which both here and elsewhere in the discourses of our Saviour might give occasion for scholastical discussion, I leave wholly to the schools, omitting many passages about which a great deal might be said, because they have been already the labours of other pens. It was my design and undertaking only to note some things which were not obvious, and which others had not yet taken notice of; and not forgetting the title of this little work, I have the more sparingly run out into scholastic or theological disputes.

1. When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

[*Over the brook Cedron.*] There is a question among expositors about the article in the plural number, and the accent in *Cedron*; and that upon this occasion, that it might not be thought as if any relation were to be had here to *Cedars*, wherein one hath been deceived when he thus comments upon it: "It is called the brook *Cedron*, that is, of *Cedars*, that grow there." So also the *Arab. Interp.* in this place, *over the brook of Cedar*. But in [2 Samuel 15:23](#), and [1 Kings 2:37](#), he retains the word *Cedron*.

Amongst the Talmudists, *keदार* signifies *dung*: where the Gloss renders *keदार* by the *easing of nature*. *Aruch* renders it by *dung*: and the sense of that clause is, *More die of inconvenient easing nature than of hunger*. I would not affirm that the word *keदार* was used in this sense in the primitive denomination of the brook *Kidron*; but rather that the brook was called so from *blackness*; the waters being blackened by the mud and dirt that ran into it; it being, indeed, rather the sink or common sewer of the city than a brook.

But when the word *keदार* was used for *dung*, which it might be at that time when the Greek version was made, perhaps those interpreters might translate the Hebrew word into Greek, which is not unusual with them; so that *the brook Cedron* might be the same with them as *the brook of filth*.

[*Where was a garden.*] The grandees of the nation had their gardens and places of pleasure about the city, yea, even in the mount of Olives: for there were none within the city itself. "The blood that was over and above, after the sprinkling of the inward altar, was poured out towards the foundation on the west of the outward altar. And the blood that was over and above at the outward altar was poured out at the foot of it on the south side: and both the one and the other meeting together ran down through a conveyance under ground into the brook *Kidron*; and was sold to the gardeners to *dung their gardens with*; which having bought they used for that purpose."

For the blood, having been once dedicated to sacred use, might not be put to any common use without trespass; so that the gardeners paid so much money for it as would purchase a trespass offering.

3. Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

[*With lanterns and torches.*] Out of *Succah*; "They danced" [that is, in the feast of Tabernacles], "holding in their hand *burning torches*." The Gloss is: "They threw up their torches into the air, and caught them again in their hands; and some there were so great artists in this exercise, they could do it, some with four, others with eight torches at once, throwing up one and catching another."

10. Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

[*Malchus.*] A name very much in use amongst the Jews; Malchus, [Nehemiah 10:4,27](#): *Malchus the Arabian*. This was also the name of that implacable enemy to Christianity Porphyrius, and of his father before him. So Luke Holsteine in the Life of Porphyrius, where he reckons up more of that name.

Christ had struck those to the ground that came to apprehend him, by the power of his word, that he might thereby provide for the flight of his disciples, and shew his own divine power. They, getting up again, accost him; Judas kisseth him; they lay hands upon him; and then Peter draws his sword, &c.

13. And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.

[*To Annas first.*] For "Annas was father-in-law to Caiaphas," as also *the sagan of the priests*, [Luke 3:2](#): Targum in [2 Kings 23:4](#). Now *sagan* was the same with the *prefect* or *ruler*, which we have so frequent mention of amongst the Rabbins.

The 'ruler' saith unto them. Gloss: *The 'ruler' is the 'sagan.'* '*Sagan' is the same with 'ruler.'*

There is frequent mention amongst the Talmudists, of R. Ananias, *the sagan of the priests*. He was destroyed, with Rabban Simeon and Ismael, at the siege of Jerusalem. But I am apt to think he was that sharp and unjust judge that St. Paul had to do with, [Acts 23](#), rather than our Annas in this place.

Why they should carry our Saviour, when they had taken him, before Annas the sagan, sooner than to Caiaphas the high priest, the evangelist gives us one reason, viz. "because he was father-in-law to Caiaphas"; under which another reason may be deduced, viz. that he was the older man, of greater experience and skill in the law: for there were sometimes some high priests that were very unlearned fellows, as may be gathered from that supposition in *Joma*; "If the high priest be a wise man, he expounds; if not, they expound to him. If he be accustomed to reading, he reads himself; if not, they read before him."

But for the *sagan of the priests*, it was very necessary he should be a man of learning, because his charge was about the things and service of the Temple, and was bound to be always assistant and present there, when the high priest was seldom there, or conversed in those affairs.

Juchasin and Aruch; *No one could by right be promoted to the high priesthood, unless he had first been sagan*. A good cautelous provision indeed, that so in the time of their saganiship they might gain experience in the laws and rituals, and might be the better fitted for the high priest's chair. But when it came to that pass, that persons were made high priests for their money, and not for their deserts, it might easily happen that very unlearned wretches might sometimes possess that seat. And perhaps Caiaphas himself was of this stamp.

It seems therefore that they led Jesus to Annas first, that Caiaphas might be directed by his counsel; and, himself being but little versed in things of this nature, might proceed in this affair by the steerage of his father-in-law. And let this high priest pardon me if I ascribe that sentence of his, "It is expedient that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish," not to his prudence and gravity, but to his rashness and cruelty; although the Holy Spirit directed it to its proper end, which the high priest himself did not dream of.

There might be another reason why they led Christ *before Annas first*, but that I shall speak of anon.

[Which was the high priest that same year.] If the Gloss which I had upon these very same words, chapter 11:51, will not so well fit here as they did there, we may add this also, which will suit well enough in both places; that is, that there was so great a vicissitude and change in the high priesthood, there being a new high priest almost every year, that it was not unnecessary to set down this particular circumstance, *Caiaphas was high priest for that year*.

"In the second Temple, which stood but four hundred and twenty years, there were more than three hundred high priests within that time. Of these four hundred and twenty years, deduct those forty wherein Simeon the Just ministered, and those eighty wherein Jochanan sat, and those ten wherein Ismael Ben Phabi, and (as it is said) those eleven wherein Eleazar Ben Harsom governed; and then reckon, and you will find that hardly any other high priest sat out his whole year."

But this number of high priests is very much lessened in *Vajicra Rabba*: "under the first Temple, because they that served therein served in the truth, there were but eighteen high priests, the father, the son, and grandson successively. But under the second Temple, when that honour came to be obtained by money [there are also that say how they murdered one another by charms and witchcrafts], there were fourscore high priests served in that time: fourscore and one, say some; fourscore and two, say others; and there are that say fourscore and four. Amongst these, Simeon the Just sat forty years: but when the place was bought and sold, the years of enjoying it were cut short. The story goes of one that sent his son with two bushels of silver [to purchase the high priest's office], and the bushels themselves were silver. Another sent his son with two bushels of gold, and the bushels themselves were of gold too."

As to this difference of numbers, we will not much trouble our heads about it: perhaps the Gemarists might reckon the sagans together with the high priests, for they were indeed deputed to minister in their stead, if any uncleanness had happened to them. Let there be fourscore high priests, or thereabouts, it is certain that so frequent were the changes and successions amongst them, that the high priest of this year was hardly so the year that went before or that followed after. Although indeed in this Caiaphas it was something otherwise,

yet did the evangelist justly and properly enough add this clause, *that he was the high priest that same year*; tacitly noting the common state of affairs as to the office of high priest at that time.

15. And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so *did* another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

[*And Simon Peter followed Jesus, &c.*] There are some that apprehend in this place some interruption in the order of the story: they would therefore have the twenty-fourth verse weaved in here, "Annas sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas": because what is here related and so on seems all to have been done in Caiaphas' hall, and not in Annas'.

This order the Syr., Arab., Vulg. interpreters, and others do still observe: Nonnus, [Dionysius] Carthusianus, Beza, and, as he quotes him, St. Cyril, invert it. It is true there is here a tacit transition, and a trajection of the words in verse 24, which is not very usual; but neither the one nor the other seems to be without some reason for it.

I. It is told us, [Matthew 26:56](#), and [Mark 14:50](#), that "all the disciples forsook him, and fled." So that probably 'Peter and that other disciple' was amongst the number when it is said *they all fled*. The transition of our evangelist therefore seems to teach us that neither 'Peter nor the other disciple' followed Christ to Annas' house; but being surprised and confounded with a very great fear, hid themselves for a while; and (not till after some time) recollecting themselves, they put forward amongst the crowd to Caiaphas' hall, or else came thither after them.

II. Annas alone could determine nothing judicially concerning Christ: for when an inquiry must be made concerning his disciples, and the nature of his doctrines, when witnesses must be produced *pro* and *con*, this necessarily required a session of the Sanhedrim. He sent him therefore to Caiaphas, where the Sanhedrim also was; and the evangelist lets the mention of that alone till he came to relate their way of proceeding.

But why, or by what right, should Annas be absent from the Sanhedrim? Could there be any right or legal proceeding in the great council, if the whole number of seventy-one elders were not complete? Let Maimonides give the answer: "It is not necessary that the whole bench of seventy-one should all sit together in their places in the Temple; but when it is necessary for them all to meet, let them be called together. *But at other times*, if any one of them have any business of his own, he may go out and do his affairs and return again. This provision is made, that there might never be fewer than twenty-three sitting together during the whole session. If any have occasion to go forth, let him look about him and see if there be twenty-three of his colleagues in the court, then he may go out; if not, he must stay till some other enter." We give another reason of Annas' absence by and by.

[*That disciple was known unto the high priest.*] Nonnus supposes that other disciple known to the high priest, *from his fishing trade*. Others guess other reasons; but to determine

any thing in this matter would look rashly. However this knowledge of the high priest came about, it is certain this disciple had the greater opportunity *to have stood in the defence of his Master* as a witness in his behalf. For,

"*Capital judgments begin always on the defendant's side, and not on the accuser's.* It is lawful for all to plead on the defendant's side, not so on the accuser's."

"They begin on the defendant's side. One of the witnesses saith, *I have something to say in his defence.* If any of his disciples say, 'I have wherewith to accuse him,' *they enjoin him silence.* If the disciple say, 'I can offer something in his defence,' they call him up and place him among themselves, and suffer him not to go down thence the whole day after."

Did they thus proceed with our Saviour? did they endeavour first for the clearing his innocency? and were there any witnesses produced for this purpose? If so, then here were 'Peter and that other disciple,' who could have witnessed in his behalf: but Peter denies that he ever knew him.

18. And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

[*For it was cold.*] It was the very dead of night, almost at cockcrowing. Our countryman Biddulph, who was at Jerusalem at the very time when they were wont to celebrate the Passover, gives us the reason of this cold by his own experience. He acknowledgeth indeed that he found it so hot at that time as we usually feel it in our own country about midsummer, that he could not but wonder how Peter, at that time of the year, should be so cold. But within a few days his doubt was resolved, for there were mighty dews fell, which not being wholly dried up by the sun made it very cold, especially in the night, &c.

Nay, the traditional fathers suppose there may be frost and snow in the time of Passover, by that canon of theirs: "*They do not intercalate the year either for snow or for frost.*"

The intercalation of the year respected chiefly the Paschal solemnity; namely, that by the interposing of the intercalated month all things might be ripe and fit for that feast. If when it came to the month Nisan the barley was not yet ripe enough to offer the sheaf of the first fruits, then they put a month between, which they called the second Adar. So if the ways were so bad that people could not travel up to Jerusalem, if the bridges were so broken that they could not pass the rivers, they intercalated or put a month between, that at the coming in of the month Nisan every thing might be ready that was requisite for the Paschal solemnity. But if frost or snow should happen when Nisan was entering in its ordinary course, they did not put a month between upon that account. From whence it is plain that frost and snow did sometimes happen at that time.

21. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

[*Ask them which heard me.*] Does not Jesus here appeal to the common right and rule amongst themselves? viz. that the witnesses in behalf of the defendant might be heard first. But who, alas! was there that durst witness for him? It is said, indeed, that "the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness *against* him," [Matthew 26:59](#). But did they seek any true witness *for* him? or did they indeed deal with the witnesses against him as their customs obliged them to have done? did they search their testimony by a strict and severe examination? *did they terrify them*, or by grave exhortations admonish them to say nothing but the truth? This by right ought to have been done: but we have reason to suppose it was not done.

28. Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

[*But that they might eat the Passover.*] I. We have already shewn, in our notes upon [Mark 14:12](#), that the eating of the Paschal lamb was never, upon any occasion whatever, transferred from the evening of the fourteenth day, drawing to the close of it; no, not by reason of the sabbath, or any uncleanness that had happened to the congregation; so that there needs little argument to assure us that the Jews ate the lamb at the same time wherein Christ did...

II. *The Passover*, therefore here doth not signify the Paschal lamb, but the Paschal *Chagigah*: of which we will remark these two or three things:

1. [Deuteronomy 16:2](#), "*Thou shalt sacrifice the Passover* unto the Lord thy God, of the flock and the herd." Where R. Solomon; "The flocks are meant of the lambs and the kids; the herd of the *Chagigah*." And R. Bechai *in locum*: "The flocks *are for the due of the Passover*; the herd, *for the sacrifices of the Chagigah*." So also R. Nachmanid: "The herd, *for the celebration of the 'Chagigah*.'" *Pesachin: The flock for the Passover, the oxen for the Chagigah*.

Where the Gloss, p. 1: "Doth not the Passover consist wholly of lambs and kids? [Exodus 12:5](#). If so, why is it said *oxen*? To equal every thing that is used in the Passover. *As the Passover* [i.e. the Paschal lamb] *is of due*, and is not taken but *out of the common flocks*," neither from the first-born nor from the tenths]; "so this also [i.e. of the oxen] is of due, and not taken but out of the common herd." See [2 Chronicles 30:24](#), &c., and 35:8,9.

2. The *Chagigah* was for joy and mirth, according to that in [Deuteronomy 16:14](#), "And thou shalt rejoice in the feast," &c. Hence the sacrifices that were prepared for that use are called *sacrifices of peace* or *eucharistic offerings, sacrifices of joy and mirth*.

3. The proper time of bringing the *Chagigah* was the fifteenth day of the month. *Aruch*: "They ate, and drank, and rejoiced, and were bound to bring their sacrifice of *Chagigah* on the fifteenth day"; i.e. the first day of the feast, &c.

There might be a time, indeed, when they brought their *Chagigah* on the fourteenth day; but this was not so usual; and then it was under certain conditions. "When is it that they bring the *Chagigah* at the same time with the lamb? *When it comes on another day in the week, and not on the sabbath; when it is clean, and when it is small.*" Let the Gloss explain the last clause; and for the two former, we shall do that ourselves.

"If the lamb be less than what will satisfy the whole company, then they make ready their *Chagigah*, eating that first, and then the lamb," &c. And the reason is given by another Glosser; viz. that the appetites of those that eat might be pretty well satisfied before they begin the lamb: for if they should fall upon the lamb first, it being so very small, and the company numerous and hungry, they would be in danger of breaking the bones, whiles they gnaw it so greedily.

For this and other reasons the Rabbins account the *Chagigah* of the fourteenth day to be many degrees less perfect than that of the fifteenth; but it would be very tedious to quote their ventilations about it. Take only these few instances:

"R. Issai saith, 'The *Chagigah* on the fourteenth day is not our duty.'" And a little after: "R. Eliezer saith, 'By the peace offerings which they slay on the evening of the feast, a man doth not his duty, either as to rejoicing, or as to *Chagigah*.'"

And now let us return to the words of our evangelist.

III. It was the fifteenth day of the month when the fathers of the council refused to enter into the praetorium, lest they should be defiled; for they would eat the Passover, that is, the *Chagigah*.

1. The evangelist expresseth it after the common way of speaking, when he calls it the *Passover*. "It is written, Observe the month of Abib: *and keep the Passover: that all that you do may go under the denomination of the Passover.*" *The calf and the young bullock which they kill in the name of the Passover, or for the Passover.* Whence we may observe, the *calf* is the *Passover* as well as the *lamb*.

2. The elders of the Sanhedrim prepare and oblige themselves to eat the *Chagigah* [the *Passover*] on that day, because the next day was the sabbath; and the *Chagigah* must not make void the sabbath.

The Chagigah doth not set aside the sabbath. Hence that we quoted before, that the *Chagigah* was not to be brought upon the sabbath day, as also not in case of uncleanness: because however the *Chagigah* and defilement might set aside the *Passover*, yet it might not the sabbath.

31. Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

[*It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.*] Doth Pilate jest or deride them, when he bids them "take him, and judge him according to their own law?" It cannot be denied

but that all capital judgment, or sentence upon life, had been taken from the Jews for above forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, as they oftentimes themselves confess. But how came this to pass? It is commonly received, that the Romans, at this time the Jews' lords and masters, had taken from all their courts a power and capacity of judging the capital matters. We have spoken largely upon this subject in our notes upon [Matthew 26:3](#). Let us superadd a few things here:

"Rabh Cahna saith, When R. Ismael Bar Jose lay sick, they sent to him saying, 'Pray, sir, tell us two or three things which thou didst once tell us in the name of thy father.' He saith to them, 'A hundred and fourscore years before the destruction of the Temple, the wicked kingdom' [the Rome empire] reigned over Israel. Fourscore years before the destruction of the Temple, *they*" [the fathers of the Sanhedrim] "*determined about the uncleanness of the heathen land*, and about glass vessels. Forty years before the destruction of the Temple, the Sanhedrim removed and sat in the *Tabernae*. What is the meaning of this tradition? Rabh Isaac Bar Abdimi saith, 'They did not judge *judgments of mulcts*.'" The Gloss is: "Those are the judgments about finding any that offered violence, that entice a maid, and the price of a servant. When, therefore, they did not sit in the room *Gazith*, they did not judge about these things; and so those judgments about mulcts or fines ceased."

Here we have one part of their judiciary power lost, not taken away from them by the Romans, but falling of itself, as it were, out of the hands of the Sanhedrim. Nor did the Romans indeed take away their power of judging in capital matters, but they, by their own oscitancy, supine and unreasonable lenity, lost it themselves. For so the Gemara goes on:

"Rabh Nachman Bar Isaac saith, 'Let him not say that they did not judge judgments of mulcts, but that they did not judge capital judgments. And whence comes this? *When they saw that so many murderers multiplied upon them, that they could not well judge* and call them to account, they said, It is better for us that we remove from place to place, *for how can we otherwise*" [sitting here and not punishing them] "*not contract a guilt upon ourselves?*"

They thought themselves obliged to punish murderers while they sat in the room *Gazith*: *for the place itself engaged them to it*. They are the words of the Gemarists. Upon which the Gloss: "The room *Gazith* was half of it within and half of it without the Holy Place. The reason of which was, that it was requisite that the council should sit near the Divine Majesty. Hence it is that they say, 'Whoever constitutes an unfit judge, is as if he planted a grove by the altar of the Lord: as it is written, Judges and officers shalt thou make thee': and it follows presently after, 'Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the Lord thy God,' [Deuteronomy 16:18,21](#). They removed therefore from *Gazith*, and sat in the *Tabernae*. Now though the *Tabernae* were upon the Mountain of the Temple, yet they did not sit so near the Divine Majesty there as they did when they sat in the room *Gazith*."

Let us now, in order, put the whole matter together:

I. The Sanhedrim were most stupidly and unreasonably remiss in their punishment of capital offenders, going upon this reason especially, that they accounted it so horrible a thing to sentence an Israelite to death. Forsooth, he is of the seed of Abraham, of the blood and stock of Israel; and you must have a care how you touch such a one!

"R. Eliezer Bar R. Simeon had laid hold on some thieves. R. Joshua Bar Korchah sent to him, saying, '*O thou vinegar, the son of good wine*'" [i.e. O thou wicked son of a good father], "'how long wilt thou deliver the people of God to the slaughter?' He answered and said, '*I root the thorns out of the vineyard.*' To whom the other, 'Let the Lord of the vineyard come and root them out himself.'" It is worth nothing that the very thieves of Israel are the people of God: and O! they must not be touched by any means, but referred to the judgment of God himself.

"When R. Ismael Bar R. Jose was constituted a magistrate by the king, there happened some such thing to him; for Elias himself rebuked him, saying, 'How long wilt thou deliver over the people of God to slaughter?'" Hence that which we alleged elsewhere: "The Sanhedrim that happens to sentence any one to death within the space of seven years is called 'a destroyer.' R. Eleazar Ben Azariah saith, 'It is so, if they should but condemn one within seventy years.'"

II. It is obvious to any one, how this foolish remissness and letting loose the reins of judgment would soon increase the number of robbers, murderers, and all kind of wickedness: and, indeed, they did so abundantly multiply, that the Sanhedrim neither could nor durst, as it ought, call the criminals to account. The laws slept while wickedness was in the height of its revels; and punitive justice was so out of countenance, that, as to uncertain murders, they made no search; and certain ones they framed no judgment against.

"Since the time that homicides multiplied, the beheading the heifer ceased." And in the place before quoted in *Avodah*; "When they saw the number of murderers so greatly increase, that they could not sit in judgment upon them, they said, 'Let us remove,'" &c.

So in the case of adultery, which we also observed in our notes upon chapter 8. "Since the time that adultery so openly advanced under the second Temple, they let off trying the adulteress by the bitter water," &c.

So that we see the liberty of judging in capital matters was no more taken from the Jews by the Romans than the beheading of the heifer or the trial of the suspected wife by the bitter waters was taken away by them; which no one will affirm. But rather,

III. When the Sanhedrim saw that it was in vain to struggle against the mighty torrent and inundation of all manner of wickedness, that *played rex* and encroached so fast upon them, and that the interposure of their authority could do nothing in suppressing them, they being incapable of passing judgment as they ought, they determine not to sit in judgment at all. And whereas they thought themselves bound by the majesty and awfulness of the place, while they sat in the room *Gazith* [in the very Court of Israel before the altar], to judge

according to the sacredness of the place, but could not indeed do it by reason of the daring pride and resolution of the criminals, they threw themselves out of that apartment, and went further off into the place where the exchangers' shops were kept in the Court of the Gentiles, and so to other places, which we find mentioned in *Rosh hashanah*.

IV. It is disputed whether they ever returned to their first place *Gazith*, or no. It is affirmed by the Gloss in *Avodah Zarah*: "When for a time they found it absolutely necessary, they betook themselves again to that room." We have the same also elsewhere upon this tradition:

"It is a tradition of R. Chaia. From the day wherein the Temple was destroyed, though the Sanhedrim ceased, yet the four kinds of death" [which were wont to be inflicted by the Sanhedrim] "did not cease. For he that had deserved to be stoned to death, he either fell off from some house, or some wild beast tore and devoured him. He that had deserved burning, he either fell into some fire or some serpent bit him. He that had deserved to be slain: [i.e. with the sword], was either delivered into the hands of a heathen king, or was murdered by robbers. He that had deserved strangling was either drowned in some river, or choked by a squinancy [*angina*]."

But it may be objected, Why is it said, "From the time that the Temple was destroyed," and not, "forty years before the destruction of the Temple?" To this the Gloss answereth: "Sometimes, according to the urgency and necessity of the time, the Sanhedrim returned to the room *Gazith*," &c. It is further excepted "*But they never returned to sit in capital causes, or to try murders*. For the reason of their removal at first was because the numbers of homicides so increased upon them," &c.

V. When the great council did not sit in *Gazith*, all courts for capital matters ceased everywhere else. One Gloss saith thus: "They took no cognizance of capital matters in any of the lesser sessions, so long as the great Sanhedrim did not sit in the room *Gazith*." Another saith; "What time the great Sanhedrim sat in its proper place, where it ought, near the altar, then thou shalt make thee judges in all thy gates, to judge in capital causes: but when that removed, then all cognizance about those matters ceased."

VI. The Sanhedrim removed, as we have already seen, from *Gazith*, forty years before Jerusalem was destroyed: and this is the very thing that was said, "Forty years before the destruction of the city, judgment in capital causes was taken away from them." And now let the reader judge what should be the reason of their being deprived of this privilege: whether the Romans were in fault; or whether rather the Jews, nay, the Sanhedrim itself, had not brought it upon themselves. When the Sanhedrim flitted from *Gazith*: all judgment of this kind vanished, and upon what reasons they did thus flit we have learned from their own pens.

We will not contend about the time when these forty years should first begin: though I am apt to think they might begin about half a year before Christ's death. The words which

we have under consideration, spoken by the Sanhedrim to Pilate, seem to refer wholly to the reason we have already mentioned: "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." Why is it not lawful? Because, being forced by the necessity of the times, we retired from the room *Gazith*, where if we sit not, neither we ourselves nor any court under us can take any cognizance of causes of life and death.

But what necessity of times could urge you to remove? So greatly did the criminals multiply, and grew to such a head, that we neither could not durst animadvert upon them, according to what the majesty of the place might expect and require from us if we should sit in *Gazith*.

That must be observed in the evangelists, that when they had had Christ in examination in the palace of the high priest all night, in the morning the whole Sanhedrim met, that they might pass sentence of death upon him. Where then was this that they met? Questionless in the room *Gazith*; at least if they adhered to their own rules and constitutions: "Thither they betook themselves sometimes upon urgent necessity." The Gloss before quoted excepts "only the case of murder"; which, amongst all their false accusations, they never charged Christ with.

But however suppose it were granted that the great council met either in the *Tabernae* or some other place, (which yet by no means agreed with their own tradition,) did they deal truly, and as the matter really and indeed was, with Pilate, when they tell him, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death?" He had saith to them, "Take ye him, and judge him according to your law." We have indeed judged and condemned him, but we cannot put any one to death. Was this that they said in fact true? How came they then to stone the protomartyr Stephen? How came they to stone Ben Satda at Lydda? How came they to burn the priest's daughter alive that was taken in adultery?

It is probable they had not put any one to death as yet, since the time that they had removed out of *Gazith*; and so might the easilier persuade Pilate in that case. But their great design was to throw off the odium of Christ's death from themselves, at least amongst the vulgar crowd, fearing them, if the council themselves should have decreed his execution. They seek this evasion, therefore, which did not altogether want some colour and pretext of truth: and it succeeded according to what they did desire; Divine Providence so ordering it, as the evangelist intimates, verse 32, "That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die": that is, be crucified, according to the custom of the Romans.

Whilst I am upon this thought, I cannot but reflect upon that passage, than which nothing is more worthy observation, in the whole description of the Roman beast in the Revelation, chapter 13:4: "The dragon which gave power unto the beast." We cannot say this of the Assyrian, Babylonish, or any other monarchy; for the Holy Scriptures do not say it. But reason dictates, and the event itself tells us, that there was something acted by the

Roman empire in behalf of the dragon which was not compatible with any other, that is, the putting of the Son of God to death. Which thing we must remember, as often as we recite that article of our creed, "He suffered under Pontius Pilate"; that is, was put to death by the Roman empire.

38. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault *at all*.

[*What is truth?*] Christ had said, "For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth": q.d. "I will not deny but that I am a king, as thou hast said; for for this end I came, that I should bear witness to the truth, whatever hazards I should run upon that account." Upon this Pilate asks him, *What is truth?* that is, "What is the true state of this affair? that thou, who art so poor a wretch, shouldst call thyself a king, and at the same time that thou callest thyself a king, yet sayest thy kingdom is not of this world? Where lies the true sense and meaning of this riddle?"

But supposing when Christ said, he came "that he should bear witness to the truth," he meant in general the *gospel*; then Pilate asks him, *What is that truth?* However, the evangelist mentions nothing, either whether our Saviour gave him any answer to that question, or whether indeed Pilate stayed in expectation of any answer from him.

Chapter 19

2. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put *it* on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,

[*Platted a crown of thorns, &c.*] A most unquestionable token this, that Christ's kingdom was not of this world, when he was *crowned* only with *thorns and briers*, which were the curse of this earth, [Genesis 3:18](#). Herod had put upon him a purple robe, [Luke 23:11](#); and the soldiers added this crown. It is likewise said, that they also clothed him with this robe, that is, after he had been stripped, in order to be scourged.

13. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabatha.

[*In a place that is called the Pavement.*] What is it could be objected against it, should we say, that the evangelist, by this title of *the Pavement*, should mean the room *Gazith*, where the Sanhedrim sat? and that, when the Jews would not go into Pilate's judgment hall, he would himself go into theirs?

Aristeas tells us concerning the Temple, "that it looked towards the east, the back parts of it towards the west; *but the floor was all paved with stone.*" To this the Talmudists all witness; and to the Pavement especially Josephus by a memorable story: "One Julian, a

centurion in Titus' army, pursuing and killing the Jews with infinite hardness and strength, in the very court of the Temple, having many and very sharp nails fastened to the bottom of his shoes, *as every other soldier had, and running along upon the pavement*, his heels tripped up, and he fell backward," &c.

But had not the room *Gazith* a pavement laid in a more than ordinary manner? Whence else had it its name? "It is called *the room Gazith* (saith *Aruch*), because it was paved with *smooth square stone*." Were not all the other places so too?

They distinguish between *bricks, halfbricks, squared hewn stones*, and *rough or unhewn*. Now, therefore, when there were so many apartments about the courts, were *those* all paved with rough stone or bricks, and *this* only of square and hewn stone? Without doubt the whole building was much more uniform. And then we shall hardly find out any more probable reason why this place was particularly and above all other rooms called *Gazith*, but that it was laid with a more noble and rich pavement than all the rest. And, therefore, what should forbid that *the Pavement*, should not in this place be meant of the room *Gazith*?

Obj. But *Gazith* was in the holy place; and it was not lawful for Pilate, being a Gentile, to enter there.

Sol. I. If he would do it 'per fas et nefas' who could hinder him?

II. It is a question whether he could not sit in that room, and yet be within the bounds of the Court of the Gentiles, into which it was lawful for a Gentile to enter. Half of that room, indeed, was within the court of Israel; but there the fathers of the council themselves did not sit, because it was lawful for none to sit in that court but the king only. The other half part in which they sat was in *Chel*, and extended itself, as it should seem, into the Court of the Gentiles. For if *Chel* was but ten cubits' breadth within the walls, it would be much too narrow a room for seventy men to sit in, if the *Gazith* did not extend itself a little within the Court of the Gentiles.

[*But in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.*] The Syriac renders it by a *mound* or *fence*: which may fall in with what we have said: for *Chel*, which was part of this room, was the fence to all the courts, excepting the Court of the Gentiles.

That *Gab*, amongst other things, signifies a *surface*, doth not stand in need of much proof: and so the *pavement* and *surface* of the floor are convertible...What if that in *Jerusalem Sanhedrim* [fol. 18. 3.] should be rendered, *the elders that sit in the upper 'Gab' in the Mount of the Temple*. But we will not contend.

14. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

[*And it was, &c.*] *The preparation of the Passover*; that is, of the *Chagigah*, as we have already noted at chapter 18:28; and more largely at [Mark 14:12](#); where also we took notice of the following passage, *About the sixth hour*.

20. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

[*In the Hebrew.*] That is, in the Chaldee tongue, or the language of those Jews on the other side Euphrates [*lingua Trans-euphratensium*], as before at chapter 5.

22. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

[*What I have written I have written.*] this was a common way of speaking amongst the Rabbins. "A widow if she take" [or occupy] "the moveables" of her husband deceased for her own maintenance, *What she takes she takes*; i.e. that which she hath done stands good, and the moveables go to her.

"If any one shall say, I bind myself to offer an oblation out of the frying pan, and offers indeed something from a gridiron, and so on the contrary; *that which he hath offered he hath offered.*" That is (and indeed it is frequently used amongst them), *that which is done is done*, and cannot be recalled.

"If the putting off the shoe of the husband's brother be before the spitting in his face, or the spitting in his face before the putting off the shoe, *that which is done is done*," and it stands good.

Pilate doth almost act the prophet as well as Caiaphas. *What I have written [Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews] I have written*, and it shall stand and obtain; nor shall they have any other king Messiah than this for ever.

23. Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

[*They took his garments--and coat, &c.*] By the word *garments*, we are to understand all his clothes, excepting his coat, or upper garment; for which, because it was without seam, they cast lots.

Targumist upon [Psalm 22:18](#). *They cast lots upon my sindon, or linen.* [Proverbs 31:24](#): that is, *sindon*, as it is the same with *talith*, the upper coat.

[Matthew 5:40](#): "If any man will take away thy *coat*," or outward garment, "let him have thy *inward garment also*."

25. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

[*There stood by the cross, &c.*] *He stood under the cross [or the gallows] and wept.* It is told of R. Eliezer Ben R. Simeon, who, being very angry, had commanded a fuller to be hanged; *but his wrath abating, and he coming to himself*, went after him to have freed him, but could not; for they had hanged the man before he came. He therefore repeated that

passage, "He that keepeth his lips and his tongue keepeth his soul from trouble. He stood under the gallows and wept," &c.

[*Mary of Cleophas.*] That is, 'Mary the wife of Cleophas,' or Alpheus. For,

I. Consult [Mark 15:40](#): "There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses." Now it is well enough known that Alpheus was the father of James the less and of Joses, [Matthew 10:3](#).

II. We very oftentimes meet with the name amongst the Talmudists, which, in the reading, may be turned either into *Alphai* or *Cleophi*.

26. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

[*Woman, behold thy son!*] I. "*The widow is maintained by the goods of the heirs*" [of him that is deceased] "so long as she remain a widow, till she receive her dower."

II. Joseph being deceased, and Jesus now dying, there were no heirs, and probably no goods or estate, for the support and maintenance of his mother Mary. This, Christ at his last breath takes particular care of; and probably had made provision before; for it is hardly conceivable that this was the first overture he had with St. John in this affair, but that he had obtained a promise from him, in his mother's behalf, some time before this. And hence perhaps that peculiar love he bore to him beyond all the rest. So that those words, *Woman, behold thy son!* and on the other side to him, *Behold thy mother!* seem no other than as if he had said, "This man, from the time that thou art now deprived of thy son, shall be in the stead of a son to thee, and shall cherish and provide for thee": and so, vice versa, to his disciple John.

29. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.

[*There was set a vessel full of vinegar.*] but was not this an unusual and unc customary thing, that there should be a vessel filled with vinegar? Should it not have been rather with *myrrhate wine*, or *wine mingled with myrrh*? as it is [Mark 15:23](#).

It seems evident, from the other evangelists, that our Saviour had the proffer of something to drink at two several times.

I. Before he was nailed to the cross, [Matthew 27:33,34](#), "When they were come unto a place called Golgotha, they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall," verse 35, "and they crucified him." It was the custom towards those that were condemned by the Sanhedrim to allow them a cup, but it was of wine mingled with myrrh or frankincense; that by drinking that their brains might intoxicate, and themselves become the more insensible of their torments, and less apprehensive of their death.

When any one was leading out to execution, *they gave them to drink a little frankincense in a cup of wine*. And they gave it for this reason, as it immediately follows, *that their under-*

standing might be disordered. It was a narcotic draught, on purpose to disguise and stupefy the senses.

"Wine mingled with *myrrh*," saith Mark;--"vinegar mingled with *gall*," saith Matthew. Perhaps both these were administered; for it follows, in the place above quoted, *The women of quality in Jerusalem were wont to bring them this cup of their own accord.* And no doubt there were women in Jerusalem enough that would not be wanting in this good office towards Jesus: but he, saith St. Mark, would not receive it. After this, it is probable, the soldiers, or some of the Jews, might, in scorn and derision, offer him a draught of vinegar and gall, of which he also refused to drink. But be it so, that there was but one cup given him, and that of vinegar mingled with gall, yet we have observed, in our notes upon [Matthew 27:34](#), how easily these two evangelists may be reconciled.

II. As to those that were condemned by the Sanhedrim, there was no need that they should have any other drink than the intoxicating wine; for they were quickly dead, and felt no thirst. But the cross kept the wretch a long time in exquisite torment, and those torments provoked a mighty thirst. So that perhaps there might be a vessel, full either of water or something else that was drinkable, placed near the cross, by which he that was crucified might allay his thirst, as need should require. Whether this vinegar might be according to the custom of the Romans, or whether only offered at this time in sport and mockery, I will make no inquiry at present. Christ knew beforehand that vinegar would be given him when he should say, "I thirst"; and therefore did he on purpose say, "I thirst," that vinegar might be given him, and the prophecy fulfilled.

[*And they filled a sponge with vinegar.*] *The sponge which sucks up the drink.* "*The sponge that drinks up any moisture that is unclean, though it be dry on the outside, yet if it fall into a furnace it defileth it.*"

[*And put it upon hyssop.*] [Matthew 27:48](#); *put it on a reed.* So also St. Mark.

I. If *hyssop*, as the nearness of sound might persuade us it doth, then there are several kinds of it. *Whatever hyssop hath an adjunct [or an epithet] is not fit;* that is, to sprinkle the unclean. For there was, as it follows afterward, *Grecian hyssop: fucous hyssop*, perhaps of the colour of blacklead: *Roman hyssop*, and *wild hyssop*.

II. Now, that there was a sort of *hyssop* that grew into stalks, like canes or reeds, is evident from that which immediately follows in the next halach, where it is thus distinguished; *He gathers hyssop for food, and he gathered it for wood.* Partly also from *Succah*, where, amongst the mention that is made of canes and reeds and twigs, wherewith they were wont to cover the booths they made at the feast of Tabernacles, this *hyssop* is reckoned up for one.

31. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

[*That sabbath day was an high day*] Because, 1. It was the sabbath. 2. It was the day when all the people presented themselves in the Temple, according to that command in [Exodus 23:17](#). 3. That was the day when the sheaf of the first fruits was offered according to that command, [Leviticus 23:10,11](#).

I. On the fifteenth day of the month was a holy day, the first day of the feast, wherein they made ready their Chagigah, with which they feasted together for joy of the feast. That is worth our noting; "Every day they swept the ashes of the altar at the time of cockcrowing; only on the day of Expiation they did it at midnight; *and on the three feasts they did it after the first watch.*" A little after: "In the three feasts, when infinite numbers of Israelites assembled, and numberless sacrifices were offered, they swept the ashes off the altar just after the first watch. *For before cockcrowing, the court was crowded with Israelites.*" I do not scruple here the rendering of *cockcrowing*; although in the very place alleged, it is under the controversy, whether it signify *cockcrowing*, or the proclamation of the *sagan*, or ruler of the Temple; viz. that proclamation mentioned, "The *sagan* saith unto them, 'Go and see whether the time for slaying the sacrifices be at hand.' If it were time, then he that was sent out to see returned with this answer, 'The day begins to break,'" &c.

If the phrase *the cockcrowing* be to be taken in this sense, then however we see that the people were assembled together before morning light: and yet I do not doubt but it ought to be rendered *the cockcrowing*, which might be made clear by many good proofs, if there were place or leisure for it. Now the people's assembling in the court thus soon in the morning on these feast days was upon this account; because on the first day of the feast, innumerable *peace offerings* were to be made, which were the *Chagigah*; and on the second day, as many burnt offerings for the appearance of the people before the Lord.

It is true indeed the victims were not slain before the morning light; but we may very well suppose that before they could be slain they must be searched and examined by the Mumcheh, or any that were deputed to that office, to see whether the beasts allotted for sacrifice were without blemish, and fit for the altar, yea or no. And upon this account they assembled, and the sacrifices were brought into the court so early in the morning. And now let us call a little to mind Annas the *sagan*, or ruler of the Temple. Might not he also be in the Temple very early in the morning? Did not his charge require it, to see that all things might be provided and put into a readiness for the service of that day? Let us consider what hath been newly quoted; "The *sagan* or ruler saith, 'Go and see if the time for killing the sacrifice be come'; i.e. whether daylight appear or no. And from hence, it may be, we may gather the reason why Annas was not amongst the rest in Caiaphas' palace; and why they

brought our Saviour before him first; viz. because his affairs in the Temple would not permit him to sit at that time with the Sanhedrim; and yet they had a mind Christ should be carried before him, before he himself should be called away into the Temple for the necessary discharge of his office there.

At the due time the sacrifices appointed for the *Chagigah* were slain: those parts of them that pertained to the altar or to the priest were given to them; the rest of the beast was shared amongst the owners that had offered it; and from thence proceeded their feastings together, and their great mirth and rejoicings, according to the manner of that festival.

This was *the preparation of the Passover*, verse 14, and that was the *Passover* to which the elders of the council reserving themselves would by no means enter into the judgment hall, chapter 18:28.

II. That day drawing towards night, those that were deputed by the Sanhedrim to reap the sheaf of the first fruits went out: "Those that were deputed by the Sanhedrim to reap went forth *in the evening of the feast day*" [the first day of the feast], "and bound their corn in sheafs pretty near the ground, that the reaping might be the easier. All the neighbouring towns about gathered together, that it might be done with the greater pomp. When it grew duskish, he that was about to reap said, 'The sun is set'; and they answered, 'Well.' 'The sun is set'; and they answered, 'Well.' 'With this sickle'; 'Well.' 'With this sickle'; 'Well.' 'In this basket'; 'Well.' 'In this basket'; 'Well.' And if it happened to be on the sabbath day he said, 'On this sabbath'; and they answered, 'Well.' 'On this sabbath'; Well.' 'I will reap,' and they said, 'Reap.' 'I will reap'; 'Reap.' And so as he said these things thrice over, they answered thrice to every one of them, 'Well, Well, Well.' And all this upon the account of the *Baithuseans*, who said, 'The sheaf of the first fruits ought not to be reaped on the close of the feast day.'"

About that hour of the day wherein our Saviour was buried, they went forth to this reaping; and when the sabbath was now come, they began the work; for the sabbath itself did not hinder this work.

"R. Ananias, the *sagan* of the priests, saith, 'On the sabbath day they reaped the sheaf only to the measure of one seah, with one sickle, in one basket': but upon a common day they reaped three seahs, with three sickles, in three baskets. But the wise men say, 'The sabbath days and other days as to this matter are alike.'"

III. This night they were to lodge in Jerusalem, or in booths about, so near the city that they might not exceed the bounds of a sabbath day's journey.

In the morning, again, they met very early in the court, as the day before, and the sacrifices are brought for the people's appearing before the Lord: the sheaf of first fruits is offered in its turn: the rites and usages of which offering are described in the place above quoted. So that upon this 'high day' there happened to be three great solemnities in one, viz. the

sabbath, the sheaf offering, and *the appearing* of the people in the court before the Lord, according to the command, [Exodus 23:17](#).

34. But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

[*With a spear pierced his side.*] The Arabic version of the Erpenian edition adds the word, he pierced his *right* side; afraid (as it should seem) lest the miracle should not be great enough, if the blood and water should have been supposed to have issued from his left side because of the water that is said to be contained in the pericardium: which being pierced, it is conceived blood and water could not but upon natural reasons flow out of it. But this issue of blood and water had something of mystery in it beyond nature: if nothing preternatural had been in it, I hardly imagine the evangelist would have used that threefold asseveration concerning the truth of the thing as we see he doth; "And he that saw it bare record," &c.

[*Came there out blood and water.*] It is commonly said that the two sacraments of the new testament, *water* and *blood*, flowed out of this wound: but I would rather say that the antitype of the old testament might be here seen.

I. The apostle teacheth us that the ratification of the old covenant was by *blood* and *water*, [Hebrews 9:19](#); "Moses took the blood of calves and of goats, with water," &c. I confess, indeed, that Moses makes no mention of *water*, [Exodus 24](#): but the apostle, writing to the Hebrews, does not write without such authority as they could not tell how to gainsay. And if my memory do not fail me, I think I have read somewhere among some of the Jewish authors (but the place itself has unhappily slipped from me), that when there was some pause to be made betwixt the slaying of the sacrifice and the sprinkling of the blood upon the altar (such a kind of pause as Moses made when he read to the people the articles of their covenant), they mingled water with the blood, lest it should congeal and coagulate. However, the authority is sufficient that the apostle tells us that the first testament was dedicated by *blood and water*. The antitype of which is clearly exhibited in this ratification of the new testament: and hence it is that the evangelist, by so vehement asseverations, confirms the truth of this passage, because it so plainly answers the type, and gives such assurance of the fulfilling of it.

II. It must not by any means let pass that in *Shemoth Rabba*; "He smote the rock, and the waters gushed out,' [Psalm 78:20](#), but the word *yod-zayin-vav-bet- yod* signifies nothing else but *blood*; as it is said, 'The woman that hath an issue of blood upon her,' [Leviticus 15:20](#). Moses therefore smote the rock twice, and first it gushed out blood, then water."

"That rock was Christ," [1 Corinthians 10:4](#). Compare these two together: Moses smote the rock, and blood and water, saith the Jew, flowed out thence: the soldier pierced our Saviour's side with a spear, and *water and blood*, saith the evangelist, flowed thence.

St. John concludes this asseveration of his, *that ye might believe*. It is not without moment what is commonly said, viz. that by this flowing out of water and blood, it is evident his

pericardium was pierced; and so there was an undoubted assurance given of his death: but I hardly believe the evangelist in this clause had any direct eye towards it; for would he be so vehement in asserting, "He that saw bare record: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe" that Jesus was indeed dead? Surely there was no need of such mighty asseverations for that. Questionless, therefore, he would intimate something else, viz. that you may believe that this is the true blood of the new covenant, which so directly answers the type in the confirmation of the old. Nor do I think that the water itself, which issued from his side, was that only which was contained in the pericardium, but that something supernatural was in this matter.

36. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

[*A bone of him shall not be broken.*] These words may have some reference to that of [Psalm 34:20](#): but they are more commonly referred by expositors to that law about the Paschal lamb, [Exodus 12:46](#): for "Christ is our Passover," [1 Corinthians 5:7](#).

"If any one *break a bone* of the Passover, let him receive forty stripes." "The bones, the sinews, and what remains of the flesh, must all be burned on the sixteenth day. If the sixteenth day should happen on the sabbath" [and so indeed it did happen in this year wherein Christ was crucified], "then let them be burned on the seventeenth: for they drive away neither the sabbath nor any holy day."

37. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

[*They shall look on him whom they pierced.*] It is observed by all expositors, how the Greek version in that place of Zechariah [12:10], from whence this passage is taken, doth vary: for they have it, *they shall look towards me, because they have insulted*. So the Roman edition, and so some others. Hence,

It is questioned whether those interpreters did so render the words; or whether this were not an interpolation. To pass by the testimonies of the ancients that ascribe it to the Seventy, let us observe these two things:

I. It is no unusual thing for the Greek interpreters in their renderings sometimes to favour the Jewish traditions, and sometimes the common interpretation of the nation. There want not instances of both kinds: it is the latter we have to do with at this time; wherein take one or two examples, instead of many that might be reckoned up.

What reason can be given that they should render *Caphtorim*, *Cappadocians*, and *Caphtor*, *Cappadocia*, [Deuteronomy 2:23](#), but only because the Pelusites and Pelusium were commonly so termed by the Jews? Who could have imagined any reason why they say of Eli, that *he judged Israel 'twenty' years*, when in the original it is *forty*, [1 Samuel 4:18](#), but that they favoured the common figment of that nation, that the Philistines had such a dread of Samson, that for twenty years after his death they stood in as much awe of him as if he

was then alive and judged Israel? Of this nature is their rendering *son* by *instruction*, (Psa 2:12)...

II. The Chaldee paraphrast thus renders the words *They shall ask after me, because they are carried away*. Which R. Solomon thus interprets: "They shall look back to mourn, because the Gentiles have pierced some of them and killed them in their captivity." Which agrees so well with the sense of the Greek version, "They shall look on me [mourning], because the Gentiles have insulted over my people in their captivity," that I cannot suspect any interpolation in the Greek copies...

Think you that figment about Messiah Ben Joseph (to which the Talmudists apply these words of Zechariah, as also doth Aben Ezra upon the place) was invented when the Greek version was first framed? If not, which is my opinion, then it is probable that the Chaldee paraphrast gave the sense that most obtained in the nation *at that time*, with which that of the Greek accords well enough...

5. And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

[*He stooping down, &c.*] Standing within the cave, he bowed himself to look down into the place where the body was laid, which was four cubits lower than the floor of the cave itself. See *Bava Bathra* about places of burial; which place I have quoted and explained, *Century Chorograph*.

12. And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

[*The one at the head, and the other at the feet.*] So were the cherubims placed at each end of the mercy seat, [Exodus 25:18,19](#). As to those cherubims that were in Solomon's Temple, [2 Chronicles 3:10](#), I cannot but by the way observe what I meet with in *Bava Bathra*: "Onkelos the proselyte saith, *The cherubims are like children going from their master.*" That is, with their faces turned partly towards their master, and partly towards the way wherein they were to go. For as the Gemarists, "When Israel obeyed the will of God, the cherubims looked towards one another; but when they did not, then they turned their faces towards the walls."

Thus Onkelos comments upon this place of the Chronicles. I hardly think he Targum-izeth on the book; for the Targum, at least that which is in our hands, renders it, *Both the cherubim are made of lily work.*

17. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

[*Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended, &c.*] These words relate to what he had spoken formerly about sending the Comforter, and that he would not leave them comfortless, &c. And this probably Mary Magdalene's mind was intent upon when she fell at his feet and would have embraced them. But he, "I must first ascend to my Father before I can bestow those things upon you which I have promised: do not therefore *touch me* and detain me upon any expectation of that kind; but wait for my ascension rather; and go and tell the same things to my brethren for their encouragement."

23. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

[*Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted.*] He had formerly given them a power of 'binding and loosing'; and therefore probably bestows something more upon them now than what he had conferred before. For,

I. It would seem a little incongruous for our Saviour to use an action so new and unwonted, such as was his 'breathing upon them,' to vest them only with that power which he had before given them.

II. The power of 'binding and loosing' was concerned only in the articles and decisions of the law; this power which he now gives them reached to the sins of mankind. That power concerned the doctrines; this, the persons of men.

Now that we may understand the words that are before us, let us a little consider what is said, [Luke 24:46](#): "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Which words we may suppose he spoke before he uttered what is in this verse. And so might there not, upon the occasion of those words, arise some such scruple as this in the apostles' breasts: "Is it so indeed? must remission of sins be preached to those in Jerusalem who have stained themselves with the blood of the Messiah himself? 'Yes,' saith he, 'for whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them.'" To this those words of his upon the cross have some reference, [Luke 23:34](#); "Father, forgive them," &c. And, indeed, upon what foundation, with what confidence could the apostles have preached remission of sins to such wretched men, who had so wickedly, so cruelly, murdered their own Lord, the Lord of life, unless authorized to it by a peculiar commission granted to them from their Lord himself?

[*Whose soever ye retain, they are retained.*] Besides the negative included in these words, that is, "If you do not remit them, they shall not be remitted," there is something superadded that is positive. That is,

I. There is granted to them a power of smiting the rebellious with present death, or some bodily stroke.

II. A power of delivering them over to Satan. Whence had St. Peter that power of striking Ananias and Sapphira with so fatal a bolt, whence St. Paul that of striking Elymas blind, whence of delivering over Hymeneus and Alexander to Satan, if not from this very commission given them by Christ? Christ himself never exercised this power himself. There was not one person whom he struck either with death or any afflictive disease: some indeed he raised, when they had been dead, and infinite numbers of the sick and diseased, whom he cured: he snatched several from the power of the devils; he *delivered* none to them. That the apostles therefore might be capable of performing things of so high a nature, it was necessary they should be backed and encouraged by a peculiar authority: which if we find not in this clause, "Whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained," where should we look for it? And therefore, when he endows his apostles with a power which he never thought fit to exercise in his own person, no wonder if he does it by a singular and unusual action; and that was 'breathing upon them,' verse 22.

But we must know, that whereas, amongst other mighty powers conferred, we reckon that as one, viz. 'delivering over unto Satan,' we are far from meaning nothing else by it but 'excommunication.' What the Jews themselves meant by that kind of phrase, let us see by one instance:

"*Those two men of Cush that stood before Solomon, Elihoreph and Ahijah the scribes, sons of Shausha. On a certain day Solomon saw the angel of death weeping: he said, 'Why weepest thou?' He answered, 'Because these two Cushites entreat me that they may continue here.' Solomon delivered them over to the devil, who brought them to the borders of Luz; and when they were come to the borders of Luz they died.*"

Gloss: "He calls them Cushites [*ironically*], because they were very beautiful. They 'entreat me that they might continue here.' For the time of their death was now come: but the angel of death could not take their souls away, because it had been decreed that they should not die but at the gates of Luz. Solomon therefore delivered them over *to the devils*; for he reigned over the devils, as it is written, 'And Solomon sat upon the throne of the Lord, for he reigned over those things that are above, and those things that are below.'"

Josephus also makes mention of the power that Solomon had over the devils. *God taught him an art against demons.* The belief of either of these stories is at the liberty of the reader. Only from the former we may make this observation, That a power of 'delivering over to Satan' was, even in the Jews' opinion, divine and miraculous. We acknowledge this to have been in the apostles, and in the apostles only: and I know nowhere, if not in the words we are now treating of, from whence otherwise the original of this power and authority can be derived.

III. It seems further, that at this very time was granted to the apostles a commission to confer the Holy Spirit on those whom they found qualified, and that in these words, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost": i.e. "Receive ye it to distribute it to others." For although it cannot be denied but that they received the Holy Ghost for other reasons also, and to others ends, of which we have already discoursed; yet is not this great end to be excluded, which seemed the highest and noblest endowment of all, viz. that Christ breathing upon them inspired them with the Holy Ghost, with this mighty authority and privilege, that they should be capable of dispensing it to others also.

24. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

[*But Thomas, called Didymus, was not with them.*] I. The evangelist does not here, as the writers of lexicons, render the signification of a Hebrew name into Greek, when he tells us, "Thomas is also called Didymus"; but only lets us know that as he was called *Thomas* among the Hebrews, so was he called *Didymus* among the Greeks. There is not another amongst the twelve apostles of whom this is said. Simon indeed is called Peter; but these are really two distinct names: so was Nathanael called Bartholomew: but Thomas and

Didymus both one name, of one signification in different languages. Perhaps Thomas was born in some place where the Jews and the Greeks promiscuously inhabited: such a place was the region of Decapolis; and so by the Hebrews he might be called by his Hebrew name, and the Greek by the Greeks.

II. The disciples had all fled and were dispersed when Christ was apprehended, [Mark 14:50](#), except Peter and John. Whence it is said in verse 2 of this chapter, that Mary Magdalene came to Peter, and "to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved"; for she knew where she might find *them*; and so she could not for the rest. And thus scattered, as it should seem, they passed over the sabbath day; but when they heard that their Lord was risen, then they begin to associate again. But as yet Thomas had not got amongst them; and indeed Peter himself had been absent too, but that having seen the Lord he returned from Emmaus.

III. Thomas therefore not being present when our Saviour breathed on the rest and gave them the Holy Ghost, are we to suppose that he, by his absence, was deprived of this gift and privilege? No surely, for it was a privilege common to the whole apostolate, and peculiar to them as Apostles: so that however by his absence he might have missed of it, yet by reason of his apostolacy he could not. St. Paul, distant with a witness while these things happened, both from the apostleship and religion too, yet when made an apostle, was withal adorned with this privilege.

25. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

[*Except I shall see, &c.*] They judge Moses once to have been thus weak and wavering in his faith: "When the holy blessed God said to Moses, Go down, for the people have corrupted themselves; he took the tables, and would not believe that Israel had sinned, saying, 'If I do not see, I will not believe.'"

"Thou Racha, wouldest thou not have believed if thou hadst not seen?"

26. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

[*The doors being shut.*] I would not easily believe that the intention of the evangelist in this place was to let us know that Christ penetrated the doors with his body; but rather that the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, as verse 19; which he also reiterates in this verse, that he might let us know the disciples were still at Jerusalem, where their greatest danger lay. On the morrow, probably, they were to make towards Galilee.

29. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

[*Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*] "R. Simeon Ben Lachish saith, "The proselyte is more beloved by the holy blessed God than that whole crowd that stood before mount Sinai. For unless they had heard the thunderings, and seen the flames and lightnings, the hills trembling, and the trumpets sounding, they had not received the law. But the proselyte hath seen nothing of all this, and yet hath come in, devoting himself to the holy blessed God, and hath taken upon him the kingdom of heaven."

Chapter 21

2. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

[*Simon Peter, and Thomas, &c.*] Here are seven of the disciples mentioned, and but five of them named. Those two whose names are not recited probably were Philip and Andrew; as the four that were absent at the time were the sons of Alpheus, Matthew, Judas, Simeon, and James. Compare those that are mentioned, chapter 1; and you may reasonably suppose the person not named there, verses 37, 40, might be Thomas.

3. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

[*I go a fishing.*] Christ had ordered his apostles to meet him at a mountain in Galilee, [Matthew 28:16](#). It is plain, verse 14, that he had not yet appeared to them there: so that it is something strange how they durst keep away from that mountain, and how the four newly mentioned durst be absent from the rest of their number. They knew the mountain without doubt; and if they knew not the time wherein Christ would make his appearance amongst them, why should they not abide continually there in attendance for him?

It should seem, that they did not look for him till the Lord's day, which had not yet been since they were come into Galilee. And perhaps the sons of Alpheus had, in their return from Jerusalem, betaken themselves amongst their relations, determining to be at that mountain on the Lord's day. These seven dwelt not far off the mountain, which was near Capernaum, and hard by the sea of Galilee: only Nathanael, who dwelt more remote in Cana, towards the extreme north parts of that sea. He was not yet gone home, but, waiting the appointed time, stayed here. Peter and Andrew dwelt in Capernaum, and so, probably, did James and John: Philip in Bethsaida, and Thomas (as we may conjecture from his Greek name *Didymus*) probably lived amongst the Syro-Grecians in Gadara, or Hippos, or some place in that country of Decapolis, not very far from Gennesaret.

5. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

[*Children.*] By what word soever Christ expressed this *children* to them, it seems to be a very familiar and gentle compellation, that his disciples, from that very salutation of his, might discern him. They did not know him by sight, as appears, verse 4: he would have them know him, therefore, by the title he gave them.

[*Any meat.*] Very usual amongst the Rabbins may not unfitly be rendered *meat for one single repast*: as if Christ should have said, "Children, have ye any meat with you sufficient for a breakfast or a dinner?" But if *any meat* should signify any sort of *meat that must be eaten with bread*, as Camerarius thinks, then Christ's words seem to have this meaning: "Here, I have bread with me: have you taken any thing, that we may eat this bread?" and so *meat* may be distinguished from *bread*.

15. So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

[*Lovest thou me more than these?*] Why *more than these*? Might it not have been enough to have said, "*as well as these*?" For what reason had he to expect that Peter should love him *more* than the rest did? especially more than St. John, whom Christ himself had so loved, and who had stuck so close to him?

Christ seems, therefore, to reflect upon Peter's late confidence, not without some kind of severity and reproof: q.d. "Thou saidst, O Simon, a little while ago, that thou wouldst never forsake me, no, not though all the other disciples should. Thou didst profess beyond all the rest that thou wouldst rather die than deny me; thou wouldst follow me to prison, to death; nay, lay down thy own life for me. What sayest thou now, Simon? Dost thou yet love me *more than these*? If thou thinkest thou art provided, and canst hazard thy life for me, feed my sheep; and for my sake do thou expose thy life, yea, and lay it down for them."

[*Feed my lambs.*] If there be any thing in that threefold repetition, *Feed, Feed, Feed*, we may most fitly apply it to the threefold object of St. Peter's ministry, viz. the Gentiles, the Jew, and the Israelites of the ten tribes.

I. To him were committed, by his Lord, the keys of the kingdom of heaven, [Matthew 16](#); that he might open the door of faith and the gospel to the Gentiles, which he did in his preaching it to Cornelius.

II. In sharing out the work of preaching the gospel amongst the three ministers of the circumcision, his lot fell amongst the Jews in Babylon. James's lot was amongst the Jews in Palestine and Syria: and John's amongst the Hellenists in Asia.

III. Now amongst the Jews in Babylon were mixed the Israelites of the ten tribes; and to them did the gospel come by the ministry of St. Peter, as I have shewn more at large in another treatise.

To this, therefore, have the words of our Saviour a plain reference; namely, putting Peter in mind, that whereas he had, with so much confidence and assurance of himself, made

such professions of love and constancy beyond the other disciples, pretending to a wonderful resolution of laying down his very life in that behalf, that he would now shew his zeal and courage in 'feeding the sheep' of Christ:--"Thou canst not, Simon, lay down thy life for me, as thou didst once promise; for I have myself laid down my own life, and taken it up again. 'Feed thou my sheep,' therefore; and be ready to lay down thy life for them, when it shall come to be required of thee."

So that what is here said does not so much point out Peter's primacy, as his danger; nor so much the privilege as the bond of his office, and at last his martyrdom: for that our Saviour had this meaning with him, is plain, because, immediately after this, he tells him by what death he should glorify God, verse 18.

24. This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

[*And we know that his testimony is true.*] The evangelist had said before, chapter 19:35, "He knoweth that he saith true"; and here in this place he changeth the person, saying, "*We know that his testimony is true.*"

I. One would believe that this was an idiotism in the Chaldee and Syriac tongue, to make '*We know*, and '*I know*, the same thing: which is not unusual in other languages also; [Joshua 2:9](#), *I know*. The Targumist hath which you would believe to be *We know*. [1 Samuel 17:28](#), *I know*. Targumist, *We know*.

II. We suppose the evangelist, both here and chapter 19:35, referreth to an *eyewitness*. For in all judicial causes the ocular testimony prevailed. If any person should testify that he himself saw the thing done, *his witness must be received*: for *true* when it is said of any testimony, does not signify barely that which *is true*, but that which was to be *believed* and entertained for a sure and irrefragable evidence. So that the meaning of these words is this: "This is the disciple who testifies of these things and wrote them: and we all know that such a testimony obtains in all judgments whatever; for he was an eyewitness, and saw that which he testifies."

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica

John Lightfoot
(1602-1675)

A Chorographical Inquiry
into some places of the land of Israel,
particularly those which we find mentioned
in the Evangelist St. John.

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Chapter 1
Bethabara, [John 1](#)

1. Different readings, Bethany and Bethamara.

It is observed by all that treat upon this evangelist, that the reading doth vary in some copies; and this instance is alleged for one:

"These things were done in *Bethabara*; but in other copies it is in *Bethany*."

But Drusius; "The Vulgar Greek copies have it in *Bethabara*, which Epiphanius, in the place above mentioned, calls *Bethamara*. Of this reading Petavius is silent."

Nor indeed is it much wonder, that *Bethamara* should change into *Bethania*, since *Bethamara* signifies a *place of wool*; and *Bethania* signifies a *place of sheep*.

But it seems very strange how *Bethabara* should ever change into *Bethany*, unless upon some such occasion as these:

Either that *Bethabara* might be taken for the same with *the house of exposition*, or *the school*; whence for explication it is annexed, by some hand or other in the margin, *the house of tradition*, or *doctrine*: as if the evangelist were to be understood in this manner; "These things were done or disputed in a certain school beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing." And so that word *the house of tradition* or *doctrine* might steal from the margin into the text and common use...

2. The noted passages over Jordan.

Among the various ways of writing *Bethabara* in Hebrew, these two especially deserve our consideration at present: 'Beth-barah,' which we meet with in [Judges 7](#), and *Bethabara*, or a *place of passage*, where they passed over Jordan. They must both come under our inquiry, whiles we are seeking the place in hand; and, first, of the latter.

Doubtless there was no part of Jordan but might be passed by boat from one side to the other, as men's different occasions might call them; but we are now considering the public and common passages that led over that river from one country into another.

I. There is a bridge over Jordan, betwixt the lake of Samochon and Gennesaret in the way that leadeth to Damascus, which hath the name of "Jacob's bridge"; of which our countryman Biddulph, who hath himself travelled over it, speaks to this purpose:

"At the foot of this rocky mountain runs a pleasant river called Jordan, which divideth Syria from Galilee. Over this river is built a goodly bridge, which bears the name of 'Jacob's bridge,' upon this twofold account: 1. Because in this place Jacob met with his brother Esau; 2. Because here he wrestled with the angel."

As to matter of fact, that there is and was such a bridge, I do not much question; but for the reasons why it is so called, as it is not much to our purpose to examine, so they seem to have little else but conjecture in them.

II. Jordan also had a bridge over it at Chammath, near Tiberias, at the very efflux of the river out of the sea of Gennesaret; as we have elsewhere shewn from the Talmudic authors,

against the mistake of the tables, which place Tiberias at a great distance thence. "As well the lord the king, as all the princes, come even unto Tiberias, and pitch their tents near the bridge, where the streams of Jordan from the sea do divide themselves."

"With his army he pitched his tents near Tiberias, by the bridge, from whence the streams of Jordan, from the lake of Gennesaret, do divide themselves." Read this, and view the situation of Tiberias in the tables, and correct the mistake.

III. That was a most known and frequent passage from Jericho, which we so often read of in the Holy Scriptures; which yet seems rather to have been by boat than bridge. See [2 Samuel 19:18](#), and [2 Kings 2:8](#).

3. The Scythopolitan country.

There was a fourth, and that the greatest, passage betwixt Chammath and Jericho, but at a great distance from either; for the finding out of which, we are to consider what is intimated, [1 Kings 4:12](#): "And all Beth-shean, which is by Zartanah beneath Jezreel." And again, [1 Kings 7:46](#): "In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in the clay-ground, between Succoth and Zarthan." We will begin with Beth-shean.

I. Beth-shean, or Scythopolis, was in the lot of Manasseh, [Judges 1:27](#). "Neither did Manasses drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean, which is Scythopolis." So that it was within the limits of Samaria, though indeed one of the Decapolitan cities, and within the jurisdiction of the Gentiles, as we have shewed elsewhere.

II. It was the utmost bound of Samaria towards Galilee. "The bounds of Galilee on the south is Samaria and Scythopolis, as far as the river Jordan."

III. The city was half a league's distance from Jordan, saith Borchard, and yet extends its jurisdiction beyond Jordan. That of Aethicus, in his *Cosmography*, is well known: "The river Jordan hath its head in mount Libanus, runs about the lake of Tiberias; from whence going out, hath its current through the midst of Scythopolis, and issues in the Dead Sea." Jordan divided Scythopolis in the midst; not the city (for that was at some considerable distance from the river), but the country itself; so that part of the country was on this, and part on the other side Jordan.

It was a noble city of the Syro-Grecians, and had considerable jurisdiction, not only within the confines of Manasses, but extended itself beyond, even to Perea.

4. The great plain: the Scythopolitan passage there.

Of this great plain, which took in the whole breadth of the country of Manasseh from Jordan towards the west, a very long way, Josephus frequently speaks. Describing the situation and portion of Ephraim and Manasseh, he thus expresseth himself:

"The tribe of Ephraim extended itself in length from the river Jordan to Gadara" [Gazarah, or Gezer, [Joshua 16:3](#), and [21:21](#)]; "in breadth, from Bethel, and ends at the Great Plain."

"The half tribe of Manasseh extends itself in longitude from Jordan to the city Dor. *But in latitude* [from Ephraim] *it reacheth to Beth-shean, which is now called Scythopolis.*" So

that that 'great plain,' to those that were journeying from Galilee, began from Beth-shean, and extended itself in latitude to the confines of Ephraim. Hence that which we meet with in the same Josephus, "They that passed over Jordan came into the great plain, before which the city Bethsan lies"; or as it is in [1 Maccabees 5:52](#), "They went over Jordan into the great plain before Beth-shean."

In the Book of Judith, chapter 1:8, it is called "The great plain of Esdrelom": that is, in truth, "the great valley of Jezreel." Insomuch, that when it is said of Judah and his army (for he it is whom this passage concerns), that in his return from the land of Gilead he passed over Jordan into this "great plain," and that (as it should seem) not very far from Beth-shean; it is evident that the great and common passage over Jordan was hereabout, by which not only the Scythopolitans went over from their country on this side Jordan to that beyond, but those also of Samaria, and those of the Lower Galilee, passed over here to Perea.

Here would I seek for Jacob's Bridge, where he passed over "Jordan with his staff," when he went into Mesopotamia, and returned back with a family; and not where it is commonly now shewn. At least, the mention of Succoth, [Genesis 33:17](#), which had its situation on the bank of Jordan, exactly opposite to Zartanah, a town near Beth-shean, puts it out of all question that Jacob returned that way. And, indeed, whether Scythopolis might not derive something of its appellation from the word *Succoth*, I cannot well tell: methinks the name of 'Scythians' hath some smack of such a kind of original for they always dwelt, and removed from one place to another, in *tents*.

5. Beth-Barah, [Judges 7:24](#).

Neither was this Beth-barah at any very great distance from this passage. For so we have it, [Judges 7:24](#): "Gideon sent messengers throughout all mount Ephraim, saying, Come down against the Midianites, and take before them the waters unto Beth-barah and Jordan." And this they did.

It is hard to say whether Kimchi with more reason said, that "these waters were not the waters of Jordan"; or Jarchi, more absurdly, that "they divided Syria from Canaan." There were, no doubt, some waters in the valley of Jezreel: for there the battle was,--at least, if that may be called a battle, where there was not one sword unsheathed by the conqueror. See [Judges 6:33](#)--When the Midianites fled, Gideon summons the Ephraimites by messengers, that they would take those waters beforehand, which the routed enemy in their flight must necessarily pass through before they could arrive at the bridge or ferry over Jordan (spoken of even now), that lay in their way home. When both armies had pitched the field, the Midianites lay on the north, towards Galilee, and the Gideonites on the south, near mount Ephraim, chapter 7:1. There was a river in the vale, (at which waters, probably, Gideon distinguished betwixt his followers, that lapped like a dog, and those that did not). This river at length discharged itself into Jordan, above the bridge or passage that led into Perea. When, therefore, the Midianites lay on the northern bank of this river, and so were not capable of

attaining the passage over Jordan, till they had made through these waters first, it was the Ephraimites' care and business to maintain the opposite bank, and that indeed all the whole space from the place where the fight began, to Beth-barah and Jordan, that the enemy might be blocked up from all possibility of escape or retiring.

Whether, therefore, this passage, of which we have spoken, was called *Beth-barah* from that place so near Jordan, or *Beth-abara*, from the etymology before mentioned, it is no absurdity for the further bank of Jordan, which lay contiguous to the bridge or passage over it, to be called "Beth-barah beyond Jordan," either upon the one or the other account. For (however the learned Beza comes to question it) the Lexicons will tell you *beyond Jordan*: especially that common three fold division, "Judea, Galilee, and beyond Jordan." "On the east of the river Jordan"; as Ptolemy expresseth it: and Beza himself confesseth, that *beyond Jordan*, is the proper signification of the Greek word *beyond*, [Matthew 4:15](#).

Let us, therefore, place the Beth-abara we are seeking for, where John was baptizing, on the further side of Jordan, in the Scythopolitan country, where the Jews dwelt amongst the Syro-Grecians, as in all the Decapolitan regions, where Christ might something more safely converse, from the vexations of the scribes and Pharisees, [John 10:40](#), being, as it were, out of their reach and jurisdiction there. And so we find John baptizing, first, at the passage of Jericho, because, through the greatness of the road, there was always a considerable concourse of people; and next, at the passage of Scythopolis, for the same reason...

Chapter 2 **Nazareth, [John 1:45](#).**

1. A legend not much unlike that of the Chapel of Loretto.

Forasmuch as our evangelist makes only a transient mention of Nazareth in this place, not relating any thing that our Saviour did there, we shall take as transient notice of it at this time; by the by, only inquiring into its situation, as what we may have occasion to discourse more largely upon in another place.

But what, indeed, need we be very solicitous about the situation of this town, when the place we would especially look for there, that is, the house of the blessed Virgin, hath taken its leave of Nazareth, and, by the conveyance of angels, hath seated itself in Loretto in Italy. Of which thing, amongst many others, cardinal Baronius gives us this grave relation:

"That house wherein the most holy Virgin received the heavenly message about the Word being made flesh, doth not only by a wondrous miracle stand to this day entire; but, by the ministry of angels, was retrieved from the hands of infidels, and translated, first into Dalmatia, thence into Italy, to Loretto in the province of Picenum."

Let us repay one legend with another.

"They say of R. Chanina, saith he, seeing once his fellow-citizens carrying their sacrifices to Jerusalem, crieth out: 'Alas! they every one are carrying their sacrifices, and for my part I have nothing to carry; what shall I do?' Straightway he betaketh himself into the wilderness of the city, and finding a stone he cuts it, squares, and artificially formeth it; and saith, 'What would I give that this stone might be conveyed into Jerusalem!' Away he goeth to hire some that should do it; they ask him a hundred pieces of gold, and they would carry it. 'Alas! saith he, where should I have a hundred pieces? indeed, where should I have three?' Immediately the holy blessed God procured five angels, in the likeness of men, who offer him for five shillings to convey the stone into Jerusalem, if himself would but give his helping hand. He gave them a lift; and of a sudden they all stood in Jerusalem; and when he would have given them the reward they bargained for, his workmen were gone and vanished. This wonder he relates before the Sanhedrim, in the conclave of Gazith. They say to him, 'Rabbi, it should seem that these were angels that brought this stone': so he gave the elders the money, for which the angels had bargained with him."

In truth, I should easilier incline to believe this story than that of Loretto, because there is some reason to apprehend this R. Chanina no other than Haninah Ben Dusa, a notorious magician. Unless you will also say, that the chapel at Loretto took that jaunt by the help of magic.

A huge stone of its own accord takes a skip from the land of Israel, and stops up the mouth of the den in Babylon, where Daniel and the lions lay. But so much for tales.

2. The situation of Nazareth.

The situation of Nazareth, according to Borchard, Breidenbach, and Saligniac, ought to be measured and determined from mount Thabor. For so they unanimously: "From Nazareth two leagues eastward is mount Thabor." Nor is there any cause why, with respect to that region of Galilee in which they place this city, we should dissent from them, seeing there are others of the same opinion. Now the mount Tabor was in the very confines that divided Issachar from Zebulun; [Joshua 19:22](#), "And the coast [i.e. of *Issachar*] reacheth to Tabor and Shahazimah." But what coast should this be? north or south? The north coast, saith Josephus:--

"Next to Manasseh is Issachar, having for its bounds of longitude mount Carmel and the river [*Jordan*], and of latitude mount Tabor." That is, the latitude of Issachar is from Manasseh to mouth Tabor, as Josephus plainly makes out in that place. Mount Tabor, therefore, lay as it were in the midst, betwixt the coasts of Samaria and Upper Galilee: having on this side Issachar towards Samaria, and on that side Zabulon towards the aforesaid Galilee.

Josephus describes mount Tabor, where these things seem something obscure. We have already seen where Scythopolis lay; and where *the great plain*, near Scythopolis. But what should that *great plain* be, that lieth so behind Tabor towards the north, that Tabor should be betwixt it and Scythopolis? Is not Zabulon so called in Josephus? yea, and Issachar too,

at least a great part of it, if we consult the same Josephus. So that the *great plain* of Scythopolis or Manasseh, is distinctly called by him "the great plain of Samaria."

And the Lower Galilee is described by the Talmudists by this character, "That it produceth sycamines, which the Upper Galilee doth not." Now the sycamine trees were *in the vale*, [1 Kings 10:27](#). And hence seems to arise the distinction between the Upper and the Lower Galilee; the Lower so called because more plain and champaign, the Upper because more hilly and mountainous.

I am deceived if the Upper Galilee be not sometimes by way of emphasis called 'Galilee'; nor without cause, when as the Lower might be called *the great plain*. So Cana had the adjunct of 'Cana of Galilee,' perhaps that it might distinguish that Cana which bounds both the Galilees; of which more in its proper place. That passage which we meet with in our evangelist, chapter 4:43,44, "He departed from thence [*from Samaria*] and went into Galilee; for Jesus himself testified that a prophet hath no honour in his country": it looks this way; that is, he would not go into Nazareth, but into Galilee, viz. the Upper; and so came to Cana.

Nazareth, therefore, was in the Lower Galilee, in the very confines of Issachar and Zabulon, and is commonly received within Zabulon, itself being distant sixteen miles or more from Capernaum; for from Capernaum, mount Tabor is distant ten miles, or thereabouts.

3. Ben Nezer.

..."The Rabbins have a tradition: Those that are taken out of the kingdom, behold they are properly captives; but those that are taken by thieves, they are not to be called captives."

"The tradition is to be distinguished. As to kingdom and kingdom, there is no difficulty": that is, as to kingdoms, which are equal. "But between the kingdom of Ahasuerus, and the kingdom of Ben Nezer, there is. Between thieves and thieves there is no difficulty; but between Ben Nezer and *the thieves of the world viz. common thieves*, there is. There [in Palestine] Ben Nezer is called a king: here [in Babylon] *he is called a robber*." Gloss: "Ben Nezer was a thief, and took cities, and ruled over them; and became the captain of robbers."

It is very suspicious to what purpose they have invented that name for the most infamous robber, to call him the "son of Nezer." By those very letters [nun, tzadai, resh] they write the city 'Nazareth.' Read on, and the suspicion will increase.

"I considered the horns; and behold, there came up among them another little horn [[Dan 7:8](#)], *This is Ben Nezer*." Aruch quoteth this passage: "There came up among them another little horn: *This is the kingdom of the Cuthites*. Now what they meant by *the kingdom of the Cuthites*, may be conjectured from 'The winter is past' [[Cant 2:11](#)]; *This is the kingdom of the Cuthites*." And a little after: "The time is coming when the kingdom of Cuth shall be destroyed, and the kingdom of heaven shall be revealed."

It is easy imagining what they would point at by the *kingdom of the Cuthites*; the Christians no doubt (unless they will pretend to some Samaritan kingdom): and if so, it is as obvious whom they design by "Ben Nezer." Let them shew whence came the name of the

tetrarchy of the Nazarenes in Coelosyria; of which Pliny: "Coelosyria habet Apamiam Marsya amne divisam. A Nazerinorum tetrarchia Bambycen, quae alio nomine 'Hierapolis' vocatur, Syris vero 'Magog.'"

4. Certain horrid practices in Capharnachum.

Having spoken of Nazareth, it will not be amiss to make some mention of Capernaum, which, however distant many miles, yet was it the place where our Saviour dwelt, as Nazareth was his native soil. We have considered its situation in another treatise, being in the country of Gennesaret, a little distance from Tiberias. There is another Capernaum mentioned by Gulielmus Tyrius, that lay upon the coast of the Mediterranean, as this did upon the coast of Gennesaret: "In a place called Petra Incisa, near old Tyre, betwixt Capernaum and Dor, two sea-coast towns."

It is uncertain whether the name be derived from *pleasantness* or *comfort*. And though our Capernaum might justly enough take its name from the *pleasantness* of its situation, according to the description that Josephus giveth of it; yet the oriental interpreters write it the latter way. The Rabbins also mention such a town, written in the same letters; of which, perhaps, it will not be tedious to the reader to take this story:

"Chanina, R. Joshua's brother's son, went into *Capernaum, and the heretics*" (or *magicians* for the word signifies either) "*enchanted him*. They brought him into the city sitting upon an ass"; on the sabbath-day, which was forbidden by their law. "He went to his uncle R. Joshua, *who besmeared him with a certain ointment, and he was recovered*." It should seem that, by some kind of enchantments, they had thrown him into a delirium so far, that he had forgot both himself and the sabbath-day. There is another story immediately follows that:

"A certain disciple of R. Jonathan's flies over to these heretics" [that himself might be entered amongst them, and become one too]. "Jonathan finds him out employed in castrating birds and beasts. They sent to him" [Jonathan], "and said, It is written, Cast in thy lot amongst us, and let us all have one purse. He fled; and they followed him, saying, Rabbi, come and give us a cast of thy office towards a young bird. He returned, and found them *committing adultery with a woman*. He asked them, *Is it the manner of the Jews to do such things as these?* They answer, 'Is it not written in the law, Cast in thy lot amongst us, and let us all have one purse?' He fled, and they pursued him to his own house, and then he shut the doors against them. They call to him and say, 'O Rabbi Jonathan, go, and rejoicing tell thy mother, that thou didst not so much as look back towards us; for if thou hadst looked back, thou hadst then followed us as vehemently as we have now followed thee.'"

While I read these things, I cannot but call to mind the Nicolaitans, and such who indulged to themselves a liberty of all obscene filthiness; nor is what we have related unworthy our observation with respect to heresies of this kind. Should this Capernaum be the same (as probably it is) with that Capernaum which we meet with so frequently in the evangelists,

it is something observable what is said of it, "Thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell."

5. Some short remarks upon Cana, John 2:2.

It is very disputable which should be the first letter of the word Cana, whether Caph or Koph, for we find both.

I. *Kanah*, with the initial letter Koph, is a city in the tribe of Asher, [Joshua 19:28](#).

II. *Kene*, a word not very much differing in the sound, occurs amongst the Talmudists, "Rabbi and his Sanhedrim, having numbered votes, pronounced Keni, clean."--Gloss: "Keni was a place of doubtful esteem, reckoned amongst the unclean" [that is, a place of the Gentiles]; "but in the days of R. Judah Haccodesh, it came under trial, and they pronounced it clean."

III. We find *Kana* in Josephus, but the situation not mentioned: "Antiochus being slain" [viz. when he fought with the Arabian king], "his army fled to the town Kana." This is hardly our Cana, as may in some measure appear in Josephus' context.

IV. But further he speaks in 'His Own Life,' of "Cana in Galilee." As for its situation, as far as can be collected from Josephus, we discuss that in another treatise, and shew that it is not far from that place where the river Jordan dischargeth itself into the sea of Gennesaret; so that between this Cana and Capernaum, there seems to be almost the whole length of that sea.

V. But it must not be forgotten that *Canah*, beginning with the letter Caph, is met with in Juchasin; the words these: "In the end of the chapter" [it is the seventh chapter of Bavah Mezia] "there is a tradition. Abba Chalaphtha or Caphar Hananiah, in the name of R. Meir, saith," [they are in Bavah Mezia, where he is brought in, and what he said], "It seems to me" (they are the words of the author of Juchasin) "that Caphar Hananiah is Caphar Cana; as may be proved out of the ninth chapter of the book Sheviith: for there was the entrance of the Lower Galilee."

From that place, quoted in Sheviith, which is Hal. 2. it plainly appears that Caphar Hananiah was in the very outmost border that divided the Upper and the Lower Galilee. From whence it is evident, that the entrance of the Lower Galilee, according to our author, was not as we go from Samaria to Galilee, but from the Upper Galilee into the Lower. And whether our Cana of Galilee be so called to distinguish it from that Cana that so divides between the two Galilees, or from that Cana that was in the tribe of Asher (which may not unfitly be called 'Cana of the Sidonians'), it is at the reader's choice to determine. As also, why the Syriac interpreter should in this place write *Katna*, instead of 'Cana.' Whether he had in his eye or mind *Kattath*, [Joshua 19:15](#), which, in the vulgar dialect, was called *Katanath*, as the Seventy render it, and the Jerusalem Talmudists affirm; or whether by a diminutive kind of word *Katanah*, he would intimate the smallness of the town: q.d. "Cana the Less."

Chapter 3 Aenon near Salim, [John 3:23](#).

1. Certain names and places of near sound with 'Salim.'

Let us begin with *Salim*, and thence look after its neighbour 'Aenon.' We may be a little helped in our inquiry by that passage in [Genesis 33:18](#): "And came to Shalem, a city of Sychem." There are some versions, and the authors of the tables, have upon these words built I know not what city Salem near Sychem. But neither the Jews nor Samaritans acknowledge any such thing. For the Jews render it, and that not without reason, "And Jacob came safe into the city of Shechem."

II. *Salim*, in the Greek interpreter, according to the Roman copy is the name of a place, [Joshua 19:22](#); where the Hebrew runs thus, "And the coast [*of Issachar*] reacheth to Tabor, and Shahazimah, and Beth-shemesh." But the Greek "And the confines touched upon Gethbor, and upon Salim near the sea, and Bethsamosh."

The Masorets observe that Shahazimah, which is written with a Vau, should be written by a Jod; which also these interpreters acknowledge (which is worthy our taking notice of); but then they divide the word into two parts, and write it *Shahaz at the sea*: but why they should turn *Shahaz* into *Salim*, it is something difficult to guess.

It seems probable that *Selame*, which Josephus, in the account of his own life, makes mention of, as fortified by himself, amongst other towns in Galilee, is the same with this *Salim*, mentioned by the Seventy; and that the rather, because there it is reckoned up with mount Tabor.

III. *Saalim*, in the Alexandrian copy, answers to the Hebrew *Shaalim*, [1 Samuel 9:4](#). In the Complut. *Sallim*; in the Roman *Segalim*; where the Targum, instead of *in the land of Shalishah*, hath *in the land of the south*: and instead of *in the land of Saalim*, it hath *in the land of Methbara*. But why both here and also [2 Kings 4:42](#), they should render *Baal-shalisha* by *the land of the south*, we find some kind of reason in the Gemarists, who upon this place have this note:

"There was no country throughout the whole land of Israel where the fruits of the earth were so forward as in Baal-Shalisha." Now such a country they call *southern fields*; or literally, *made south*; "because the sun both riseth and sets upon them." But why they should render *the land of Saalim*, *the land of Methbara* is something more unintelligible, unless it should be with some respect to mount Tabor, which we find mentioned in the following chapter, verse 3; and so *Methbara*, should be "the plain of Tabor."

If now the reader can pitch upon any of these places we have already named, or any other he may have met with in his reading, as that which our evangelist here meaneth, let him consider whether the article *near to* may properly be prefixed to it, and yet St. John hath it *near to Salim* which gives some ground of conjecture that the passage is to be under-

stood not of any town or city, but of some other matter; which, by way of exercitation, it may not be amiss a little to enlarge upon.

2. A 'Salmean' or a 'Salamean,' used amongst the Targumists instead of a 'Kenite.'

Every one that hath but dipped into the Chaldee paraphrasts, must know that the 'Kenites' are called by them 'Salmeans,' or 'Salameans.' So Onkelos, [Genesis 15:19](#); [Numbers 24:21,22](#). So Jonathan, [Judges 1:16](#), 4:2, 5:24; [1 Samuel 15:6](#), 27:10. It is likewise observable, that the 'Maachathites' are by them called the 'Epikerites,' [Deuteronomy 3:14](#); [Joshua 13:13](#). And this, probably, from the place or country where the Maachathites of old dwelt, which, in the time of the Targumists, was called "Epicaerus on the east of the river Jordan," deg. 67.31.0. Whether indeed the situation doth fall out right, I shall not at present discourse.

But the 'Kenite' is not termed a 'Salmean' from any place or country where he dwelt. For the Kenites in the southern part of Judea are called 'Salameans,' [Judges 1](#). So also Heber the Kenite in Galilee, [Judges 4](#). And there were Kenites amongst the Amalekites, [1 Samuel 15](#); and there were of the Kenites beyond Jordan, [Genesis 15](#): whence so called is not to our purpose. It sufficeth, that they were vulgarly known by the name of *Salame*; which, how near akin it is to *Salim*, let the unbiased reader judge. Who knoweth, therefore, but the evangelist should mean thus; "John was baptizing in Aenon, near the Salamean, 'or Kenite'"; giving that name to that people, which, at that time, they were commonly called by? But supposing this should be granted us, what Kenite should we understand here? either those that were in the wilderness of Judah, or those on the other side of the salt sea?

3. Aenon in the Greek Interpreter, [Joshua 15:62](#).

If the 'Essene' might be called *Salmean*, as well as Kenite (and certainly he seems to have as much claim to it, if the word denote *perfection*, or *austerity* of life), then I could more confidently place our *Salim*, in the wilderness of Judah; because there I find Aenon mentioned in the Greek version, [Joshua 15:61,62](#): where the Hebrew hath it thus: "In the wilderness, Beth-araba, Middin, and Secacah, and Nishban, and the city of Salt, and En-gedi, six cities": but the Greek "And *Baddargis*, and *Tharabaam*, and *Aenon*." &c. Where it is plain that *Aenon*, is put for *Middin*; but why it should be so, is more difficult to tell. This only we may remark, that the word *Middin* occurs [Judges 5:10](#): which if I should render, "ye that dwell by *Middin*," I should have Kimchi to warrant me, who, in his notes upon this place, tells us, that "*Middin* is the name of a city mentioned in Joshua, *Middin* and Secacah." But now, when *Aenon*, signifies a *place of springs* or *waters*, see what follows: "from the noise of archers among the places of drawing waters." The Greek is "among those that draw water." So that if you ask the Greek interpreter why he should render *Middin* by *Aenon*, a *place of springs*, he will tell you, because *Middin* was a place "of those that draw waters."

The Essenes succeeded the Kenites in their dwelling in the wilderness of Judah: and not only so, but in strictness and austerity of life, as Josephus and others assure us. Now if we will but allow the 'Essenes' to be called *Salmeans*, as the Kenites were, then the words of the

evangelist might bear such sense as this;--"John was baptizing in Aenon near the Essenes." And it may be supposed, that as the Baptist had already conversed with two of the Jewish sects, the Pharisees and Sadducees, and had baptized some of each, so he would now apply himself to a third sect amongst them, viz. the Essenes, and baptize some of them too. But herein I will not be positive.

4. The Syriac remarked. And Eustathius upon Dionysius.

Whilst we are treating upon the word *Aenon*, I cannot but observe that the word is divided both in the Syriac and Arabic version: Syriac, "In the fountain Jon": Arabic "In the fountain Nun." The words of the evangelist seem to discover the signification of the name.

"Because there was much water there." For we could not have rendered the word more significantly, than a *place of springs*, or a *watery place*. So Nonnus;

Baptizing near the waters of deep-waved Salem.

Why, therefore, did those interpreters take the word in two, when it was plain and etymological enough of itself?

The Syriac *Jon* brings to mind a passage of Eustathius upon this verse of Dionysius:

"Some say, saith he, that that whole sea from Gaza as far as Egypt, is called the Ionian sea, from Io." "Indeed, some call even Gaza itself *Ione*, where there is a heifer in the image of Io, or the moon."

That Gaza was ever called *Ione*, is not commonly known; but grant it was, and the same, from that place even as far as Egypt, to have been called the Ionian sea; yet should not I have derived its name from 'Io,' but rather from the 'Iones,' those brassy robust men, of whose coming into Egypt, and fixing their seats there by the sea, Herodotus gives us a famous relation.

But must we seek for *ein Jon* (or *Javan*, as some would have it) hereabout? To seek John about Gaza, would be to seek him out of the land of Israel; at least, as the bounds of that land were at that time determined.

5. Herodium, a palace.

If Aenon was the place where John baptized last, immediately before his imprisonment, then we must look for it either in Galilee or Perea: for in one of those places it was where he began his acquaintance with Herod. For however St. Luke, speaking of Herod, mentions Galilee only within his tetrarchy, [Luke 3:1](#), yet Josephus tells us, that "both Perea and Galilee were under his jurisdiction." Where then shall we begin his first acquaintance with the Baptist? I had once inclination to have fixed it in Galilee; but whilst I consider better that Herodium was in Perea, and very near Machaerus, John's prison, that seems the more probable.

Josephus, speaking of Herod the Great and his stately buildings, hath this amongst other things: "He fortified a castle upon a hill towards Arabia, and called it Herodium, after

himself." Where, by *Arabia*, you are to understand the land of *Moab*; and he seemed to have fortified that castle, as a bulwark against the Moabitish Arabs.

The same Herod that built it is buried there, as the same Josephus tells us; where, describing the funeral pomp, he gives this account: "*After those followed five hundred of his own domestic servants, bearing spices. His body was brought two hundred furlongs*" [from Jericho where he died] *to Herodium, where, according to his own appointment, he was interred.* But, in Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 10, "*They came to Herodium eight furlongs; for there he had ordered his funeral solemnities.*" At first sight, here is an appearance of a slip in history; but it is to be understood, that from Jericho to Herodium it was two hundred furlongs, that is, twenty-five miles; but Herod's burying-place was eight furlongs from Herodium, a common distance for burying-places to be from cities.

6. Machaerus, a castle.

Josephus tells us, that John Baptist was imprisoned by Herod in the castle of Machaerus: "He [*the Baptist*], upon Herod's suspicion, is sent prisoner to Machaerus." A little before that he had told us, This place "is the frontier betwixt the kingdom of Aretas [*the Arabian king*] and Herod."

Of the situation of the place, Pliny hath this hint; "that Arabia of the Nomades [*or Moab*], situated on the east of Asphaltites, fronts it on the west, and Machaerus situated on the north, fronts it on the south"; otherwise, you would remove Machaerus a great way from its proper situation.

We meet with it in the Talmudists under the name of Macvar.

"The mountainous country of Perea was the hill Macvar and Gedor." The Jerusalem Targum, and Jonathan upon [Numbers 32:35](#), instead of "Atroth, Shophan, and Jaazer," have "Maclelta of Shophan and Macvar": to which Jonathan adds "Macvar of Garamatha."

It is obvious enough how they came to render *Atroth* by *Maclelta* (as also Onkelos hath done); viz. because they translated the Hebrew word, which denotes a *crown*, by the Chaldee word, which is of the same signification. But why *Jaazer* by *Macvar*? Onkelos upon the third verse of the same chapter, renders 'Jaazer' and 'Nimrah' by, which I should translate, "the *Atrati* or *denigrati* of the house of Nimrin." And Ptolemy comments thus in Arabia Petraea: "There are all along that country certain mountains called the Black Mountains, namely, from the bay which is near Pharan, to Judea." But whether *Macvar* hath any relation with *blackness* from a *dish* or *furnace*, I leave it to others to inquire.

So that we see Herodium and Machaerus are situated on the outermost coast of Perea towards the south, or the land of Moab, near the shore of Asphaltites, or the Dead sea.

The nature of the place we have described by Josephus, "There spring out, near this place, certain fountains of hot waters, of a very different taste, some bitter some sweet; there are also many springs of cold waters," &c. Compare the *bitter* waters with the waters of Nimrin, [Isaiah 15:6](#), and the other with those of Dimon, verse 9; where, query whether *Dimon*

be not the same with *Dibon* [Beth and Mem being alternately used]; that by that pronunciation it might agree more with *blood*; "The waters of *Dimon* are full of blood."

Whilst we are in this watery country, are we not got amongst the rivers of Arnon? The learned Beza commenting upon those words of St. [John 3:23](#), "for there was much water there," affirms it, commenting thus: "namely, many rivers, of which also in that tract about Aroer there is mention in the books of Moses." And the situation of the place confirms it; when as Machaerus was the very utmost bounds of the 'land of Israel' towards Moab, according to Josephus, as also was Arnon according to Moses.

But here we find no place that is called either *Aenon* or *Salim*. True, indeed; but the place, for the very *wateriness* of it, deserves to be called *Aenon*, that is, *a place of springs*; and if *Salim* may be the same with *Salamean*, here we have also the Kenite or *Salamean*, [Genesis 15](#) and [Numbers 24](#). However, in a thing so very obscure, it is safest not to be positive; and the reader's candour is begged in this modest way of conjecturing. The way we tread is unbeaten, and deserves a guide, which as yet we have not obtained.

7. The hill Mizaar, [Psalm 42:6](#).

Let us now (however something beyond our bounds) pass from the first entering of the coasts of Moab towards the north, to the utmost limits of it southward.

"I will remember thee (saith the Psalmist) from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, *from the hill Mizar*." Where is this *hill Mizar*? not to take any notice of what we meet with in Borchard and others, concerning Hermon near Thabor (by what authority I cannot tell), as also that *the hill Mizaar*, is rendered almost by all, *a little hill*; or, in a word, that the Targumist and R. Solomon tell us, it is mount Sinai; Apollinarius, that it is mount Hermon: it seems plainly to be the 'hilly part of Zoar,' whither Lot would have fled, if the straitness of time might have permitted him, [Genesis 19:20](#); "O let me escape to this city; *is it not Mizar, or a little one?*" so that *the hill Mizar* may be the same, as if it had been said *the hilly part of the little city Zoar*.

The reasons of the conjecture, besides the agreeableness of the name, may be especially these two:

I. As Hermonium, or Hermon, was near the springs of Jordan, so the hilly part of Zoar lay hard by the extreme parts of Jordan in Asphaltites; and the Psalmist, speaking of the land of Jordan, or of the land on the other side of Jordan, seems to measure out all Jordan from one end to the other, from the very spring-head to the furthest part where the stream ends.

II. As David betook himself to the country on the other side of Jordan towards Hermon, in his flight from his son Absalom, so was it with him, when flying from Saul he betook himself to Zoar in the land of Moab, [1 Samuel 22:3](#). And so bewails his deplorable condition so much the more bitterly, that both those times he was banished to the very utmost countries, north and south, that the river Jordan washed.

8. Eglath Shelishijah, Isaiah 15:5.

With the mention of Zoar is this clause subjoined in Isaiah, *Eglath Shelishijah*, or "a heifer of three years old." So with the mention of Zoar and Horonaim, the same clause is also subjoined in Jeremiah.

[Isaiah 15:5](#): "His fugitives unto Zoar, a heifer of three years old."

Greek: "In it unto Sego. For it is a heifer of three years."

Vulgar: "Its bars were unto Segor: a heifer in his third year."

Targum: "That they should fly as far as Zoar, a great heifer of three years old."

English: "His fugitive shall flee unto Zoar: a heifer of three years old."

[Jeremiah 48:34](#): "From Zoar to Horonaim, a heifer of three years old."

Vulgar: "From Segor unto Horonaim, the heifer being in her third year." And so others.

I am not ignorant what commentators say upon these places: but why may not *Eglath Shelishijah* be the name of some place, and so called a *third Eglah*, in respect of two other places much of the same sound...

There is mention of *Ein Eglaim*, in that country, [Ezekiel 47:10](#); where *Eglaim* is plainly of the dual number, and seems to intimate that there were two *Egels*, with relation to which this our *Eglah* may be called *Eglah the third*. So Ramathaim, [1 Samuel 1:2](#), is of the dual number, and plainly shews there were two Ramahs.

The sound of the word Necla comes pretty near it. This we meet with in Ptolemy, in Arabia Petraea: Zoar 67.20.30.30.; Thoan 67.30.30.30.; Necla 67.20.30.15.

So that here we see the geographer mentions Zoar and Necla, as the prophet before had Zoar and Eglah: and how easily might Eglah pass into Necla in Greek writings, especially if the letter Tzadai hath any thing of the sound of the letter *n* in it. The geographer makes the distance of Zoar from Necla to be fifteen miles: so, we may suppose, was the distance of Zoar from Eglah, Horonaim lying between them; from whence the words of the prophet may not be unfitly rendered thus:

"His fugitives shall flee unto Zoar, unto the third Eglah.

From Zoar unto Horonaim: even unto the third Eglah."

I am deceived if *Agalla*, which we meet with in Josephus, be not the Eglah we are now speaking of: numbering up the twelve cities, which Hyrcanus promised he would restore to Aretas, the Arabian king, being what his father Alexander had taken from him: amongst the rest he nameth *Agalla*, *Athone*, *Zoar*, *Horonae*. Of Zoar there can be no scruple; and as little of *Horonae*; but, by that must be meant *Horonaim*. *Athone*, seems to bear a like sound with Ptolemy's *Thoana*; and *Agalla*, with his 'Necla,' and that with our 'Eglah.'

Chapter 4

John 4:5

1. A few remarks upon the Samaritan affairs.

1. Of the name of the Cuthites.

That the 'Samaritans' were called 'Cuthites' by the Jews is unquestionable; "Those that in the Hebrew tongue are called Cuthaeans, in the language of the Greeks are Samaritans."

But why Cuthites rather than Babylonians, Hamathites, Avites, &c., is uncertain: for thence, as well as from Cutha, were colonies transplanted into Samaria, [2 Kings 17:24](#): nay, they were called Cuthites even at that time, when a great part of the Samaritan nation consisted of Jews.

I am apt to apprehend there was some virulent design even in the very name. The name of Cushites amongst the Jews was most loathsome and infamous; as they were not only a hostile country, but a people accursed. Perhaps in the title of the seventh Psalm there is no little severity of reproach hinted in the name *Cush*. Something of the like nature may be couched in the word *Cuthim*. For it may be an easy conjecture, that the Jews, calling the Samaritans (a nation peculiarly abominated by them) *Cuthites*, might tacitly reproach them with the odious name of *Cushites*.

2. Josephus mistaken.

Rabbi Ismail saith, "that the Cuthites are proselytes of lions." R. Akiba saith, "that they are true proselytes." The story of the lions, [2 Kings 17:26](#), is well enough known; which Josephus, faltering very lamely, reports in this manner; He tells us that as every one brought their several gods into Samaria, and worshipped them accordingly, so the great and true God was infinitely displeased with them, and brought a destructive plague amongst them. He makes no mention of lions being sent amongst them, according to what the sacred history relates. Probably the story of that horrible destruction upon Sennacherib's army by a wasting plague, gave the first rise to Josephus' fancy of a plague amongst the Samaritans; though it is very odd that he should have no touch of the lions, being so remarkable a judgment as that was.

3. Samaria planted with colonies two several times.

There are the colonies which Asnapper is said to have brought into Samaria, [Ezra 4:10](#), as well as those by Esarhaddon, verse 2.

The Jews do judge this 'Asnapper' to be the same with 'Sennacherib,' and that he had eight names. The first syllables of the names, indeed, agree pretty well, Sena and Asna; but whether they denote the same persons, I leave undetermined.

However, whether this Asnapper was the same with Sennacherib, or Shalmaneser, or some great minister, or the king's commander-in-chief, in the transplanting of a colony, it seems evident that Samaria was planted with colonies two several times. The first, immediately after the taking of the city, being then furnished with Cuthites, Avites, Sepharvaites,

&c., under Asnapper; be he king, or only chief commander in the action. And when multitudes of them had been devoured by lions, then was it afresh planted by the Shushanchites, Tarpelites, &c. in the days of Esar-haddon, with whom a priest went up to instruct them in the worship of the true God. How greatly Epiphanius confounds these things may be seen in his Haeres. viii. cap. 9.

4. Of Dosthai, the pseud-apostle of the Samaritans.

"When the lions had devoured the Samaritans, the Assyrian king, hearing the news, calls to him the elders of Israel, and asks them, Did the wild beasts ever use to tear and mangle any of your people in your own land, when you dwelt there? Therefore, how comes it to pass that they do so now? They answer him, Our own land bears no nation, that is not conversant in the law, or will not be circumcised. Send, therefore, saith he, two, that may go and instruct the people. So they sent R. Dosthai the son of Jannai, and R. Sabia, who taught them the book of the written law."

But is this likely? that Dosthai, the Samaritans' oracle, should be in the times of the Assyrian empire? whence then had he that Greek name of his? and the name of his father Janneus was Greekish too. It is much more probable, what Eulegius hath in Photius; "The Samaritan people, having divided into various factions, disagreed amongst themselves, and brought in foreign opinions. Some were of opinion that Joshua was he of whom Moses spoke, when he tells them, 'A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me.' Others, rejecting this opinion, cried up one Dosthai, or Dositheus, a native Samaritan, and contemporary with Simon Magus."

From Dosthai and Sabia, the Dostheni and Sebuei, two Samaritan sects, originally sprang.

5. The language of Ashdod, [Nehemiah 13:24](#), whether the Samaritan language or no?

"And the children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language." What language was this at this time?

I. The Arabian version tells us it was the Chaldee. But was not the Jewish and the Chaldee tongue at that time all one? It may be questionable whether it were so "at that time or no"; but I shall wave that controversy.

II. As to the question in hand, it may not be amiss to consider that passage, [Acts 2:11](#): "Cretes and Arabians." Who are these Cretes? who would not think, at first sight, that, by the Cretans were meant the inhabitants of the island of Crete? I myself have sometime fallen into this error; but now I should be ready to say they were the *Cherethim*, a Philistine nation and country. And there is some reason to apprehend that St. Luke, in the place above quoted, understands the same people, because he joins them with the Arabians.

Targum on [2 Chronicles 26:7](#): "And the word of the Lord helped them, *against the Philistines, and against the Arabians dwelling in Gerar.*"

Observe, *Arabians dwelling in Gerar*, a city of the Philistines;--and it is well enough known that Arabia joins to the land of the Philistines. And one may suspect the language

of Ashdod might be the Arabian, rather than the Samaritan tongue; especially when as the name of Idumea obtained as far as these places: and was not the Arabic the language of the Idumeans?

2. The Samaritan Pentateuch.

In the Samaritan version (that I may still contain myself within our Chorographical Inquiry), as to the names of places, there are three things are matter of our notice, and a fourth of our suspicion.

I. There are some places obscure enough by their own names, which, as they are there rendered, are still more perplexed and unknown. Consult the names used there for the rivers of Eden, and the countries which those rivers ran into, and you will see how difficult it is any where else to meet with the least footstep or track of those names, except *Cophin* only, which seems indeed to agree something with *Cophen* mentioned by Pliny.

II. Places of themselves pretty well known are there called by names absolutely unknown. Such are *Chatsphu*, for Assyria, [Genesis 2:14](#): *Lilak*, for Babel, [Genesis 10:9](#): *Salmaah* for Euphrates, [Genesis 15:18](#): *Naphik* for Egypt, [Genesis 26:2](#).

III. Sometimes there are names of a later date used, and such as were most familiarly known in those days. Such are *Banias* for Dan, [Genesis 14:14](#), that is, Panias, the spring of Jordan: *Gennesar* for Chinnereth, [Numbers 34:11](#); [Deuteronomy 3:17](#): not to mention Bathnan and Apamia for Bashan and Shepham, which are so near akin with the Syriac pronunciation: and Gebalah, or Gablah, for Seir, according to the Arabic idiom.

Such names as these make me suspect the Samaritan version not to be of that antiquity which some would claim for it, making it almost as ancient as the days of Ezra.

IV. I suspect too, when we meet with places pretty well known of themselves, obscured by names most unknown, that, sometimes, the whole country is not to be understood, but some particular place of that country only.

The suspicion is grounded on the word *Naphik* for *Egypt*, and *Salmaah* for *Euphrates*. By *Naphik*, probably, they understood, not the whole land of Egypt, but *Pelusium* only, which is the very first entry into Egypt from Canaan. The reason of this conjecture is this: the word *Anpak* (as we have elsewhere observed) was writ over the gates of that city; and how near that word comes to *Naphik*, is obvious enough to any one.

It is possible, also, that the mention of the *Kinites*, immediately following, might bring *Salmaah* to mind; and so they might not call 'Euphrates' itself 'Salmaah,' but speaking of 'Euphrates' as washing some place called 'Salmah.' Ptolemy, in his chapter concerning the situation of Arabia Deserta, mentions Salma, in degr. 78.20.28.30: and it is numbered amongst six-and-twenty other cities, which he saith are 'near Mesopotamia.' If this be true, the Samaritan version hath something by which it may defend itself: for if those cities mentioned by Ptolemy were indeed 'near Mesopotamia' (the river Euphrates only running between), then may the Samaritan version be warranted while it renders "even to the river Euphrates,"

"even to the river of Salmaah," that is, "to the river Euphrates in that place where it washeth the sides of Salma."

3. The situation of the mounts Gerizim and Ebal. The Samaritan text upon Deuteronomy 27:4 noted.

That Sychar is the same place with Sychem, seems beyond doubt; which, indeed, the mount Gerizim pointed to by the Samaritan woman, sufficiently confirms. A wily argument, perhaps, in Epiphanius' esteem, who, in his Samaritan heresy, give us this account:

"There are two mounts near Jericho beyond Jordan, Gerizim and Ebal, which look towards Jericho on the east," &c. So that, we see, he tells us Gerizim and Ebal were near Jericho, not near Sychem.

That clause "over-against Gilgal," Deuteronomy 11:30, hath deceived these authors in that manner, that they have removed the mounts Gerizim and Ebal to Gilgal by Jericho: and it hath, on the other hand, deceived some in that manner, that they have brought Gilgal by Jericho to Sychem, misunderstanding the word *Gilgal* for that place mentioned in Joshua 5, when this which Moses speaks of is really Galilee; as I have proved elsewhere.

On these two mounts (it is well known) were pronounced the blessings and the curses, Deuteronomy 11:29, and 27:12,13; Joshua 8:33. But mark the impudence of the Samaritans, who, in their text, Deuteronomy 27:4, instead of "Ye shall set up these stones which I command you this day *on mount Ebal*," they have put "Ye shall set up these stones, &c. *on mount Gerizim*."

Compare, with this falsification of theirs, that in Sotah, "R. Eliezer Ben Jose saith, I have said to you, O Samaritans, Ye have falsified your law; for ye say, *the plain of Moreh, which is Shechem*, Deuteronomy 11:30 [they add Shechem of their own]: we ourselves indeed confess that the plain of Moreh is Shechem," &c.

Seeing he blames the Samaritans for falsifying their text in so little a matter, wherein the truth is not injured, namely, in adding Shechem, why did he not object to them that greater fault of suborning *Gerizim* for mount *Ebal*. The truth is, this very thing giveth me reason enough to suspect that this bold and wicked interpolation of the word *Gerizim* for *Ebal* hath stolen into the Samaritan text since the time that this Rabbin wrote. The thing is not unworthy our considering.

4. Why it is written Sychar, and not Sychem.

If Sychem and Sychar be one and the same city, why should not the name be the same?

I. This may happen from the common dialect, wherein it is very usual to change the letters. So *Reuben* in the Syriac version is *Reubil*, and *Rubelus*, in Josephus; by what etymology let him tell, and explain it if you can. Speaking of Leah bringing forth Reuben, he thus expresseth himself; "And having brought forth a male child, and obtaining favour from her husband by it, she called his name Rubel, because it happened to her according to the mercy of God; for this his name signifies."

It would be endless to reckon up such variations of letters in proper names; but as to the letter *r*, which is our business at present, take these few instances:

'Nebuchadnezzar' is elsewhere 'Nebuchadrezzar'; 'Belial' is 'Beliar'; 'Shepham,' by the Greek interpreters, *Sephamar*, [Numbers 34:11](#): so Sychem, Sychar; and this so much the rather because the letters *r* and *m* have obtained I know not what kind of relation and affinity one with another. So Dammesek and Darmesek in the Holy Scriptures; and the 'Samaritans' are the 'Samatians' in Dionysius Afer, &c.

Or, secondly, it might happen that the Jews, by way of scoff and opprobrium, might vulgarly call Sychem Sychar, either that they might stigmatize the Samaritans as 'drunkards,' [Isaiah 28:1](#), "Woe to the *drunkards* of Ephraim"; or (as the word might be variously writ and pronounced) might give them some or other disgraceful mark. So Aruch in *Sochere*, i.e. *sepulchres*. He quotes a place where the words are not as they are by him cited; nor is he consistent with himself in the interpretation. But Munster hath a *sepulchre*. If it be thus, perhaps *Sychem*, might be called Sychar, because there the twelve patriarchs were *buried*; and under that notion the Samaritans might glory in that name.

5. Ain Socar, in the Talmud.

May we not venture to render *the well of Sychar*? We meet with both the place and name in Bava Kama; "There was a time when the sheaf" [of the firstfruits] "was brought *from Gaggoth Zeriphin*, and the two loaves" [those which were to be offered by the high-priest] "*from the valley of the well of Sychar*." So give me leave to render it. Gloss; "The sheaf was wont to be fetched from places in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem; but now, the fruits having been destroyed by war, they were fain to fetch it afar off."

Take, if you will, the whole story: "It is a tradition among the Rabbins, that when the Asmonean family mutually besieged one another, Aristobulus without, and Hyrcanus within, every day they that were besieged within let down their money by the wall in a little box, which those that were without received, and sent them back their daily sacrifice. It came to pass that there was an old man amongst them skilled in the wisdom of the Greeks, that told them, 'So long as they within perform their worship, you will never be able to subdue them.' Upon this, the next day they let down their money, and the besiegers sent them back a hog; when the hog had got half up the wall, fixing his feet upon it, the land of Israel shook four hundred leagues round about. From that time they said, 'Cursed be he that breedeth swine: cursed be he that teacheth his son the wisdom of the Greeks.' From that time the sheaf of the firstfruits was fetched from Gaggoth Zeriphin, and the two loaves from the valley Ein Sychar."

This story is told, with another annexed, in Menachoth: "When the time came about that the sheaf should be brought, nobody knew from whence to fetch it. They made inquiry, therefore, by a public crier. There came a certain dumb man, *and stretched forth one hand towards a roof, and the other hand towards a cottage*. Mordecai saith to them, 'Is there any

place that is called Gaggoth Zeriphin, or Zeriphin Gaggoth?' They sent and found there was. When they would have offered the two loaves, but knew not where to get them, they made inquiry again by a public crier; the same dumb man comes again, *and he puts one hand to his eye, and another hand to the hole of the doorpost where they put in the bolt.* Quoth Mordecai to them, 'Is there such a place as Ein Sychar, or Sychar Ein?' They inquired, and found there was."

But what had Mordecai to do with the times of the Asmoneans? One of the Glossators upon this place makes this objection; and the answer is, That whoever were skilled either in signs or languages had this name given them from Mordecai, who, in the days of Ahasuerus, was so skilled.

And now let the reader give us his judgment as to name and place; whether it doth not seem to have some relation with our *well of Sychar*. It may be disputed on either side. I shall only say these things:

Menachoth, as before; "It is commanded that the sheaf be brought from some neighbouring place, *but if it ripen not in any place near Jerusalem, let them fetch it elsewhere.*" Gloss: "Gaggoth Zeriphin and Ein Sychar were at a great distance from Jerusalem." So is our Sychar distant far enough indeed.

"*Zariph*, and *Zeripha*, denotes a little cottage, *where the keeper of fields lodged.*" It is described by Aruch that "it was covered over with osier twigs, the tops of which were bound together, and it was drawn at pleasure from one place to another," &c.

Gloss in Erubhin: "*They that dwelt in those cottages* were keepers of sheep; they abode in them for a month or two, so long as the pasture lasted, and then they removed to another place." Gaggoth Zeriphin, therefore, signifies *the roofs of little cottages*: and the place seems to be so called either from the number of such lodges in that place, or from some hills there, that represented and seemed to have the shape of such kind of cottages.

Such cottages may come to mind when we read, [Luke 2:8](#), of the shepherds watching their flocks by night. But this is out of our way.

Chapter 5 Bethesda, [John 5:2](#).

1. The situation of the Probatika.

It is commonly said that the *Probatika*, or *the Sheep-gate* (for let us annex the word *gate* to it, out of [Nehemiah 3:1](#)), or, at least, Bethesda, was near the Temple. Consult the commentators, and they almost all agree in this opinion. With their good leave, let it not be amiss to interpose these two or three things:

I. That no part of the outward wall of the city (which this *Sheep-gate* was) could be so near the Temple, but that some part of the city must needs lie between. Betwixt the north

gates and the Temple, Zion was situated; on the west, was part of Zion and Millo; on the south, Jerusalem, as it is distinguished from Zion; on the east, the east street, whose gate is not the *Sheep-gate*, but the Water-gate.

II. *The Sheep-gate*, according to Nehemiah's description, should be situated on the south wall of the city, not far from the corner that pointed southeast; so that a considerable part of Jerusalem lay betwixt the Temple and this gate.

We have elsewhere made it plain that Sion was situated on the north part of the city, contrary to the mistake of the tables, which place it on the south. Now, therefore, consider to how great an extent the wall must run before it can come to any part of Zion; to wit, to the stairs that go down from the city of David, verse 15, which were on the west; and thence proceed to the sepulchres of David, verse 16; till it come at length to the Water-gate, and Ophel towards the east, verse 26: and thence to the corner near which is the *Sheep-gate*, verse 31, 32; and this will plainly evince that the description and progress in Nehemiah is first, of the south wall, from the *Sheep-gate* to the west corner; then of the west wall; and so to the northern and the eastern; which makes it evident that the *Sheep-gate* is on the south wall, a little distant from the corner which looks southeast, which could not but be a considerable distance from the Temple, because no small part of Jerusalem, as it was distinguished from Zion, laid between.

2. The fountain of Siloam, and its streams.

Our inquiry into Bethesda (if I be not greatly mistaken) must take its rise from the fountain of Siloam.

I. The proper and ancient name for the fountain of Siloam, was Gihon, [1 Kings 1:33](#); "Bring ye him [Solomon] down to Gihon." Targum, to 'Siloam': Kimchi, "Gihon is Siloam, and is called by a twofold name." The tables that describe Jerusalem speak of a '*mount Gihon*'; by what warrant I cannot tell: if they had said the '*fountain Gihon*,' it might have pleased better.

II. How that name 'Gihon' should pass into 'Siloam,' is difficult to say. "The waters" of it are mentioned, [Isaiah 8:6](#), to signify the reign and sovereignty of the house of David. So the Targum and Sanhedrin. "Rabh Joseph saith, If there had been no Targum of this Scripture, we had not known the sense of it, which is this: Forsomuch as this people is weary of the house of David, whose reign hath been gentle as the flowing of the waters of Siloam, which are gentle," &c. Therefore it was not in vain that David sent his son Solomon to be anointed at Gihon or Siloam, for he might look upon those waters as some type or shadow by which the reign of his house should be deciphered.

III. The situation of it was behind the west wall, not far from the corner that pointed towards the southwest. "The wall bent southward above the fountain of Siloam, and then again inclined towards the east."

The waters of this spring, by different streams, derived themselves into two fish-pools, as seems hinted in [2 Chronicles 32:30](#): "Hezekiah stopped the upper water-course of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David"; where a MS of the Targum, "He stopped up the upper waters of Gihon, and brought them in pipes." But to let this pass, that which I would observe is this: that there was a water-course from Gihon or Siloam, which was called the "upper water-course," which flowed into a pool, called also the "upper pool," [Isaiah 36:2](#); and, as it should seem, the "old pool," [Isaiah 22:11](#); by Josephus "the pool" or "fish-pool of Solomon"; for so he, in the place before cited.

"The wall again inclined eastward, even to Solomon's fish-pond, and going on to the place called Ophel, it came over-against the eastern porch of the Temple." From whence we may gather that Solomon's fish-pool was within, hard by the east wall of the city, and on this side the place they called Ophel: which does so well agree with the situation of Bethesda within the sheep-gate, that it seems to me beyond all doubt or question, that Solomon's pool and the pool of Bethesda were one and the same.

3. The pool Shelahh, and the pool Shiloahh.

By another stream the waters of Siloam are derived into another pool, which is called the Lower Pool, [Isaiah 22:9](#), and the King's Pool, [Nehemiah 2:14](#); near the west wall of Sion.

We have the mention of it also in [Nehemiah 3:15](#): *the pool of Siloam by the king's garden.* Where we may observe that it is here written *Shelahh* different from *Shiloahh*, [Isaiah 8:6](#); by a difference hardly visible in Bibles not pointed: indeed, sometimes overlooked by myself, and so, as is evident, by others. For *Shelahh* is rendered in the very same sound with *Shiloahh*, in the Complutensian, Vulgar, English, and French Bibles. And, in St. [John 9:7](#), where there is mention of the pool Siloam, some commentators refer you to that text in Nehemiah.

The Greek interpreters did, indeed, observe the difference, and thus render the words of Nehemiah, "The pool of skins by the king's wool." Nor doth the Italian overlook it; for that renders it thus: "The Fish-pond of Selac hard by the garden of the king."

It is observable in the Greek version, that whereas they render the word by *the king's wool* or *hair*, they may seem to have read *a fleece of wool* for *a garden*. And whereas they translate *the pool of skins*, they follow the signification of the word as it is frequently used amongst the Talmudists.

Now, therefore, here ariseth a question, whether that pool be the pool of Siloam or no: which as yet hath hardly been questioned by any, and, for some time, not by myself. But I am now apt to think that it was so distinguished betwixt the two pools, that the lower pool retaining its name of the 'Pool of Shelahh,' the upper pool obtained that of 'Siloahh.'

For,

I. How otherwise should that distinction of the Greek version arise, but that the interpreters followed the common pronunciation of the word Shelahh, when they render it of *skins*.

II. Those words of St. [John 9:7](#), "in the pool of Siloam, which is by interpretation, Sent," seem to intimate that there were two pools of a very near sound, whereof one signified *Sent*, the other not.

III. The Jerusalem Talmudists seem to say that the upper pool was called the 'Pool of Siloam' in these words: "He that is unclean by a dead body doth not enter into the mount of the Temple. It is said that they appear only in the court. Whence do you measure? from the wall, or from the houses? It is Samuel's tradition, *from Siloam*: now Siloam was in the midst of the city."

The question here propounded is, whether he that is unclean by a dead body may be permitted to enter the Temple: and the stating of it comes to this, that inquiry be made within what measure he is to be admitted; whether within the wall of the Temple, or at that distance where the houses next to the Temple end; especially where the houses of Siloam end.

Now, whereas they say *that Siloam is in the midst of the city*, it must by no means be understood of the fountain itself, for that was plainly without the city; nor yet of the lower pool Shelahh, for that also was without the city, or scarce within it. There is, therefore, no third, unless that this upper pool be called 'the pool of Siloam,' and that it give denomination to the adjacent part of the city, to wit, to the five porches and the buildings about it: which though they were not in the very centre of the city, yet they might properly enough be said to be in the *middle* of it, because they were situated a good way within the walls. [Luke 13:4](#), "The tower of Siloam," was amongst these buildings.

4. The Targumist on [Ecclesiastes 2:5](#) noted.

It is an even lay, whether the Targumist on this place deal more cunningly or more obscurely. The passage is about the king's gardens: and he, "I planted me all trees of spice, *which the goblins and the demons brought me out of India*": and then goes on, *and the bound of it was from the wall that is in Jerusalem, by the bank of the waters of Siloam*. Render *by the bank* for illustration's sake; for *to the bank* (as the Latin interpreter renders it), although it might signify the same, yet it may also signify something else, and so become a difficulty not to be resolved. Besides, it is to be observed, that it is *upon*, or *above*, not *unto*.

The meaning of the Targumist seemeth to be this; that the king's gardens were bounded in this manner. They extended from the descent of Zion, until they came over-against Shelahh, or the lower pool; even to the beginning of the wall of the city, which is in Jerusalem: which wall runs near to the bank of the waters of Siloam.

That passage in [Nehemiah 3:15](#) illustrates this; "the gate of the fountain repaired Shallum, and the wall of the pool of Shelahh by the king's gardens." 'The gate of the fountain,' whether that was called so from the pool of Siloam, or otherwise, was at some distance from the king's pool, [Nehemiah 2:14](#): and by the wall of the city, that ran between the gate and the pool, there was a rivulet, drawn from the fountain into that pool.

The words of the Targumist, therefore, are to be so rendered as that the king's gardens may not be said to extend themselves to the bank of the waters of Siloam; but that the wall of Jerusalem ran along by the bank of those waters, and the garden to the first part of that wall. So that he does not call the lower pool by the name of *Siloahh*; but by 'the waters of Siloahh' he understands the stream that came from the fountain and fell into that pool.

5. The fountain of Etam. The water-gate.

The collector of the Hebrew *Cippi, Grave-stones*, hath this passage concerning the fountain of Etam: "In the way betwixt Hebron and Jerusalem, is the fountain Etam, from whence the waters are conveyed by pipes into the great pool at Jerusalem." It is so translated by the learned Hottinger, who also himself adds, "I suppose here is meant the Probatia, or the pool by the Sheep-gate."

The Rabbins often and again tell us of an aqueduct from the fountain of Etam to Jerusalem. But it may very well be doubted whether that fountain be in the way to Hebron; or whether those waters ran into the pool by the Sheep-gate. For,

I. If the fountain of Etam be the same with the waters of Nephtoah, mentioned [Joshua 15:9](#); which the Gloss supposeth (where it is treating about the fountain of Etam), then it lieth quite in another quarter from Hebron; for Hebron lies on the south, and Nephtoah on the west.

II. The waters streaming from the fountain Etam were not conveyed into the city, but into the Temple: which might be abundantly made out from the Talmudists, if there were any need for it. And probably Aristeas hath respect to this aqueduct: "There is a confluence of water that never fails [speaking of the Temple]; as if there were a great spring within naturally flowing: and for the space of five furlongs (as appeared everywhere about the Temple), there were certain receptacles made, under the earth, by a wondrous and unspeakable art." And a little after: "They led me out of the city above four furlongs, where one bade me lean down my head at a certain place, and listen to the noise that the flow of waters there made," &c.

In a word, to any one that is conversant in the Talmudic authors, nothing can be more plain than that the aqueduct from the fountain of Etam was into the Temple, and not into the city; and it is plain enough in Holy Writ that the aqueduct into the sheep-pool was from the fountain of Siloam: which also from that spring, from whence it was derived, is called the 'Pool of Siloam'; and from him that first made it, the 'Pool of Solomon'; and from the miraculous medicinal virtue in it, 'the Pool of Bethesda.'

As to the Water-gate, we find it mentioned [Nehemiah 3:26](#), situated on the east wall of the city; called the 'Water-gate' because through that the waters flowed out of the Temple; and perhaps those also out of Bethesda. For, whereas the waters ran incessantly out of Etam into the Temple, and those that were more than needed flowed out of the Temple, they all fell down into the valley that lay between the Temple and Jerusalem, and emptied themselves

by that gate which bore the name of the 'Water-gate' upon that account. And it is probable that the pool of Bethesda, which also had its constant supply by the aqueduct from the spring of Siloam, did also continually empty itself along the descent of the hill Acra, through the same gate, and so into the brook Kedron.

Chapter 6 Solomon's Porch, [John 10:23](#).

1. Some obscure hints of the Gate of Huldah, and the Priest's Gate.

From Solomon's Pool proceed we to Solomon's Porch; which we have also recorded, [Acts 5:12](#). Possibly it is 'the King's Gate'; both the title and the magnificence of it make it probable. For, as Josephus tells us, it was "one of the most memorable works under the sun."

That king's porch was situated on the south side of the Temple, having under it on the wall *the two gates of Huldah*. At which gates I rather admire than believe or understand what I meet with concerning them; "Behold, he stands behind our wall, that is, behind the west wall of the Temple; because the Holy Blessed One hath sworn that it shall never be destroyed. *The Priest's gate also, and Huldah's gate, were never to be destroyed till God shall renew them.*"

What gate that of *the priest's* should be, I am absolutely ignorant; unless it should be that over which was "the conclave of *the counsellors*," where was the bench and the consistory of the priests.

But be it this, or be it that, how do these and the rest agree with what Josephus relateth?

"Caesar commanded that the whole city and Temple should be destroyed, saving only those towers which were above the rest; viz. Phasaelus, the Hippic, and Mariamne, and the west wall. The wall, that it might be for the garrison soldiers; the towers, as a testimony how large and how fortified a city the Roman valour had subdued. But as to all the rest of the city and its whole compass, they so defaced and demolished it, that posterity or strangers will hardly believe there was ever any inhabited city there." Which all agrees well enough with what we frequently meet with in the Jewish writers; that Turnus Rufus drew a plough over the city and Temple. He is called in Josephus Terentius Rufus.

2. Solomon's Porch; which it was, and where.

Through the 'Gate of Huldah' you enter into the Court of the Gentiles, and that under *the King's Gallery*; which, from the name itself and gallantness of the structure, might seem worthy of such a founder as Solomon. But this is not the porch or gallery which we seek for, nor had it the name of *royal* from king Solomon, but from king Herod.

Josephus, in this inquiry of ours, will lead us elsewhere; who thus tells us, "At this time was the Temple finished" [i.e. under Gessius Florus, the procurator of Judea about the eleventh or twelfth year of Nero]; "the people, therefore, seeing the workmen were at leisure"

[the work of the Temple being now wholly finished], "being in number more than eighteen thousand, importune the king" [Agrippa] "*that he would repair the eastern porch.*" Here are some things not unworthy our observation; partly, that the Temple itself was not finished till this time; and then, that the eastern porch was neither then finished, nor, indeed, was there any at all; for Agrippa, considering both how great a sum of money, and how long a space of time would be requisite for so great a work, rejected their suit. Herod, as it should seem from Josephus, finished the Temple, and the Pronaon, *the porch* before it, and *the Royal Gallery*. But what he finished further, about the courts and cloister-walks, it does not appear. It is manifest, indeed, that there was a great deal left unperfected by him; when the whole was not finished till the very latter end of Nero's reign, and scarcely before that fatal war in which the Temple was burnt and buried in its own ruins: which observation will be of use when we come to [John 2:20](#), "Forty and six years was this Temple in building."

Josephus proceeds, as to the eastern gallery: *Now that was the gallery of the outward Temple*, overlooking a deep valley, supported by walls of four hundred cubits, made of great square stone, very white: the length of each stone was twenty cubits, and the breadth six. "The work of king Solomon, who first founded the whole Temple." There needs no commentary upon these words; *the east gallery* was first *Solomon's work*: which plainly points which and where was Solomon's Porch; namely, upon the outer wall of the Temple, towards the east, as *the Royal Gallery* was upon the south wall.

3. The Gate of Shushan. The assembly of the Twenty-three there. The tabernae, or 'shops,' where things were sold for the Temple.

There was but one gate to this east wall, and that was called *the Gate of Shushan*. "Because upon that gate was engraven the figure of Shushan, the metropolis of Persia."

It is no wonder if they cherished the memory of Shushan and the Persian empire, because it was under that empire that the Temple was built; nor had they, indeed, ever received much damage thence. But it is something strange, that that sculpture should remain after so long a time that that kingdom had been abolished; and, after them, first the Greeks, then the Romans, had obtained the universal monarchy.

"Upon this gate the priest looked when he burnt the red heifer." For, slaying the heifer upon the mount of Olives directly before the Temple when he sprinkled the blood, he looked towards the holy of holies. The Gate of Shushan, therefore, was not of height equal with the others, but built something lower, that it might not hinder his prospect.

Upon this gate was the assembly of the Twenty-three held. "There were three assemblies; one upon the Gate of the mountain of the Temple" [that is, upon the Gate Shushan]: "another upon the Gate of the Court" [that is, upon the Gate of Nicanor]: "a third, in the room Gazith."

Going into the court by the Gate Shushan, both on the right hand and on the left, there was a portico, upheld by a double row of pillars, that made a double piazza. And either within or about that portico were the *tabernae*, or *shops*, where salt, and oil, and frankincense,

with other necessary materials for the altar, were sold; but by what right, upon such sacred ground let the buyer or the seller, or both, look to that.

"The great Sanhedrim removed from the room Gazith, *to the shops*, and from the shops into Jerusalem." Not that the Sanhedrim could sit in the shops where such things were sold; but the lower part of that was all called by the common name of the Tabernae, or *shops*.

4. Short hints of the condition of the second Temple.

The Jews, upon their return from Babylon, at first made use of an altar without a Temple, till the Temple was finished under Darius the Second. And then they made use of the Temple without the ark, a priesthood without the Urim and Thummim, and sacrifices without fire from heaven. In some of these things they were necessitated by present circumstances; in other things they were directed by the prophets, that flourished at that time.

Under the Persian empire, they went on quietly with the Temple, little or nothing molested or incommoded by them, unless in that affair under Bagos, mentioned by Josephus.

But under the Greeks happened the calamity of the Temple and nation; and all those dreadful things which are spoken concerning God by Ezekiel the prophet, were fulfilled in the tyranny of this empire. For Gog, in that prophet, was no other than the Grecian empire warring against the people and sanctuary, and true worship of God. It was a long time that the Jewish nation suffered very hard things from that kingdom; the relation of which we have, both in Josephus and the books of the Maccabees. The chief actor in those tragedies was Antiochus Epiphanes, the bloodiest enemy that the people and religion of the Jews ever had: who, besides other horrid things he acted against their law and religion, profaned the Temple and the altar, and made the daily sacrifice to cease for "a thousand and three hundred days," [Daniel 8:14](#), or 'one thousand two hundred and ninety days,' chapter 12:11: a round number for "a time and times, and half a time," chapter 7:25, 11:7; that is, "three years and a half."

Of the insolences of the Greeks against the Temple, we read in Middoth: "In the railed place" [that divided the Chel from the court of the Gentiles] *there were thirteen breaches which the kings of Greece made upon it, &c.* And that of the impudent woman; "Mary, the daughter of Bilgah, apostatized, and married a certain Greek soldier. She came, and struck upon the top of the altar, crying out, *O wolf, wolf!* thou that devourest the wealth of Israel; and yet in the time of her extremity canst not help her." The same things are told of Titus.

But the heaviest thing of all was, when Antiochus profaned the Temple and the altar, nor would allow any sacrifices to be offered there but heathenish and idolatrous. Of which persecution consult [1 Maccabees 1](#) and Josephus, *Antiq. lib. xii. cap. 7*. Indeed, this waste and profanation of sacred things lasting for three years and a half, so stuck in the stomachs of the Jews, that they retained that very number as famous and remarkable; insomuch that they often make use of it when they would express any thing very sad and afflictive.

"There came one from Athens to Jerusalem, and stayed there three years and a half, to have learnt the language of wisdom, but could not learn it. Vespasian besieged Jerusalem for three years and a half; and with him were the princes of Arabia, Africa, Alexandria, and Palestine, &c. Three years and a half did Hadrian besiege Betar. The judgment of the generation of the deluge was twelve months: the judgment of the Egyptians twelve months: the judgment of Job was twelve months: the judgment of Gog and Magog was twelve months: the judgment of the wicked in hell twelve months. But the judgment of Nebuchadnezzar was three years and a half: and the judgment of Vespasian three years and a half. Nebuchadnezzar stayed in Daphne of Antioch, and sent Nebuzar-adan to destroy Jerusalem. He continued there for three years and a half."

There are many other passages of that kind, wherein they do not so much design to point out a determinate space of time, as to allude to that miserable state of affairs they were in under Antiochus. And perhaps it had been much more for the reputation of the Christian commentators upon the Book of the Revelation, if they had looked upon that number, and the "forty-and-two months," and the "thousand two hundred and sixty days," as spoken allusively, and not applied it to any precise or determinate time.

By the way, whilst we are speaking of the persecution under the Greeks, we cannot but call to mind the story in the Second Book of Maccabees 7, of the mother and her seven sons, that underwent so cruel a martyrdom: because we meet with one very like it, if not the same, only the name changed.

"We are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter,' [Psalm 44:22](#). Rab. Judah saith, This may be understood of the woman and her seven sons. They brought forth the first before Caesar, and they said unto him, Worship idols. He answered and said to them, It is written in our law, I am the Lord thy God. Then they carried him out and slew him. They brought the second before Caesar," &c. Which things are more largely related in Echah Rabbathi, where the very name of the woman is expressed: "*Mary, the daughter of Nachton, who was taken captive with her seven sons*. Caesar took them and shut them up within seven gates. He brought forth the first and commanded, saying, Worship idols," &c.

The story seems wholly the same, only the names of Antiochus and Caesar changed; of which the reader, having consulted both, may give his own judgment. And because we are now fallen into a comparing of the story in the Maccabees with the Talmudists, let us compare one more in Josephus with one in the same authors.

Josephus tells us, that he foretold it to Vespasian, that he should be emperor. Vespasian commanded that Josephus should be kept with all the diligence imaginable, that he might be conveyed safely to Nero; which when Josephus understood, he requested that he might be permitted to impart something of moment to Vespasian himself alone. Vespasian having commanded all out of the room, except Titus and two other of his friends, Josephus accosts

him thus, "*Are you sending me to Nero?* Thou thyself, O Vespasian, shalt be Caesar and emperor, thou and this thy son," &c.

The Talmudists attribute such a prediction to Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai, in the tracts before quoted; viz. "Rabban Jochanan Ben Zaccai was carried out in a coffin, as one that is dead, out of Jerusalem. He went to Vespasian's army and said, Where is your king? They went and told Vespasian, There is a certain Jew desireth admission to you. Let him come in, saith he. When he came in, he said, *Live, O king, live, O king.*" [So in Gittin; but in Midrash, *Live my lord the emperor.*] "Saith Vespasian, You salute me as if I were king, but I am not so; and the king will hear this, and judge such a one to death. To whom he, Although you are not king yet, you shall be so, *for this Temple must not be destroyed but by a king's hand;* as it is written, 'Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one,'" [Isaiah 10:34](#).

To which of these two, or whether indeed to both, the glory of this prediction ought to be attributed, I leave it to the reader to judge; returning to the times of the Greeks.

The army and forces of the enemy being defeated under the conduct of Judah the Maccabee, the people begin to apply themselves to the care and the restoration of the Temple, and the holy things. The story of which we meet with [1 Maccabees 4:43](#), &c. and in Josephus, whose words are worth our transcribing; "He found the Temple desolated, the gates burnt; and the grass, through the mere solitude of the place, springing up there of its own accord: therefore he and his followers wept, being astonished at the sight."

They, therefore, apply themselves to the purging of the Temple, making up the breaches; and, as Middoth in the place above speaks, "*Those thirteen breaches, which the Grecians had made, they repaired; and, according to the number of those breaches, they instituted thirteen adorations.*"

The altar, because it had been profaned by Gentile sacrifices, they pull it wholly down, and lay up the stones in a certain chamber near the court.

"Towards the northeast there was a certain chamber where the sons of the Asmoneans laid up the stones of that altar, which the Grecian kings had profaned": and that (as the Book of the Maccabees hath it) "till there might come a prophet that should direct them what to do with them."

Nor did it seem without reason: for, whereas those stones had once been consecrated, they would by no means put them to any common use; and since they had been profaned, they durst not put them to any holy use.

The rest of the Temple they restored, purged, repaired, as may be seen in the places above quoted; and, on the five-and-twentieth of the month Cisleu, they celebrated the feast of the Dedication, and established it for an anniversary solemnity, to be kept eight days together. Of the rites of that feast I shall say more in its proper place; and, for the sake of it, I have been the larger in these things.

Chapter 7 Various things.

1. 'Ephraim,' [John 11:54](#).

Beth-el, and Jeshanah, and *Ephraim*, are mentioned together, [2 Chronicles 13:19](#); and Beth-el and Ephraim in Josephus: "Vespasian subdued two toparchies or lordships, the Gophnitic and Acrabatene *after which he took Beth-el and Ephraim, two little cities.*"

In the Targumist it is written Ephraim with a Vau, and rendered by the Greek interpreters *Ephron*. But the Masorah tells us it must be read by Jod. Nor do I question but that it is the same with Josephus' Ephraim, and the *Ephraim* of the Talmudists, of which we have discoursed in our Chorographical Century, chapter 53.

It is probable it was a city in the land of Benjamin, as also was Beth-el, which is mentioned at the same time with it. Now Beth-el was the utmost border of the tribe of Benjamin, as it lay towards the tribe of Ephraim. But where this Ephraim should lie, it is not so plain. Only this our evangelist speaks of it,--that it was "near the wilderness"; that is (as it should seem), near the wilderness of Judea, in the way from Jerusalem to Jericho.

2. 'Beth Maron,' and 'A Maronite.'

"There goes a story of a brother and a sister: he was in *Gush Halab*; she in *Beth Maron*. There happened a fire in his house, that was in Gush Halab; his sister comes from Beth Maron, and embraced and kissed him."

Now *Gush Halab* was in the tribe of Asher, as appears in Menacoth: where there is a story of a most precious oil bought in Gush Halab, in the tribe of Asher, such as could not be bought in any other place.

And so perhaps that may be understood of *Beth Maron*, being so near to Gush Halab, which we meet with in Jerusalem Kiddushin; "*There goes a story of a certain Maronite*" [for so let us render it], "*who lodged in Jerusalem*. He was a very wealthy man; and, when he would have parted his riches amongst his kindred, they told him it was not lawful for him to do it, unless he would buy some land," &c.

It may not unfitly be rendered a *Maronite*, though not in the same sense wherein it is now commonly understood; but as signifying 'one coming from the town Maron, or Beth Maron.' Render it *Maronensian*, and then there is no difficulty.

And to this, perhaps, may refer that passage in Rosh Hashanah: In the beginning of the year, *All that come into the world pass before God, as the sons of Maron*. Gemara Resh Lachish saith, *As the ascents of Beth Maron*. Gloss: "Where the way was so narrow, that two could not walk abreast together, for there was a deep vale on each side of the way." There are almost the same things in Erubhin.

3. Chalamish, Naveh, and other obscure places.

Let us take in these also for novelty's sake.

"God commanded concerning Jacob, that his enemies should be about him:

"As Chalamish is to Naveh. Jericho to Noaran. Susitha to Tiberias. Castara to Chephar. Lydda to Ono."

Gloss: "In Chalamish dwelt the enemies of Israel; and in Naveh, a town near it, dwelt Jews; and these were afflicted by them." And elsewhere, "These are the names of places where the sinners of the Gentiles, of Moab and Ammon, &c., did dwell."

By the way, it is to be observed that the word, which in other places is written *Chephar*, or *Chippar*, in Schir Rabbathi is written *Cephah*. Whence in Shemoth Rabba R. *Abdimi of Cephah*, or *Chippah*; the same in Echah Rabbathi.

If the distance of the other places might be determined by the distance of Susitha from Tiberias, and Lydda from Ono, it will be the space of three miles, or thereabouts; for so far were they from one another, as I have shewn in another place. But as to the places themselves, where shall we find them? Where are Chalamish and Naveh? Where are Castara and Chippar? &c. Let us not, therefore, give ourselves a needless trouble of searching what there is no hope of finding out; taking notice only thus far, how miserably the face of things was changed when there was cause for this complaint! For before, Jericho had flourished with great numbers of Jews, there being twelve thousand of the courses of the priests, that stood in continual readiness every day: but now it was inhabited wholly by its enemies. So was it with Lydda once, when it was a most famed school of the Rabbins, but now an enemy city. These things are worthy of a chronological inquiry.

We find only this of *Chippar*, that it was within twelve miles from Tsippor. "B. Tanchum Bar R. Jeremiah was in *Chippar*. They asked him something about the law; and he taught them. They say to him, Have not the masters said, that it is forbidden to the scholar to teach within twelve miles' distance from his master? and behold, R. Minni, thy master, is in Tsippor. He answered, *Let a curse light upon me if I knew he was in Tsippor!*"

4. Chaphenatha, 1 Maccabees 12:37.

In the days of Jonathan the Asmonean, "They came together to build the city, and he approached to the wall of the brook, which is on the east; and they repaired that which was called Chaphenatha."

Where and what is this *Chaphenatha*? I am apt to think it might be some part of the outskirts of the city towards the east; called so much upon the same reason that Bethphage was, which was the outmost part of the city towards the east; for that was so called, viz. "a place of green figs," from the fig-trees that grew near it in the mount of Olives: so here *Chaphenatha*, some part of that outmost coast towards the east and mount of Olives, so called from the *dates* growing there.

For *Cephanioth* is frequently used amongst the Talmudists for the *dates* of palm-trees, that never come to their full maturity: *A sort of ill palm-trees*, as the Gloss in Beracoth; "the fruit of the palm that never ripens." So Aruch in *Caphnith*. By a signification near akin to

Hene, and *ahene*, which denotes the *unripe dates* of palms; from whence, I suppose, *Bethany*, in the mount of Olives, is derived. So that some outmost part of the city and wall towards mount Olivet was called *Bethphage* from the *figs* that grew there, and another part of it *Chaphenatha* from the *dates*.

5. The Targum of Jonathan upon Numbers 34:8 noted.

Moses hath it thus; "*From mount Hor, ye shall point out (the border), unto the entrance of Hamath, and the goings forth of the border shall be to Zedad.*"

But the Targumist thus; "From the mount Umanus you shall point out your border to the entrance of Tiberias, and the goings out of that border, *tending from the two sides, to Codcor Bar Zaamah, and to Codcoi Bar Sinegora, and Divachenus and Tarnegola*, unto Caesarea, by which thou enterest into Abela of the Cilicians."

Every word almost in this place must be considered; as, indeed, almost every word of it is obscure.

I. *Taurus*: This, indeed, is not so obscure, but that every one knows mount Taurus, so noted by geographers and historians. *Taur* both in the Chaldee and Syriac signifies a *mountain*.

II. *Umanus*: Neither is this so very obscure, but that all who have turned over the Jewish writings do acknowledge it to be the mountain *Amana*, and who have turned over other books, *Amanus*. But in the mean time, I doubt they, as well as myself, cannot tell why the same Targumist should call mount Hor, where Aaron died, by the same name of *Taurus Umanus*, [Numbers 20](#).

III. *To the entrance of Tiberias*: It is a strange thing the Targumist should be no better read in chorography, than to mistake the reading of this word in this place. For it is plain he read *Chammoth*, or the "warm baths of Tiberias," when it is really *Hamath*, or 'Antioch.' He is a blind geographer that brings down the borders of the land of Israel to Tiberias, unless he means something beyond our capacity to apprehend.

IV. *From the two sides*: It is plain here also, that he took *Zedad*, appellatively for a *side*.

V. *To Codcor Bar Zaamah*: If he doth not blunder, we do. We only take notice, that *Zaamah*, and *Sinegora*, do signify *indignation*, and *advocate*, perhaps in the same sense that *accuser* and *advocate* are used in the Rabbinical writers: but what it should signify in him, he must shew himself an Oedipus, or somebody else.

VI. *Divachenus*: I suspect this to be Greek. By which is intimated some back of a mountain, either lifting itself up, or stretching itself out...

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