doctrines of the Gospel bear to each other, or the close connexion between the truths of revealed religion. It is one of the most important aids for ascertaining the sense of Scripture. The *Analogy of Faith* is an expression borrowed from Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans (xii.6.) where he exhorts those who prophesy in the church (that is, those who exercise the office of authoritatively expounding the Scriptures,) to prophesy according to the proportion, or, as the word is in the original, the *Analogy of Faith*.

II. Hints for investigating the Analogy of Faith.

1. Whenever any doctrine is manifest, either from the whole tenour of divine revelation, or, from its scope, it must not be weakened or set aside by a few obscure passages.

No truth is more certain in religion, or is more frequently asserted in the Bible than this, viz. that God is good, not only to some individuals, but also towards all men. (See Psal. exlv. 9. Ezek. xviii. 23. 32. John iii. 16. Tit. ii. 11, &c. &c.) If, therefore, any passages occur which at first sight appear to contradict the goodness of God, as, for instance, that He has created some persons that He might damn them (as some have insinuated,) in such case the very clear and certain doctrine relative to the goodness of God is not to be impugned, much less set aside, by these obscure places, which, on the contrary, ought to be illustrated by such passages as are more clear. Thus Prov. xvi. 4. has, by several eminent writers, been supposed to refer to the predestination of the elect and the reprobation of the wicked, but without any foundation. The passage, however, may be more correctly rendered, *The Lord hath made all things to answer to themselves, or aptly to refer to one another, yea even the wicked, for the evil day, that is, to be the executioner of evil to others:* on which account they are in Scripture termed the rod of Jehovah (Isa. x. 5.), and his sword. (Psal. xvii. 13.) But there is no necessity for rejecting the received version, the plain and obvious sense of which is that there is nothing in the world which does not contribute to the glory of God, and promote the accomplishment of his adorable designs.

2. No doctrine can belong to the analogy of faith, which is founded on a single text.

Every essential principle of religion is delivered in more than one place. Besides, single sentences are not to be detached from the
places where they stand, but must be taken in connexion with the whole discourse.

From disregard to this rule, the temporary direction of the apostle James (v. 14, 15.) has been perverted by the church of Rome, and rendered a permanent institution, (by her miscalled a sacrament, for it was never instituted by Jesus Christ,) from a mean of recovery, to a charm, when recovery is desperate, for the salvation of the soul.

3. The whole system of revelation must be explained, so as to be consistent with itself. — When two passages appear to be contradictory, if the sense of the one can be clearly ascertained, in such case that must regulate our interpretation of the other.

4. An obscure, doubtful, ambiguous, or figurative text must never be interpreted in such a sense as to make it contradict a plain one.

In explaining the Scriptures, consistency of sense and principles ought to be supported in all their several parts; and if any one part be so interpreted as to clash with another, such interpretation cannot be justified. Nor can it be otherwise corrected than by considering every doubtful or difficult text, first by itself, then with its context, and then by comparing it with other passages of Scripture; and thus bringing what may seem obscure into a consistency with what is plain and evident.

The doctrine of transubstantiation, inculcated by the church of Rome, is founded on a strictly literal interpretation of figurative expressions, “This is my body,” &c. (Matt. xxvi. 26, &c.) and (which has no relation to the supper), “Eat my flesh, drink my blood.” (John vi. 51—58.) But independently of this, we may further conclude that the sense put upon the words “This is my body” by the church of Rome, cannot be the true one, being contrary to the express declaration of the New Testament history, from which it is evident that our Lord is ascended into heaven, where he is to continue “till the time of the restitution of all things;” (Acts iii. 21.) that is, till his second coming to judgment. How then can his body be in ten thousand several places on earth at one and the same time? We may further add, that, if the doctrine of transubstantiation be true, it will follow that our Saviour, when he instituted the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, did actually eat his own flesh, and drink his own blood: a conclusion this, so obviously contradictory both to reason and to Scripture, that it is astonishing how any sensible and religious man can credit such a tenet.

5. Such passages as are expressed with brevity are to be expounded by those where the same doctrines or duties are expressed more largely and fully.
i. The doctrine of justification, for instance, is briefly stated in Phil. iii.; but that momentous doctrine is professedly discussed in the Epistle to the Galatians, and especially in that to the Romans; and according to the tenour of these, particularly Rom. iii., all the other passages of Scripture that treat of justification, should be explained.

ii. Even slight variations will frequently serve for the purpose of reciprocal illustration. Thus, the beatitudes, related in Luke vi. though delivered at another time and in a different place, are the same with those delivered by Jesus Christ in his sermon on the mount, and recorded in Matt. v. Being, however, epitomised by the former evangelist, they may be explained by the latter.

6. "Where several doctrines of equal importance are proposed, and revealed with great clearness, we must be careful to give to each its full and equal weight."

"Thus that we are saved by the free grace of God, and through faith in Christ, is a doctrine too plainly affirmed by the sacred writers to be set aside by any contravening position. (Eph. ii. 8.) But so, on the other hand, are the doctrines of repentance unto life, and of obedience unto salvation. (Acts iii. 19. Matt. xix. 17.) To set either of these truths at variance with the others, would be to frustrate the declared purpose of the Gospel, and to make it of none effect. Points thus clearly established, and from their very nature indispensable, must be made to correspond with each other: and the exposition, which best preserves them unimpaired and undiminished, will in any case be a safe interpretation, and most probably the true one. The analogy of faith will thus be kept entire, and will approve itself, in every respect, as becoming its Divine Author, and worthy of all acceptance." (Bp. Vanmildert’s Bampton Lectures, p. 291.)

It must, however, be ever borne in mind, that, valuable as this aid is, it is to be used only in concurrence with those which have been discussed and illustrated in the preceding sections. But, by a due attention to these principles, accompanied with humility and sincerity, with a desire to know and obey the revealed will of God, and above all, with fervent supplication to the throne of Grace for a blessing on his labours, the diligent inquirer after Scripture truth may confidently hope for success, and will be enabled to perceive the design of every portion of holy writ, its harmony with the rest, and the divine perfection of the whole.
§ 6.—On the Assistance to be derived from Jewish Writings in the Interpretation of the Scriptures.

Besides the various aids mentioned in the preceding sections, much important assistance is to be obtained in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, from consulting the Apocryphal writings, and also the works of other Jewish authors, especially those of Josephus and Philo.

Of the writings of the Jews, the Targums or Chaldee Paraphrases, which have been noticed in pp. 91, 92. supra, are, perhaps, the most important; and next to them are the Apocryphal books of the Old Testament, and the Talmud.

I. The Apocryphal Books, (of which an account will be found in Part IV. Chap. VIII. infra,) are the productions of the Alexandrian Jews and their descendants. They are all curious, and some of them extremely valuable; not only as containing documents of history and lessons of prudence as well as of piety, but also as materially elucidating the phraseology of the New Testament.

II. The Talmud (a term which literally signifies doctrine) is a body of Jewish Laws, containing a digest of doctrines and precepts relative to religion and morality. The Talmud consists of two general parts, viz. The Misna or text, and the Gemara or commentary.

1. The Misna (or repetition, as it literally signifies) is a collection of various traditions of the Jews, and of expositions of Scripture texts; which, they pretend, were delivered to Moses during his abode on the Mount, and transmitted from him, through Aaron, Eleazar, and Joshua, to the prophets, and by those to the men of the Great Sanhedrin, from whom they passed in succession to Simeon (who took our Saviour in his arms), Gamaliel, and ultimately to Rabbi Jchuda, surnamed Hakkadosh or the Holy. By him this digest of oral law and traditions was completed, towards the close of the second century, after the labour of forty years. From this time it has been carefully handed down among the Jews, from
generation to generation; and in many cases has been esteemed beyond the written law itself.

2. The Gemaras, or commentaries on the Misna, are twofold, viz. 1. The Gemara of Jerusalem, compiled between the second and sixth centuries: it is but little esteemed by the Jews; and, 2. The Gemara of Babylon, which was compiled in the sixth century, and is filled with the most absurd fables. The Jews value it very highly. These commentaries are by them termed Gemara or perfection, because they consider them as an explanation of the whole law, to which no further additions can be made, and after which nothing more can be desired. When the Misna or text, and the commentary compiled at Jerusalem, accompany each other, the whole is called the Jerusalem Talmud; and when the commentary which was made at Babylon is subjoined, it is denominated the Babylonish Talmud.

The Misna, being compiled towards the close of the second century, may, for the most part, be regarded as a digest of the traditions received and practised by the Pharisees in the time of our Lord. Accordingly, different commentators have made considerable use of it in illustrating the narratives and allusions of the New Testament, as well as in explaining various passages of the Old Testament: particularly Ainsworth on the Pentateuch, Drs. Gill and Clarke in their entire comments on the Scriptures, and Wetstein in his critical edition of the New Testament, who in his notes has abridged the works of all former writers on this topic.

III. More valuable in every respect than the Talmudical and Rabbinical Writings, are the works of the two learned Jews, Philo and Josephus.

1. Philo, surnamed Judæus, in order to distinguish him from several other persons of the same name, was a Jew of Alexandria, descended from a noble and sacerdotal family, and pre-eminent among his contemporaries for his talents, eloquence, and wisdom. He was of the
sect of the Pharisees, and was profoundly conversant in the Scriptures of the Old Testament: he is supposed to have been born between twenty and thirty years before the advent of Christ, and he is known to have lived some time after his ascension. In the works of Philo we meet with accounts of the customs, opinions, and actual state of the Jews, under the Roman Emperors, which are calculated to throw great light on many passages of the sacred writings.

2. Flavius Josephus, also a Pharisee, was of sacerdotal extraction and royal descent, and was liberally educated. He was born A.D. 37, and was alive A.D. 96; but it is not known when he died. His writings contain accounts of many Jewish customs and opinions, and of the different sects which existed among his countrymen about the time of Christ; which being supposed, alluded to, or mentioned in various passages of the New Testament, enable us fully to enter into the meaning of those passages. His accurate and minute detail of many of the events of his own time, and, above all, of the Jewish war, and the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, affords us the means of perceiving the accomplishment of many of our Saviour's predictions, especially of his circumstantial prophecy respecting the utter subversion of the Jewish polity, nation, and religion. The testimony of Josephus is the more valuable, as it is an undesigned testimony, which cannot be suspected of fraud or partiality.

§ 7.—On the Assistance to be derived from the Writings of the Greek Fathers, in the Interpretation of Scripture.

The fathers of the Christian church are those doctors who flourished before the sixth century. Not to enter into the controversy which has been agitated respecting the degree of authority to be conceded to their works, it may suffice to state, in this place, that the primitive
fathers were men eminent for their piety and zeal, though occasionally deficient in learning and judgment; that they may be relied upon in general for their statements of facts, but not invariably for the construction which they put upon them, unless in their expositions of the New Testament, with the language of which they were intimately acquainted; and that they are faithful reporters of the opinions of the Christian church.

The writings of the fathers who are not commentators, particularly those who lived nearest the time of the apostles, are valuable, not only as exhibiting a series of testimonies to the genuineness of the New Testament; but also for determining the meaning of words and phrases by the interpretations which they give to passages incidentally cited by them: whence we may clearly perceive what meaning was attached to such passages in the age when the fathers respectively flourished. The following instance will elucidate the nature of this aid to the interpretation of Scripture.

In John i. 3. the work of creation is expressly ascribed to Jesus Christ. To evade the force of this testimony to his deity, Faustus Socinus affirms that τα πάντα, all things, in this verse, means the moral world — the Christian church: but to this exposition there are two objections. First, a part of these τα πάντα is in verse 10. represented as δ κόσμος, the world; a term nowhere applied in the New Testament to the Christian church, nor to men as morally amended by the Gospel. Secondly, this very world (δ κόσμος) which he created did not know or acknowledge him, αυτον ουκ εγνω: whereas the distinguishing trait of Christians is, that they know Christ; that they know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. Τα πάντα, then, which the Logos created, means, (as common usage and the exigency of the passage require) the universe, the world, material and immaterial — (Stuart’s Letters to Dr. Channing, p. 67.) In this passage, therefore Jesus Christ is unquestionably called God; and this interpretation of it is corroborated by the following passage of Irenæus, who wrote A. D. 185: —

“Nor can any of those things, which have been made, and are in subjection, be compared to the Word of God, by whom all things were made. For that angels or archangels, or thrones or dominations, were appointed by him, who is God over all, and made by his Word,
John has thus told us: for, after he had said of the Word of God, that he was in the Father, he added, *all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made.*” (Irenæus adversus Haereses, lib. III. c. 8. § 2. Burton’s Testimonies of the Anti-Nicene Fathers to the Divinity of Christ, p. 71.)

§ 8. — Historical Circumstances.

**Historical Circumstances** are an important help to the correct understanding of the Sacred Writers. Under this term are comprised: — 1. The *Order*; 2. The *Title*; 3. The *Author*; 4. The *Date* of each of the several books of Scripture; 5. The *Place* where it was written; 6. The *Occasion* upon which the several books were written; 7. *Antient Sacred and Profane History*; 8. The *Chronology* or period of time embraced in the Scriptures generally, and of each book in particular; 9. *Bibical Antiquities*; (all these topics are adverted to, in the third and fourth parts of this volume;) and, 10. The *Knowledge of the Affections* or feelings of the Sacred Writers, and of the sentiments of the persons whom they addressed.

I. A knowledge of the *Order* of the different Books, especially such as are historical, will more readily assist the student to discover the order of the different histories, and other matters discussed in them, as well as to trace the divine economy towards mankind, under the Mosaic and Christian dispensations.

II. The *Titles* are further worthy of notice, because some of them announce the chief subject of the book — as *Genesis*, the generations of heaven and earth — *Exodus*, the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, &c.; while other titles denote the churches or particular persons for whose more immediate use some parts of Scripture were composed, and thus elucidate particular passages.

III. Where the name of the *Author* of a book is not distinctly stated, it may be collected from internal cir-
cumstances, as his peculiar character, mode of thinking, and style of writing, as well as the incidental testimonies concerning himself, which his writings may contain. Thus,

The expressions in 2 Pet. i. 18. and iii. 1. 15. prove Saint Peter to have been the author of that epistle; and a comparison of the Epistles and Gospel of St. John prove also that they are the production of one and the same author.

IV. A knowledge of the Time when a book was written, also of the state of the Church at that time, will indicate the reason and propriety of things said in such book, as well as the author’s scope or intention in writing it. Thus,

(1.) The injunction in 1 Thess. v. 27. which may appear unnecessary, will be found to be a very proper one, when it is considered that was the first epistle written by St. Paul; and that the apostle, knowing the plenitude of his divine commission, demands the same respect to be paid to his writings, which had been given to those of the antient prophets, which in all probability were read in every assembly for Christian worship.

(2.) When St. James wrote his epistle the Christians were suffering a cruel persecution, in consequence of which many were not only declining in faith, love, and a holy life, but also abused the grace of God to licentiousness, boasting of a faith destitute of its appropriate fruits; viz. who boasted of a bare assent to the doctrines of the Gospel, and boldly affirmed that this inoperative and dead faith was alone sufficient to obtain salvation. (Chapter ii. verse 17. et seq.) Hence we may easily perceive, that the apostle’s scope was, not to treat of the doctrine of justification; but, the state of the church requiring it, to correct those errors in doctrine, and those sinful practices, which had crept into the church, and particularly to expose that fundamental error of a dead faith unproductive of good works. This observation further shows the true way of reconciling the supposed contradiction between the apostles Paul and James concerning the doctrine of salvation by faith.

V. The consideration of the Place where a Book was written, as well as of the nature of the place, and the cus-
toms which obtained there, is likewise of great importance.

The first Psalm being written in Palestine, the comparison (in v. 4.) of the ungodly to chaff driven away by the wind will become more evident, when it is recollected that the threshing-floors in that country were not under cover as those in our modern barns are, but that they were formed in the open air, without the walls of cities, and in lofty situations, in order that the wheat might be the more effectually separated from the chaff by the action of the wind. (See Hosea xiii. 5.) In like manner, the knowledge of the nature of the Arabian desert, through which the children of Israel journeyed, is necessary to the correct understanding of many passages in the books of Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, which were written in that desert.

VI. A knowledge of the Occasion on which a book was written will greatly help to the understanding of the Scriptures, particularly the Psalms, many of which have no title. The occasion in this case must be sought from internal circumstances.

Psalm lxi. was evidently written by David, when he was in circumstances of the deepest affliction: but if we compare it with the history of the conspiracy of Absalom, aided by Ahithophel, who had deserted the councils of his sovereign, as related in 2 Sam. xv., and also with the character of the country whither David fled, we shall have a key to the meaning of that Psalm, which will elucidate it with equal beauty and propriety.

VII. A knowledge of antient Sacred and Profane History is of great importance to the interpretation of the Bible, not only as it enables us to trace the fulfilment of prophecy, but also because it enables us to explain many customs and institutions which the Jews borrowed from neighbouring heathen nations, notwithstanding they were forbidden to have any intercourse with them.

A judicious comparison of the notions that obtained among antient and comparatively uncultivated nations, with those entertained by the Hebrews or Jews, will, from their similitude, enable us to enter more fully into the meaning of the sacred writers.
Thus many pleasing illustrations of patriarchal life and manners may be obtained by comparing the writings of Homer and Hesiod with the accounts given by Moses; such comparisons are to be found in the best of the larger philological commentaries.

In order, however, that we may correctly explain the manners, customs, or practices referred to by the sacred writers, at different times, it is necessary that we should investigate the laws, opinions, and principles of those nations among whom the Hebrews resided for a long time, or with whom they held a close intercourse, and from whom it is probable they received some of them.

The Hebrews, from their long residence in Egypt, seem to have derived some expressions and modes of thinking from their oppressors. A single example will suffice to illustrate this remark. Under the Jewish theocracy the judges are represented as holy persons, and as sitting in the place of Jehovah. The Egyptians regarded their sovereigns in this light. Hence it has been conjectured, that the Israelites, just on their exit from Egypt, called their rulers gods, not only in poetry, but also in the common language of their laws. See Exod. xxi. 6., where the word judges is, in the original Hebrew, gods.

VIII. Chronology, or the science of computing and adjusting periods of time, is of the greatest importance towards understanding the historical parts of the Bible, not only as it shows the order and connexion of the various events therein recorded, but likewise as it enables us to ascertain the accomplishment of many of the prophecies, and sometimes leads to the discovery and correction of mistakes in numbers and dates, which have crept into particular texts. The chronology in the margin of our larger English Bibles is called the Usserian Chronology, being founded on the Annales Veteris et Novi Testamenti of the eminently learned Archbishop Usher.

IX. To all these are to be added a knowledge of Biblical Antiquities; which include Geography, Genealogy, Natural History and Philosophy, Learning and Philosophical Sects, Manners, Customs, Political, Eccle-
siastical, and Civil State, of the Jews and other Nations mentioned in the Bible. A concise sketch of the principal topics comprised under this head, is given in the Third Part of this manual.

X. Lastly, in order to enter fully into the meaning of the sacred writers, especially of the New Testament, it is necessary that the reader in a manner identify himself with them, and invest himself with their affections or feelings; and also familiarize himself with the sentiments, &c. of those to whom the different books or epistles were addressed.

This canon is of considerable importance, as well in the investigation of words and phrases, as in the interpretation of the sacred volume, and particularly of the prayers and imprecations related or contained therein. If the assistance, which may be derived from a careful study of the affections and feelings of the inspired writers, be disregarded or neglected, it will be scarcely possible to avoid erroneous expositions of the Scriptures. Daily observation and experience prove, how much of its energy and perspicuity familiar discourse derives from the affections of the speakers: and also that the same words, when pronounced under the influence of different emotions, convey very different mean-

§ 9. — On Commentators.


Commentators are writers of Books of Annotations on Scripture: they have been divided into the following classes, viz.

1. Wholly spiritual or figurative; — this class of expositors proceed on the principle, that the Scriptures are everywhere to be taken in the fullest sense of which they will admit; — a principle of all others the most unsafe and most calculated to mislead the student.

2. Literal and critical; — those who apply themselves to explain the mere letter of the Bible.

3. Wholly practical; — those who confine themselves to moral and doctrinal observations: and,
4. Those who unite critical, philological, and practical observations.

Expository writings may also be classed into Scholiasts, or writers of short explanatory notes, who particularly aim at brevity; — Commentators, or authors of a series of perpetual annotations, in which the train of thought in the sacred writers, and the coherence of their expressions, are pointed out; — Modern Versions, the authors of which fully, perspicuously, and faithfully render the words and ideas of the sacred writers into modern languages; — and Paraphrasts, who expound a sacred writer by rendering his whole discourse, as well as every expression, in equivalent terms.

II. Use of Commentators, and in what manner they are to be consulted.

The use of Commentators is two fold: first, that we may acquire from them a method of interpreting the Scriptures correctly; and, 2. that we may understand obscure and difficult passages. The best commentators only should be consulted; and in availing ourselves of their labours, the following hints will be found useful: —

1. We should take care that the reading of commentators does not draw us away from studying the Scriptures for ourselves, from investigating their real meaning, and meditating on their important contents.

This would be to frustrate the very design for which commentaries are written, namely, to facilitate our labours, to direct us aright where we are in danger of falling into error, to remove doubts and difficulties which we are ourselves unable to solve, to reconcile apparently contradictory passages, and, in short, to elucidate whatever is obscure or unintelligible to us. No commentators, therefore, should be consulted until we have previously investigated the sacred writings for ourselves, making use of every grammatical and historical help, comparing the scope, context, parallel passages, the analogy of faith, &c.; and even then commentaries should be resorted to, only for the purpose of explaining what was not sufficiently clear, or of removing our doubts. This method of studying the sacred volume will, unquestionably, prove a slow one; but the student will proceed with certainty; and if he have patience and resolution enough to persevere in it, he will ulti-
mately attain greater proficiency in the knowledge of the Scriptures, than those who, disregarding this method, shall have recourse wholly to assistances of other kinds.

2. We should not inconsiderately assent to the interpretation of any expositor or commentator, or yield a blind and servile obedience to his authority.

3. Where it does not appear that either antient or modern interpreters had more knowledge than ourselves respecting particular passages; and where they offer only conjectures, — in such cases their expositions ought to be subjected to a strict examination. If their reasons are then found to be valid, we should give our assent to them: but, on the contrary, if they prove to be false, improbable, and insufficient, they must be altogether rejected.

4. Lastly, as there are some commentaries, which are either wholly compiled from the previous labours of others, or which contain observations extracted from their writings, if any thing appear confused or perplexed in such commentaries, the original sources whence they were compiled must be referred to and diligently consulted.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE SPECIAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

SECTION I. — On the Interpretation of the Figurative Language of Scripture.

Figurative language had its rise in the first ages of mankind: the scarcity of words occasioned them to be used for various purposes: and thus figurative terms, which constitute the beauty of language, arose from its poverty; and it is still the same in all uncivilised nations. Figures, in general, may be described to be that language, which is prompted either by the imagination or by the passions. They are commonly divided into, 1. Tropes or Figures of Words, which consist in the advantageous alteration of a word or sentence, from its original and proper signification, to another meaning;
and, 2. **Figures of Thought**, which suppose the words to be used in their literal and proper meaning, and the figure to consist in the turn of the thought; as is the case in ex-
clamations, apostrophes, and comparisons, where, though we vary the words that are used, or translate them from one language into another, we may nevertheless still preserve the same figure in the thought. This distinc-
tion, however, is of no great use, as nothing can be built upon it in practice: neither is it always very clear. It is of little importance, whether we give to some particular mode of expression the name of a trope, or of a figure, provided we remember that figurative language always imports some colouring of the imagination, or some emotion of passion expressed in our style.

Disregarding, therefore, the technical distinctions, which have been introduced by rhetorical writers, we shall first offer some hints by which to ascertain and cor-
rectly interpret the tropes and figures occurring in the sacr
ed writings; and in the following sections we shall notice the principal of them, with a few illustrative ex-
amples.

§ 1. — General Observations on the Interpretation of Tropes and Figures.

In order to understand fully the figurative language of the Scriptures, it is requisite, first, to ascertain and de-
termin e what is really figurative, lest we take that to be literal which is figurative, as the disciples of our Lord
and the Jews frequently did, or lest we pervert the liter-
ral meaning of words by a figurative interpretation; and, se-
condly, when we have ascertained what is really figu-
rate, to interpret it correctly, and deliver its true sense.
For this purpose the following hints will be found useful,
in addition to a consideration of historical circumstances, parallel passages, and the context.
1. The literal meaning of words must be retained, more in the historical books of Scripture, than in those which are poetical.

We are not, therefore, to look for a figurative style in the historical books: and still less are historical narratives to be changed into allegories and parables, unless these are obviously apparent. Those expositors, therefore, violate this rule, who allegorise the history of the fall of man, and that of the prophet Jonah.

2. The literal meaning of words is to be given up, if it be either improper, or involve an impossibility, or where words, properly taken, contain any thing contrary to the doctrinal or moral precepts delivered in other parts of Scripture. Thus,

(1.) The expressions in Jer. i. 18. are therefore necessarily to be understood figuratively. So, the literal sense of Isa. i. 25, is equally inapplicable; but in the following verse the prophet explains it in the proper words.

(2.) In Psal. xviii. 2. God is termed, a rock, a fortress, a deliverer, a buckler, a horn of salvation, and a high tower: it is obvious that these predicates are metaphorically spoken of the Almighty.

(3.) Matt. viii. 22. "Let the dead bury their dead," cannot possibly be applied to those who are really and naturally dead; and consequently must be understood figuratively. "Leave those who are spiritually dead to perform the rites of burial for such as are naturally dead."

(4.) The command of Jesus Christ, related in Matt. xviii. 8, 9, if interpreted literally, is directly at variance with the sixth commandment, (Exod. xx. 13,) and must consequently be understood figuratively.

(5.) Whatever is repugnant to natural reason cannot be the true meaning of the Scriptures; for God is the original of natural truth, as well as of that which comes by particular revelation. No proposition, therefore, which is repugnant to the fundamental principles of reason, can be the sense of any part of the word of God; hence the words of Christ, — This is my body, and This is my blood, — (Matt. xxvi. 26, 28,) are not to be understood in that sense, which makes for the doctrine of transubstantiation; because it is impossible that contradictions should be true; and we cannot be more certain that any thing is true, than we are that that doctrine is false.

(6.) To change day into night (Job xvii. 12,) is a moral impossibility, contrary to common sense, and must be a figurative expression. In Isa. i. 5, 6, the Jewish nation are described as being sorely stricken or chastised, like a man mortally wounded, and destitute both of me-
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decine as well as of the means of cure. That this description is figurative, is evident from the context; for in the two following verses the prophet delineates the condition of the Jews in literal terms.

It is not, however, sufficient to know whether an expression be figurative or not, but, when this point is ascertained, another of equal importance presents itself; namely, to interpret metaphorical expressions by corresponding and appropriate terms. In order to accomplish this object, it is necessary,

3. That we inquire in what respects the thing compared, and that with which it is compared, respectively agree, and also in what respects they have any affinity or resemblance.

For, as a similitude is concealed in every metaphor, it is only by diligent study that it can be elicited, by carefully observing the points of agreement between the proper or literal and the figurative meaning. For instance, the prophetic writers, and particularly Ezekiel, very frequently charge the Israelites with having committed adultery and played the harlot, and with deserting Jehovah, their husband. From the slightest inspection of these passages, it is evident that spiritual adultery, or idolatry, is intended. Now the origin of this metaphor is to be sought from one and the same notion, in which there is an agreement between adultery and the worship paid by the Israelites to strange gods. That notion or idea is unfaithfulness; by which, as a wife deceives her husband, so they are represented as deceiving God, and as violating their fidelity in forsaking him.

4. Lastly, in explaining the figurative language of Scripture, care must be taken that we do not judge of the application of characters from modern usage; because the inhabitants of the East have very frequently attached a character to the idea expressed, widely different from that which usually presents itself to our views.

In Deut. xxxiii. 17. the glory of the tribe of Joseph is compared to the firstling of a bullock; in like manner Amos (iv. 1.) compares the noble women of Israel to the kine of Bashan, and Hosea compares the Israelites to refractory kine that shake off the yoke. If we take these metaphors according to their present sense, we shall greatly err. The ox-tribe of animals, whose greatest beauty and strength lie in their horns, was held in very high honour among the antient nations, and was much esteemed on account of its aptitude for agricultural labour: hence, in the East, it is not reckoned disgraceful to be compared with these animals. In the comparison of the tribe of Joseph to the firstling of a bullock, the point of resemblance is strength and power. In
the comparison of the matrons of Samaria to the kine of Bashan, the point of resemblance is luxury and wantonness, flowing from their abundance.

§ 2. — On the Interpretation of the Metonymies occurring in Scripture.

A Metonymy is a trope, by which we substitute one appellation for another, as the cause for the effect, the effect for the cause, the subject for the adjunct, or the adjunct for the subject.

A Metonymy of the cause is used in Scripture, when the person acting is put for the thing done, or the instrument by which a thing is done is put for the thing effected, or when a thing or action is put for the effect produced by that action.

A Metonymy of the effect occurs, when the effect is put for the efficient cause.

A Metonymy of the subject is, when the subject is put for the adjunct, that is, for some circumstance or appendage belonging to the subject; when the thing or place containing is put for the thing contained or placed; when the possessor is put for the thing possessed; when the object is put for the thing conversant about it; or when the thing signified is put for its sign.

A Metonymy of the adjunct is, when that which belongs to any thing serves to represent the thing itself.

[i.] Metonymy of the Cause.

I. Frequently the person acting is put for the thing done. Thus,

1. Christ is put for his doctrine in Rom. xvi. 9.

2. The Holy Spirit for his Effects and Operations, in 2 Cor. iii. 6. Psalm li. 10.; Influences, in Luke xi. 13. and 1 Thess. v. 19.; a Divine Power, reigning in the soul of the renewed man, in Luke i. 46, 47. compared with 1 Thess. v. 23.; the Extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, in 2 Kings ii. 9. Dan. v. 12.; and for revelations, visions, or ecstasies, whether really from the Holy Spirit, or pretended to be so, in Ezek. xxxvi. 1. 2 Thess. ii. 2. and Rev. i. 10.

3. Parents or Ancestors, are put for their Posterity; as in Gen. ix. 27. Exod. v. 2. and very many other passages of holy writ.
4. The *Writer or Author* is put for his *Book or Work*; as in Luke xvi. 29. xxiv. 27. Acts xv. 21. xxi. 21. and 2 Cor. iii. 15. in which passages *Moses* and the *Prophets* respectively mean the Mosaic and Prophetic writings.

II. Sometimes the cause or instrument is put for the thing effected by it. Thus,

1. The *mouth*, the *lips*, and the *tongue*, are respectively put for the *speech*, in Deut. xvii. 6. xix. 15. Matt. xviii. 16, &c.

2. The *mouth* is also put for *commandment* in Gen. xlv. 21. (marginal rendering *Heb. mouth*). Numb. iii. 16. 39. xx. 24. xxvii. 14. Deut. i. 26. 43. and in Prov. v. 3. the *palate* (marginal rendering) is also put for *speech*.

3. The *throat* is also put for *loud speaking*, in Isa. lviii. 1. *Cry aloud* (*Heb. with the throat*).

4. The *hand* is ordinarily put for its *writing*, 1 Cor. xvi. 21. Col. iv. 18.

5. The *sword, famine*, and *pestilence*, likewise respectively denote the effects of those scourges, as in Ezek. vii. 15.

[iii.] Metonymy of the Effect.

III. Sometimes, on the contrary, the effect is put for the cause.

Thus *God* is called *Salvation*, that is the *Author of it*, Exod. xv. 2., *our life* and the length of our days, Deut. xxx. 20., *our strength*, Psal. xviii. 1. *So Christ* is termed *Salvation*, Isa. xlix. 6. Luke ii. 30. *Life*, John xi. 25. and the *Resurrection* in the same place.

[iii.] Metonymy of the Subject.

IV. Sometimes the subject is put for the adjunct, that is, for some circumstance or appendage belonging to, or depending upon, the subject. Thus,

The *heart* is frequently used for the *will and affection*, Deut. iv. 29 vi. 5, &c.; and for the *understanding*, Deut. iv. 39. vi. 6. Luke ii 51, &c.

V. Sometimes the place or thing denotes that which is contained in such place or thing.

The *earth* and the *world* are frequently put for the men that dwell therein, as in Gen. vi. 11. Psalm xcvi. 13, &c. The *Houses of Is*
ruef and Levi denote their several families, in Exod. ii. 1. and Ezek. iii. 1.

VI. Sometimes the possessor of a thing is put for the thing possessed.

Thus, Deut. ix. 1. To possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, means to possess the countries of the Gentiles. See also Psal. lxxix. 7. where Jacob means the land of the Israelites.

VII. Frequently the object is put for that which is conversant about it.

Thus glory and strength are put for the celebration of the divine glory and strength, in Psal. viii. 2. explained by Matt. xxi. 16.; see also Psal. xcvi. 7, 8.

VIII. Sometimes the thing signified is put for its sign.

So, the strength of God, in 1 Chron. xvi. 11. and Psal. cv. 4. is the ark, which was a sign and symbol of the divine presence and strength.

IX. When an action is said to be done, the meaning frequently is, that it is declared, or permitted, or foretold, to be done: as in Gen. xlii. 3. Jer. iv. 10. Matt. xvi. 9, &c.

X. An action is said to be done, when the giving of an occasion for it is only intended.

1 Kings xiv. 6. Jeroboam made Israel to sin, i.e. occasioned it by his example and command. See Acts i. 18. Rom. xiv. 15. and 1 Cor. vii. 16.

[iv.] Metonymy of the Adjunct, in which the Adjunct is put for the Subject.

XI. Sometimes the accident, or that which is additional to a thing, is put for its subject in kind.

The abstract is put for the concrete. So grey hairs (Heb. hoariness or grey-headedness) in Gen. xliii. 38. denote me, who am now an old man and grey-headed; abomination for an abominable thing, in Gen. xlvi. 34. and Luke xvi. 15.

XII. Sometimes the thing contained is put for the thing containing it, and a thing deposited in a place for the place itself.

Thus Gen. xxviii. 22. means this place, where I have erected a pillar of stone, shall be God's house. Josh. xv. 19. Springs of water
Figurative Language of Scripture.

Denote some portion of land, where there may be springs. Matt. ii. 11. Treasures are the cabinets or other vessels containing them.

XIII. Time is likewise put for the things which are done or happen in time, as in 1 Chron. xii. 32. John xii. 27.

XIV. In the Scriptures, things are sometimes named or described according to appearances, or to the opinion formed of them by men, and not as they are in their own nature.

Thus Hananiah, the opponent of Jeremiah, is called a prophet, not because he was truly one, but was reputed to be one, Jer. xxviii. 1. 5. 10. In Ezek. xxii. 3. the righteous mean those who had the semblance of piety, but really were not righteous. And in Luke ii. 48. Joseph is called the Father of Christ, because he was reputed so to be.

XV. Sometimes the action or affection, which is conversant about any object, or placed upon it, is put for the object itself.

Thus, the senses are put for the objects perceived by them, as hearing for doctrine or speech, in Isa. xxviii. 9. (marg. rend.) and 1. iii. 1. (Heb.) In John xii. 38. and Rom. x. 16. the Greek word ακοη translated report, literally means hearing, and so it is rendered in Gal. iii. 2. 5. Hearing is also put for fame or rumour in Psal. cxii. 7. (Heb.) Ezek. vii. 26. Obad. 1. Hab. iii. 2. (Heb.) Matt. iv. 24. xiv. 1. and xxiv. 6. Mark i. 28. and xiii. 7. &c.

The eye, in the original of Numb. xi. 7. Lev. xiii. 55. Prov. xxiii. 31. Ezek. i. 4. viii. 2. and x. 9. is put for colours which are seen by the eye.

XVI. Sometimes the sign is put for the thing signified, as in Gen. xliv. 10. Isa. xxii. 22. Matt. x. 34.

XVII. Lastly, the names of things are often put for the things themselves, as in Psal. xx. 1. cxv. 1. Acts ii. 21. Rom. x. 13, &c.

§ 3. — On the Interpretation of Scripture Metaphors and Allegories.

I. Nature and sources of Metaphors.

A metaphor is a trope, by which a word is diverted from its proper and genuine signification to another meaning, for the sake of comparison, or because there is some analogy between the similitude and the thing signified. Of all the figures of rhetoric, the metaphor is that which is most frequently employed, not only in
the Scriptures, but likewise in every language: for, independently of the pleasure which it affords, it enriches the mind with two ideas at the same time, the truth and the similitude. To illustrate this definition: — In Deut. xxxii. 42. we read, I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh. Here, the first metaphor is borrowed from excessive and intemperate drinking, to intimate the very great effusion of blood, and the exceeding greatness of the ruin and destruction which would befall the disobedient Israelites; the second metaphor is drawn from the voracious appetite of an hungry beast, which in a lively manner presents to the mind the impossibility of their escaping the edge of the sword, when the wrath of God should be provoked. The foundation of them consists in a likeness or similitude between the thing from which the metaphor is drawn, and that to which it is applied. When this resemblance is exhibited in one or in a few expressions, it is termed a simple metaphor. When it is pursued with a variety of expressions, or there is a continued assemblage of metaphors, it is called an allegory. When it is couched in a short sentence, obscure and ambiguous, it is called a riddle. If it be conveyed in a short saying only, it is a proverb; and if the metaphorical representation be delivered in the form of a history, it is a parable. When the resemblance is far-fetched, — as to see a voice, (Rev. i. 12.) it is termed a catachresis. This last-mentioned species of figure, however, is of less frequent occurrence in the Bible than any of the preceding. Scripture Metaphors are variously derived from the works of nature: — from the ordinary occupations and customs of life, as well as from such arts as were at that time practised; — from sacred topics, that is, the Religion of the Hebrews, and things connected with it, and also from their national History.

II. Nature of an Allegory.

The Allegory is another branch of the figurative lan-
guage of Scripture; in which a foreign or distant meaning is concealed under the literal sense of the words. It differs from a metaphor, in that it is not confined to a word, but extends to a thought, or even to several thoughts. Of this species of figure Bishop Lowth has distinguished three kinds, viz.

1. The Allegory properly so called, and which he terms a continued metaphor; — 2. The Parable, or similitude, which is discussed in the following section; — and, 3. The Mystical Allegory, in which a double meaning is couched under the same words, or when the same prediction, according as it is differently interpreted, relates to different events, distant in time, and distinct in their nature. This sort of allegory is exclusively derived from things sacred; and, while in those other forms of allegory the exterior or ostensible imagery is fiction only, in the mystical allegory each idea is equally agreeable to truth. As the mystical and typical interpretation of Scripture is discussed in a subsequent part of this volume, we shall at present consider the allegory, or continued metaphor properly and strictly so called.

III. The following rules may assist us to determine the meaning of an allegory:

1. The proper or literal meaning of the words must be ascertained, before we attempt to explain an allegory.

2. The design of the whole allegory must be investigated; and the point of comparison must not be extended to all the circumstances of an allegory.

For this purpose, the occasion that gave rise to it must be diligently examined and considered, together with historical circumstances, as well as the nature of the thing spoken of, and also the scope and context of the whole passage in which it occurs; because the scope and interpretation of an allegory are frequently pointed out by some explanation that is subjoined.

3. We must not explain one part literally, and another part figuratively.

Thus the whole of 1 Cor. iii. 9—13. is allegorical: a comparison is there instituted between the office of a teacher of religion, and that
of a builder. Hence a Christian congregation is termed a building; its ministers are the architects, some of whom lay the foundation on which others build; some erect a superstructure of gold and silver; others of wood, hay, and stubble. The sense concealed under the allegory is apparent: a Christian congregation is instructed by teachers, some of whom communicate the first principles, others impart further knowledge: some deliver good and useful things (the truth), while others deliver useless things (erroneous doctrines, such as at that time prevailed in the Corinthian church). That day (the great day of judgment) will declare what superstructure a man has raised; that is, whether what he has taught be good or bad. And as fire is the test of gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, so the great day will be the test of every man's work. Though the whole of this passage is obviously allegorical, yet it is understood literally by the church of Rome, who has erected upon it her doctrine of the fire of purgatory. How contrary this doctrine is to every rule of right interpretation, is too plain to require any exposition.

§ 4. — Interpretation of Scripture Parables.

I. Nature of a Parable.

The word Parable is of various import in Scripture, denoting a proverb or short saying, a thing darkly or figuratively expressed, and a similitude or comparison. Strictly speaking, a parable is a similitude taken from things natural, in order to instruct us in things spiritual. This mode of instruction is of great antiquity, and an admirable means of conveying moral lessons: "by laying hold on the imagination, parable insinuates itself into the affections; and by the intercommunication of the faculties, the understanding is made to apprehend the truth which was proposed to the fancy." In a word, this kind of instruction seizes us by surprise, and carries with it a force and conviction which are almost irresistible. It is no wonder, therefore, that parables were made the vehicle of national instruction in the most early times; that the prophets, especially Ezekiel, availed themselves of the same impressive mode of conveying instruction or reproof; and
that our Lord, following the same example, also adopted it for the same important purposes.

II. For the interpretation of a parable (to which the rules belonging to the allegory may indeed be applied), the following hints will be found useful:—

1. The first excellence of a parable is, that it turns upon an image well known and applicable to the subject, the meaning of which is clear and definite; for this circumstance will give it that perspicuity which is essential to every species of allegory.

How clearly this rule applies to the parables of our Lord, is obvious to every reader of the New Testament. It may suffice to mention his parable of the Ten Virgins (Matt. xxv. 1—13.), which is a plain allusion to those things which were common at the Jewish marriages in those days. In like manner, the parables of the lamp (Luke viii. 16.), of the sower and the seed, of the tares, of the mustard seed, of the leaven, of the net cast into the sea, all of which are related in Matt. xiii. as well as of the householder that planted a vineyard, and let it out to husbandmen (Matt. xxi. 33.), are all representations of usual and common occurrences, and such as the generality of our Saviour’s hearers were daily conversant with, and they were therefore selected by him as being the most interesting and affecting.

2. Further, the image must be not only apt and familiar, but must also be elegant and beautiful in itself; and all its parts must be perspicuous and pertinent; since it is the purpose of a parable, and especially of a poetic parable, not only to explain more perfectly some proposition, but frequently to give it animation and splendour.

Of all these excellencies there cannot be more perfect examples than the parables which have just been specified: to which we may add the well-known parables of Jotham (Judges ix. 7—15.), of Nathan (2 Sam. xii. 1—4.), and of the woman of Tekoah. (2 Sam. xiv. 4—7.)

3. As every parable has two senses, the literal or external, and the mystical or internal sense, the literal sense must be first explained, in order that the correspondence between it and the mystical sense may be the more readily perceived. And wherever words seem to be capable of different senses, particularly in the parables of Jesus Christ, we may with certainty conclude that to be the true sense which lies most level to the apprehensions of those to whom the parable was delivered.

4. It is not necessary in the interpretation of parables, that we
should anxiously insist upon every single word; nor ought we to expect too curious an adaptation or accommodation of it in every part to the spiritual meaning inculcated by it; for many circumstances are introduced into parables which are merely ornamental, and designed to make the similitude more pleasing and interesting.

Inattention to this obvious rule has led many expositors into the most fanciful explanations; resemblances have been accumulated, which are for the most part futile, or at best of little use, and manifestly not included in the scope of the parable. In the application of this rule, the two following points are to be considered; viz.

(1.) Persons are not to be compared with persons, but things with things; part is not to be compared with part, but the whole of the parable with itself. Thus, the similitude in Matt. xiii. 24, 25. is, not with the men there mentioned, but with the seed and the pearl: and the construction is to be the same as in verses 31. and 33. where the progress of the Gospel is compared to the grain of mustard seed, and to leaven.

(2.) In parables it is not necessary that all the actions of men, mentioned in them, should be just actions, that is to say, morally just and honest: for instance, the unjust steward (Luke xvi. 1—8.) is not proposed either to justify his dishonesty, or as an example to us in cheating his lord (for that is merely ornamental, and introduced to fill up the story); but as an example of his care and prudence in providing for the future.

§ 5. — On Scripture Proverbs.

I. Nature of Proverbs.

Proverbs are concise and sententious common sayings, founded on a close observance of men and manners. They were greatly in use among the inhabitants of Palestine in common with other Oriental nations: and the teachers of mankind who had recourse to this mode of instruction, in order to render it the more agreeable, added to their precepts the graces of harmony; and decorated them with metaphors, comparisons, allusions, and other elegant embellishments of style.

II. Different Kinds of Proverbs.

Proverbs are divided into two classes, viz. 1. Entire
Sentences; and, 2. Proverbial Phrases, which by common usage are admitted into a sentence.

1. Examples of Entire Proverbial Sentences occur in Gen. x. 9. and xxii. 14. 1 Sam. x. 12. and xxiv. 13. 2 Sam. v. 8. and xx. 18. Ezek. xvi. 44. and xviii. 2. Luke iv. 23. John iv. 37. and 2 Pet. ii. 22.; in which passages the inspired writers expressly state the sentences to have passed into proverbs.

2. Examples of Proverbial Phrases, which indeed cannot be correctly termed proverbs, but which have acquired their form and use, are to be found in Deut. xxv. 4. 1 Kings xx. 11. 2 Chron. xxv. 9. Job vi. 5. xiv. 19. and xxvii. 18. Psal. xlii. 7. and lxii. 9. The Book of Proverbs likewise contains many similar sentences; examples of which may also be seen in the Book of Ecclesiastes, in some of the Prophets, as well as in the New Testament.

III. Interpretation of the Proverbs in the New Testament.

The Proverbs occurring in the New Testament are to be explained, partly by the aid of similar passages from the Old Testament, and partly from the antient writings of the Jews; whence it appears how much they were in use among that people, and that they were applied by Christ and his apostles, agreeably to common usage.


Besides the figures discussed in the preceding sections, there are many others dispersed throughout the sacred Scriptures, the infinite superiority of which over all uninspired compositions they admirably elucidate. Two or three of these, from their importance and frequent occurrence, claim to be noticed in this place.

1. A Synecdoche is a trope in which, 1. The whole is put for a part; 2. A part is put for the whole; 3. A certain number for an uncertain one; 4. A general name for a particular one; and, 5. Special words for general ones.

[i.] The whole is sometimes put for a part.
As, the world for the Roman empire, which was but a small though very remarkable part of the world, in Acts xxiv. 5. and Rev. iii. 10.

The world for the earth, which is a part of it, 2 Pet. iii. 6. Rom. i. 8. 1 John v. 19.

[ii.] Sometimes the part is put for the whole.

Thus in Gen. i. 5. 8. 13. 19. 23. 31. the evening and morning, being the principal parts of the day, are put for the entire day. So the soul comprehends the entire man, Acts xxvii. 37. Tree in Gen. iii. 8. is in the original put for trees; and man, in Gen. lix. 6. for men.

[iii.] A certain number for an uncertain number, as twelve for several times, in Psal. lxii. 11. Ten for many, in Gen. xxvi. 7.; and seven for an indefinite number, in Gen. iv. 15. and very many other passages of Scripture.

[iv.] A general name is put for a particular one.


[v.] Sometimes special words or particular names are put for such as are general.

Thus, father is put for any ancestor in Psal. xxi. 4.; father for grandfathers, in 2 Sam. ix. 7. and Dan v. 11. 18.; father and mother for all superiors in Exod. xx. 12.

2. An Irony is a figure, in which we speak one thing and design another, in order to give the greater force and vehemence to our meaning. An irony is distinguished from the real sentiments of the speaker or writer, by the accent, the air, the extravagance of the praise, the character of the person, or the nature of the discourse.

Instances of irony may be seen in 1 Kings xviii. 27. 1 Kings xxii. 15. Job xi. 2. and 1 Cor. iv. 8.

Under this figure we may include the Sarcasm, which may be defined to be an irony in its superlative keenness and asperity. See examples of this figure in Matt. xxvii. 29. and Mark xv. 32.

3. Hyperbole, in its representation of things or objects, either magnifies or diminishes them beyond or below their proper limits; it is common in all languages, and is of frequent occurrence in the Scripture.

Thus, a great quantity or number is commonly expressed by the sand of the sea, the dust of the earth, and the stars of heaven, Gen. xiii. 16. xlii. 49. Judges vii. 12. 1 Sam. xiii. 5. 1 Kings iv. 29. 2 Chron. i. 9. Jer. xv. 8. Heb. xi. 12. In like manner we meet, in Numb.
Chapter III.

On the Interpretation of the Poetical Parts of Scripture.

I. Nature of Hebrew Poetry.

The diversity of style, evident in the different books of Scripture, sufficiently evinces which of them were written in prose, and which are poetical compositions: though the nature of the Hebrew verse cannot now be exactly ascertained. The grand characteristic of Hebrew Poetry is what Bishop Lowth terms Parallelism, that is, a certain equality, resemblance, or relationship between the members of each period: so that, in two lines or members of the same period, things shall answer to things, and words to words, as if fitted to each other by a kind of rule or measure. Such is the general strain of Hebrew Poetry, instances of which occur in almost every part of the Old Testament, particularly in the ninety-sixth Psalm.

II. Gradations of the poetical parallelism.

The poetical parallelism has much variety and many gradations; which may be referred to four species, viz. Parallel Lines Gradational, Parallel Lines Antithetic, Parallel Lines Synthetic, and Parallel Lines Introverted. An example or two of each of these shall be given, which will enable the attentive reader of our admirable authorised version readily to discover others as they arise: for, that version being strictly word for word after the original, the form and order of the original sentences are preserved; and this circumstance will account for its retaining so much of a poetical cast, notwithstanding it is executed in prose.

1. Parallel Lines Gradational are those, in which the
second or responsive clause so diversifies the preceding clauses, as generally to rise above it, sometimes by a descending scale in the value of the related terms and periods, but in all cases with a marked distinction of meaning. This species of parallelism is of most frequent occurrence, particularly in the psalms and the prophecies of Isaiah. The following example is given from the evangelical prophet, ch. iv. 6, 7:—

Seek ye Jehovah [or, the LoRD] while he may be found;
Call ye upon him while he is near;
Let the wicked forsake his way,
And the unrighteous man his thoughts:
And let him return unto Jehovah, and he will compassionate him
And unto our God, for he aboundeth in forgiveness.

"In the first line men are invited to seek Jehovah, not knowing where he is, and on the bare intelligence that he may be found; in the second line, having found Jehovah, they are encouraged to call upon him, by the assurance that he is near. In the third line, the wicked, the positive, and presumptuous sinner, is warned to forsake his way, his habitual course of iniquity; in the fourth line, the unrighteous, the negatively wicked, is called to renounce the very thought of sinning. While, in the last line, the appropriate and encouraging title our God is substituted for the awful name Jehovah, and simple compassion is heightened into overflowing mercy and forgiveness."
(Bp. Jebb's Sacred Literature, pp. 37, 38.) See further instances in Isa. li. 47. Joel ii. 7. Psalm i. 1. xxi. 1, 2. and xxiv. 3, 4.

2. Parallel Lines Antithetic are those in which two lines correspond one with another, by an opposition of terms and sentiments: when the second is contrasted with the first, sometimes in expressions, sometimes in sense only. This is not confined to any particular form. Accordingly, the degrees of antithesis are various, from an exact contraposition of word to word, sentiment to sentiment, singulars to singulars, plurals to plurals, down to a general disparity, with something of a contrariety in the two propositions. Thus, Prov. ch. x. 1.

A wise son rejoiceth his father:
But a foolish son is the grief of his mother.
Here every word has its opposite, the terms “father” and “mother” being relatively opposite.

3. *Parallel Lines Constructive* are those, in which the parallelism consists only in the similar form of construction; wherein word does not answer to word, and sentence to sentence, as equivalent or opposite: but there is a correspondence and equality between the different propositions in respect of the shape and turn of the whole sentence and of the constructive parts; such as noun answering to noun, verb to verb, member to member, negative to negative, interrogative to interrogative. This form of parallelism admits of great variety, the parallelism being sometimes more, sometimes less exact, and sometimes hardly at all apparent. Psalm xix. 7—11. will furnish a beautiful instance of this description of poetical parallelism.

The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul;
The testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple;
The precepts of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of Jehovah is clear, enlightening the eyes;
The fear of Jehovah is pure, enduring for ever;
The judgments of Jehovah are truth, they are just altogether.
More desirable than gold, or than much fine gold,
And sweeter than honey or the dropping of honey-combs.

4. *Parallel Lines Introverted, or Introverted Parallelisms*, are stanzas so constructed, that whatever be the number of lines, the first line shall be parallel with the last; the second with the penultimate, or last but one; and so throughout, in an order that looks inward, or, to borrow a military phrase, from flanks to centre. Dr. Jebb, Bishop of Limerick, has illustrated this definition with numerous apposite examples, from which the following has been selected:—

“And it shall come to pass in that day;
Jehovah shall make a gathering of his fruit:
From the flood of the river;
To the stream of Egypt:
And ye shall be gleaned up, one by one;
O ye sons of Israel.
"And it shall come to pass in that day;
The great trumpet shall be sounded:
And those shall come, who were perishing in the land
of Assyria;
And those who were dispersed in the land of Egypt:
And they shall bow themselves down before Jehovah
In the holy mountain, in Jerusalem. (Isa. xxvii. 12, 13.)

"In these two stanzas, figuratively in the first, and literally in the
second, is predicted the return of the Jews from their several dispersions. The first line of each stanza is parallel with the sixth; the
second with the fifth; and the third with the fourth. Also on comparing
the stanzas one with another, it is manifest, that they are constructed
with the utmost precision of mutual correspondence; clause harmonizing with clause, and line respectively with line; the first line of the
first stanza with the first line of the second, and so throughout." (Sacred Lit. pp. 54, 55.)

Until very recently, the poetical parallelism was supposed to be confined to the Books of the Old Testament: but Bishop Jebb has shown that this characteristic of Hebrew Poetry also exists to a considerable degree in the New Testament.

III. Different Kinds of Hebrew Poetry.

Bishop Lowth reduces the various productions of the Sacred Poets to the following classes:—

1. Prophetic Poetry, or that peculiar to the prophetic Books: for, though some parts of them are evidently in prose, yet the remainder are clearly poetical.

2. Elegiac Poetry, of which many passages occur in the prophetic Books, in the Book of Job, in the Psalms, and especially in the Lamentations of Jeremiah.

3. Didactic Poetry, or that which delivers moral precepts in elegant verses. To this class belongs the Book of Proverbs.

4. Of Lyric Poetry or that which is designed to be accompanied with music, numerous instances occur in the Old Testament, especially in the Book of Psalms. See also Exod. xv. Deut. xxxii. and Habakkuk iii.
5. Of the Idyl, or short pastoral poem, the historical Psalms afford abundant instances. See particularly Psalms lxxviii. cv. cvi. cxxvi. and cxxxix.

6. To Dramatic Poetry Bishop Lowth refers the Book of Job, and the Song of Solomon: but this opinion has been questioned by later critics. Many of the Psalms however are a kind of dramatic ode, consisting of dialogues between persons sustaining certain characters.

7. Acrostic or Alphabetical Poems are those which consist of twenty-two lines, or twenty-two systems of lines, periods, or stanzas, according to the number of letters of the Hebrew alphabet; that is, the first line or first stanza begins with א (aleph), the second with ב (beth), and so on. Twelve of these poems are found in the Old Testament, viz. Psalms xxv. xxxiv. xxxvii. cxi. cxii. cxix. and cxlv. Prov. xxxi. 10—31. Lament. of Jeremiah i. ii. iii. iv. Some of these poems are perfectly, and others more or less, alphabetical.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

Section I. — Rules for the Spiritual or Mystical Interpretation of Scripture.

Some injudicious expositors having unduly preferred the spiritual or mystical sense to the literal sense, which is undoubtedly first in point of nature as well as in order of signification; others have been induced to conclude that no such interpretation is admissible. “A principle,” however, “is not therefore to be rejected, because it has been abused: since human errors can never invalidate the truth of God.” The following Hints will be found useful for the spiritual interpretation of Scripture.

In this department of sacred literature it may be considered as an axiom that the spiritual meaning of a
passage is *there only* to be sought, where it is evident, from *certain* criteria, that such meaning was designed by the Holy Spirit.

The criteria, by which to ascertain whether there is a latent spiritual meaning in any passage of Scripture, are twofold: either they are seated in the text itself, or they are to be found in some other passages.

I. Where these criteria are seated in the text, vestiges of a spiritual meaning are discernible, when the things, which are affirmed concerning the person or thing immediately treated of, are so august and illustrious that they cannot in any way be applied to it, in the fullest sense of the words.

The writings of the prophets, especially those of Isaiah, abound with instances of this kind. Thus, in the 24th, 40th, 41st, and 49th chapters of that evangelical prophet, the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity is announced in the most lofty and magnificent terms. If we compare this description with the accounts actually given of their return to Palestine by Ezra and Nehemiah, we shall not find any thing corresponding with the events so long and so beautifully predicted by Isaiah. In this description, therefore, of their deliverance from captivity, we must look beyond it to that infinitely higher deliverance, which, in the fulness of time, was accomplished by Jesus Christ.

II. Where the spiritual meaning of a text is latent, the Holy Spirit (under whose direction the sacred penmen wrote) sometimes clearly and expressly asserts, that one thing or person was divinely constituted or appointed to be a figure or symbol of another thing or person: in which case the indisputable testimony of eternal truth removes and cuts off every ground of doubt and uncertainty.

For instance, if we compare Psalm cx. 4. with Heb. vii. 1. we shall find that Melchisedec was a type of Messiah, the great high priest and king. So Hagar and Sarah were types of the Jewish and Christian churches. (Gal. iv. 22—24.)

III. Sometimes, however, the mystical sense is intimated by the Holy Spirit in a more obscure manner: and, without excluding the practice of sober and pious meditation, we are led by various intimations (which require very diligent observation and study) to the knowledge of the spiritual or mystical meaning.
This chiefly occurs in the following cases:—

[i.] When the antitype is proposed under figurative names taken from the Old Testament.

Thus, in 1 Cor. v. 7. Christ is called the paschal lamb; — in 1 Cor. xv. 45. he is called the last Adam; the first Adam, therefore, was in some respect a type or figure of Christ.

[ii.] When, by a manifest allusion of words and phrases, the inspired writers refer one thing to another.

Thus, from Isa. ix. 4. which alludes to the victory obtained by Gideon (Judges vii. 22.), we learn that this represents the victory which Christ should obtain by the preaching of the Gospel, as Vitringa has largely shown on this passage.

So, when St. Paul is arguing against the Jews from the types of Sarah, Hagar, Melchizedec, &c. he supposes that in these persons there were some things in which Christ and his church were delineated, and that these things were admitted by his opponents: otherwise his arguments would be inconclusive.

Section II. — On the Interpretation of Types.

I. Nature of a Type, and its different species.

A type, in its primary and literal meaning, simply denotes a rough draught, or less accurate model, from which a more perfect image is made: but, in the sacred or theological sense of the term, a type may be defined to be a symbol of something future and distant, or an example prepared and evidently designed by God to prefigure that future thing. What is thus prefigured is called the antitype.

In the examination of the sacred writings three species of types present themselves to our notice; viz.

1. Legal Types, or those contained in the Mosaic law. On comparing the history and economy of Moses with the whole of the New Testament, it evidently appears, that the ritual law was typical of the Messiah and of Gospel blessings: and this point has been clearly established by the great apostle of the Gentiles, in his Epistle to the Hebrews.

2. Prophetic Types are those by which the divinely
inspired prophets prefigured or signified things either present or future, by means of external symbols. Of this description is the prophet Isaiah's going naked (that is, without his prophetic garment,) and barefoot (Isa. xx. 2.) to prefigure the fatal destruction of the Egyptians and Ethiopians.

3. **Historical Types** are the characters, actions, and fortunes of some eminent persons recorded in the Old Testament, so ordered by Divine Providence as to be exact prefigurations of the characters, actions, and fortunes of future persons who should arise under the Gospel dispensation.

Great caution is necessary in the interpretation of types; for unless we have the authority of the sacred writers themselves for it, we cannot conclude with certainty that this or that person or thing, which is mentioned in the Old Testament, is a type of Christ on account of the resemblance which we may perceive between them; but we may admit it as possible.

II. **Hints for the interpretation of Types.**

1. There must be a fit application of the Type to the Antitype.

This canon is of great importance; and inattention to it has led fanciful expositors into the most unfounded interpretations of holy writ. In further illustration of this rule, it may be remarked,

[i.] The *type itself* must in the first instance be explained according to its literal sense; and if any part of it appear to be obscure, such obscurity must be removed: as in the history of Jonah, who was swallowed by a great fish, and cast ashore on the third day.

[ii.] The analogy between the thing prefiguring and the thing prefigured must be soberly shown in all its parts.

2. There is often more in the type than in the antitype.

God designed one person or thing in the Old Testament to be a type or shadow of things to come, not in all things, but only in respect to *some particular thing* or things: hence we find many things in the type that are inapplicable to the antitype. The use of this canon is shown in the epistle to the Hebrews, in which the ritual and sacrifices of the Old Testament are fairly accommodated to Jesus Christ the antitype, although there are many things in the Levitical priesthood which do not accord. Thus, the priest was to offer sacrifice for his
3. Frequently there is more in the antitype than in the type.

The reason of this canon is the same as that of the preceding rule: for, as no single type can express the life and particular actions of Christ, there is necessarily more in the antitype than can be found in the type itself; so that one type must signify one thing, and another type another thing.

4. In types and antitypes, an enallage or change sometimes takes place; as when the thing prefigured assumes the name of the type or figure; and, on the contrary, when the type of the thing represented assumes the name of the antitype.

Of the first kind of enallage we have examples in Ezek. xxviii. 24, xxxi. 21, and Hos. iii. 5; in which descriptions of Messiah’s kingdom he is styled David; because as he was prefigured by David in many respects, so he was to descend from him.

Of the second kind of enallage we have instances:—1. In Prophetic Types, in which the name of a person or thing, properly agreeing with the antitype, and for which the type was proposed, is given to any one: as in Isa. vii. 3. and viii. 1—3. — 2. In Historical Types: as, when hanging was called in the Old Testament the curse of the Lord, because it was made a type of Christ, who was made a curse for our sins, as St. Paul argues in Gal. iii. 13.

5. That we may not fall into extremes in the interpretation of types, we must, in every instance, proceed cautiously, “with fear and trembling,” lest we imagine mysteries to exist where none were ever intended.

No mystical or typical sense, therefore, ought to be put upon a plain passage of Scripture, the meaning of which is obvious and natural; unless it be evident from some other part of Scripture that the place is to be understood in a double sense. When St. Paul says, (Gal. iii. 24. Col. ii. 17.) that the law was a-schoolmaster to bring men to Christ, and a shadow of things to come, we must instantly acknowledge that the ceremonial law in general was a type of the mysteries of the Gospel.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE PROPHECIES.

Prophecy, or the prediction of future events, is justly considered as the highest evidence that can be given of
supernatural communion with the Deity. The force of
the argument from prophecy, for proving the divine in-
spiration of the sacred records, has already been ex-
hibited; and the cavils of objectors have been obviated.
(See pp. 45—57. supra.) Difficulties, it is readily ad-
mitted, do exist in understanding the prophetic writings:
but these are either owing to our ignorance of his-
tory, and of the Scriptures, or because the prophecies
themselves are yet unfulfilled. The latter can only be
understood when the events foretold have actually been
accomplished: but the former class of difficulties may
be removed in many, if not in all cases; and the know-
ledge, sense, and meaning of the prophets may, in a
considerable degree, be attained by prayer, reading, and
meditation, and by comparing Scripture with Scripture,
especially with the writings of the New Testament, and
particularly with the book of the Revelation. With this
view, the following general rules will be found useful in
investigating, first, the sense and meaning of the pro-
phecies, and, secondly, their accomplishment.

I. Rules for ascertaining the sense of the Prophetic
Writings.

1. As not any Prophecy of Scripture is of self-interpretation
(2 Pet. i. 20.) or is its own interpreter, "the sense of the pro-
phesy is to be sought in the events of the world, and in the har-
mony of the prophetic writings, rather than in the bare terms of
any single prediction."

In the consideration of this canon, the following circumstances
should be carefully attended to:—

[i.] Consider well the times when the several prophets flourished, in
what place and under what kings they uttered their predictions, the
duration of their prophetic ministry, and their personal rank and con-
dition, and lastly, whatever can be known respecting their life and
transactions.

[ii.] As the prophets treat not only of past transactions and present
occurrences, but also for all future events, in order to understand
them, we must diligently consult the histories of the following ages,
both sacred and profane, and carefully see whether we can trace in
them the fulfilment of any prophecy.

[iii.] The words and phrases of a prophecy must be explained, where
they are obscure; if they be very intricate, every single word should
be expounded; and, if the sense be involved in metaphorical and em-
blematic expressions (as very frequently is the case), these must be
explained according to the principles already considered.

[iv.] Similar prophecies of the same event must be carefully com-
pared, in order to elucidate more clearly the sense of the sacred pre-
dictions.

For instance, after having ascertained the subject of the prophet’s
discourse and the sense of the words, Isa. liii. 5. (He was wounded, li-
terally pierced through, for our transgressions,) may be compared with
Psal. xxii. 16. (They pierced my hands and my feet), and with Zech.
xii. 10. (They shall look on me whom they have pierced). In thus pa-
ralleling the prophecies, regard must be had to the predictions of former
prophets, which are sometimes repeated with abridgment, or more dis-
tinctly explained by others; and also to the predictions of subsequent
prophets, who sometimes repeat, with greater clearness and precision,
former prophecies, which had been more obscurely announced.

2. In order to understand the prophets, great attention should be
paid to the prophetic style, which is highly figurative, and par-
ticularly abounds in metaphorical and hyperbolical expressions.

By images borrowed from the natural world, the prophets often un-
derstand something in the world politic. Thus, the sun, moon, stars,
and heavenly bodies, denote kings, queens, rulers, and persons in great
power; and the increase of splendour in those luminaries denotes in-
crease of prosperity, as in Isa. xxx. 26. and lx. 19. On the other
hand, their darkening, setting, or falling signifies a reverse of fortune,
or the entire destruction of the potentate or kingdom to which they
refer.

3. As the greater part of the prophetic writings was first com-
posed in verse, and still retains much of the air and cast of the
original, an attention to the division of the lines, and to that pec-
uliarity of Hebrew poetry by which the sense of one line or
couplet so frequently corresponds with another, will often lead
to the meaning of many passages; one line of a couplet, or
member of a sentence, being generally a commentary on the
other.

Of this rule we have an example in Isa. xxxiv. 6.:  
The Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah,  
And a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.
Here the metaphor in the first verse is expressed in the same terms in the next: the sacrifice in Bozrah means the great slaughter in the land of Idumea, of which Bozrah was the capital.

4. Particular names are often put by the prophets for more general ones, in order that they may place the thing represented, as it were, before the eyes of their hearers; but in such passages they are not to be understood literally.

Thus, in Joel iii. 4., Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of Palestine, are put, by way of poetical description, for all the enemies of the Jews.

5. The order of time is not always to be looked for in the prophetic writings: for they frequently (particularly Jeremiah and Ezekiel) resume topics of which they have formerly treated after other subjects have intervened, and again discuss them.

6. The prophets often change both persons and tenses, sometimes speaking in their own persons, at other times representing God, his people, or their enemies, as respectively speaking, and without noticing the change of persons; sometimes taking things past or present for things future, to denote the certainty of the events.

Isa. ix. 6. liii. throughout, lxiii. throughout, Zech. ix. 9., and Rev. xviii. 2., to cite no other passages, may be adduced as illustrations of this remark.

7. When the prophets received a commission to declare anything, the message is sometimes expressed as if they had been appointed to do it themselves.

Isa. vi. 9, 10. is merely a prediction of what the Jews would do: for when the prophetic declaration was fulfilled, Jesus Christ quoted the passage and explained its general sense in Matt. xiii. 15.

8. As symbolic actions and prophetic visions greatly resemble parables, and were employed for the same purpose, viz. more powerfully to instruct and engage the attention of the people, they must be interpreted in the same manner as parables. (For which, see pp. 184—186, supra.)

II. Observations on the Accomplishment of Scripture Prophecies.

A prophecy is demonstrated to be fulfilled, when we can prove, from unimpeachable authority, that the event
has actually taken place, precisely according to the manner in which it was foretold.

1. The same prophecies frequently have a double meaning, and refer to different events, the one near, the other remote; the one temporal, the other spiritual, or perhaps eternal. The prophets thus having several events in view, their expressions may be partly applicable to one, and partly to another, and it is not always easy to mark the transitions. What has not been fulfilled in the first, we must apply to the second; and what has already been fulfilled, may often be considered as typical of what remains to be accomplished.

The following examples, out of many which might be offered, will illustrate this rule:

[i.] The second psalm is primarily an inauguration hymn, composed by David, the anointed of Jehovah, when crowned with victory, and placed triumphant on the sacred hill of Sion. But, in Acts iv. 25., the inspired apostles with one voice declare it to be descriptive of the exaltation of the Messiah, and of the opposition raised against the Gospel, both by Jews and Gentiles.

[ii.] Isa. xi. 6. — What is here said of the wolf dwelling with the lamb, &c. is understood as having its first completion in the reign of Hezekiah, when profound peace was enjoyed after the troubles caused by Sennacherib; but its second and full completion is under the Gospel, whose power in changing the hearts, tempers, and lives of the worst of men, is here foretold and described by a singularly beautiful assemblage of images. Of this blessed power there has in every age of Christianity been a cloud of witnesses.

Thus, it is evident that many prophecies must be taken in a double sense, in order to understand their full import; and as this twofold application of them was adopted by our Lord and his apostles, it is a full authority for us to consider and apply them in a similar way.

2. Predictions, denouncing judgments to come, do not in themselves speak the absolute futurity of the event, but only declare what is to be expected by the persons to whom they are made, and what will certainly come to pass, unless God in his mercy interpose between the threatening and the event.

Of these conditional comminatory predictions we have examples in Jonah's preaching to the Ninevites (Jonah iii. 4—10.), and in Isaiah's
denunciation of death to Hezekiah. (Isa. xxxviii. 1.) See also a similar instance in Jcr. xxxviii. 14—23.

III. Observations on the Accomplishment of Prophecies concerning the Messiah in particular.

1. Jesus Christ being the great subject and end of Scripture revelation, we ought everywhere to search for prophecies concerning him.

We have the united testimony of Christ (John v. 39. Luke xxiv. 25—27. 44.) and of an inspired apostle (Acts x, 43.), that He is the subject of Scripture prophecy. Whatever therefore is emphatically and characteristically spoken of some other persons, not called by his own name, in the psalms or prophetical books, so that each predicate can be fully demonstrated in no single subject of that or any other time, must be taken and said of the Messiah. Psal. xxii: and Isa. liii. may be adduced as an illustration of this rule.

2. The interpretation of the word of prophecy, made by Jesus Christ himself, and by his inspired apostles, is a rule and key, by which to interpret correctly the prophecies cited or alluded to by them.

The prophecy (in Isa. viii. 14.) that the Messiah would prove a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, is more plainly repeated by Simeon (Luke ii. 34.), and is shown to have been fulfilled, by St. Paul (Rom. ix. 32, 33.), and by St. Peter (1 Pet. ii. 8.); and the sixteenth psalm is expressly applied to Jesus Christ by the latter of these apostles. (Acts ii. 25—31.)

5. Where the prophets describe a golden age of felicity, they clearly foretell Gospel times.

Many passages might be adduced from the prophetic writings in confirmation of this rule. It will however suffice to adduce two instances from Isaiah, ch. ix. 2—7., and xi. 1—9. In the former of these passages, the peaceful kingdom of the Messiah is set forth, its extent and duration; and in the latter, the singular peace and happiness which should then prevail, are delineated in imagery of unequalled beauty and energy.

4. Things, foretold as universally or indefinitely to come to pass under the Gospel, are to be understood,—as they respect the duty,—of all persons; but,—as they respect the event,—only of God’s people.
The highly figurative expressions in Isa. ii. 4, xi. 6, and lxv. 25, are to be understood of the nature, design, and tendency of the Gospel, and what is the duty of all its professors, and what would actually take place in the Christian world, if all who profess the Christian doctrine did sincerely and cordially obey its dictates.

5. As the antient prophecies concerning the Messiah are of two kinds, some of them relating to his first coming to suffer, while the rest of them concern his second coming to advance his kingdom, and restore the Jews; — in all these prophecies, we must carefully distinguish between his first coming in humiliation to accomplish his mediatorial work on the cross, and his second coming in glory to judgment.

In studying the prophetic writings, the two following cautions should uniformly be kept in view; viz.

1. That we do not apply passing events, as actually fulfilling particular prophecies.

2. That we do not curiously pry beyond what is expressly written, or describe, as fulfilled, prophecies which are yet future. What the Bible hath declared, that we may without hesitation declare: beyond this all is mere vague conjecture.

Chapter VI.

ON THE DOCTRINAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

As the Holy Scriptures contain the revealed will of God to man, they not only offer to our attention the most interesting histories and characters for our instruction by example, and the most sublime prophecies for the confirmation of our faith, but they likewise present, to our serious study, doctrinal truths of the utmost importance. Some of these occur in the historical, poetical, and prophetical parts of the Bible; but they are chiefly to be found in the apostolic epistles, which, though originally designed for the edification of particular Christian churches or individuals, are nevertheless of general application, and designed for the guidance of the universal church in every age. For many of the
fundamental doctrines of Christianity are more copiously treated in the epistles, which are not so particularly explained in the gospels: and as the authors of the several epistles wrote under the same divine inspiration as the evangelists, the epistles and gospels must be taken together, to complete the rule of Christian faith. The doctrinal interpretation, therefore, of the sacred writings is of paramount consequence: as by this means we are enabled to acquire a correct and saving knowledge of the will of God concerning us. In the prosecution of this important branch of sacred literature, the following observations are offered to the attention of the student:

1. The meaning of the sacred writings is not to be determined according to modern notions and systems: but we must endeavour to carry ourselves back to the very times and places in which they were written, and realise the ideas and modes of thinking of the sacred writers.

This rule is of the utmost importance for understanding the Scriptures; but is too commonly neglected by commentators and expositors, who, when applying themselves to the explanation of the sacred writings, have a preconceived system of doctrine which they seek in the Bible, and to which they refer every passage of Scripture. Thus they rather draw the Scriptures to their system of doctrine, than bring their doctrines to the standard of Scripture; a mode of interpretation which is altogether unjust, and utterly useless in the attainment of truth. The only way by which to understand the meaning of the sacred writers, and to distinguish between true and false doctrines, is, to lay aside all preconceived modern notions and systems, and to carry ourselves back to the very times and places in which the prophets and apostles wrote. In perusing the Bible, therefore, this rule must be most carefully attended to: — It is only an unbiased mind that can attain the true and genuine sense of Scripture.

2. In order to understand any doctrinal book or passage of Scripture, we must attend to the controversies which were agitated at that time, and to which the sacred writers allude: for a key to the apostolic epistles is not to be sought in the modern controversies that divide Christians, and which were not only unknown, but, also, were not in existence at that time.

The controversies which were discussed in the age of the apostles are to be ascertained, partly from their writings, partly from the exist-
ing monuments of the primitive Christians, and likewise from some passages in the writings of the Rabbins. The most important passages of this kind are to be found in almost all the larger commentators.

3. The doctrinal books of Scripture, for instance, the epistles, are not to be perused in detached portions or sections; but they should be read through at once, with a close attention to the scope and tenour of the discourse, regardless of the divisions into chapters and verses, precisely in the same manner in which we would peruse the letters of Cicero, Pliny, or other antient writers.

Want of attention to the general scope and design of the doctrinal parts of Scripture, particularly of the epistles, has been the source of many and great errors: the reading, however, which is here recommended, should not be cursory or casual, but frequent and diligent; and the epistles should be repeatedly perused, until we become intimately acquainted with their contents. On the investigation of the Scope, see p. 156. supra.

4. Where any doctrine is to be deduced from the Scriptures, it will be collected better, and with more precision, from those places in which it is professedly discussed, than from those in which it is noticed only incidentally, or by way of inference.

For instance, in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, the doctrine of justification by faith is fully treated: and in those to the Ephesians and Colossians, the calling of the Gentiles and the abrogation of the ceremonial law are particularly illustrated. These must therefore be diligently compared together, in order to deduce those doctrines correctly.

5. Distinguish figurative expressions from such as are proper and literal; and when easy and natural interpretations offer themselves, avoid all those interpretations which deduce astonishing and incredible doctrines.

6. It is of great importance to the understanding of the doctrinal books of the New Testament, to attend to and distinctly note the transitions of persons which frequently occur, especially in Saint Paul’s Epistles.

The pronouns I, We, and You are used by the apostles in such a variety of applications, that the understanding of their true meaning is often a key to many difficult passages. Thus, by the pronoun I, Saint Paul sometimes means himself; sometimes any Christian; sometimes
a Jew; and sometimes any man, &c. To discover these transitions requires great attention to the apostle's scope and argument; and yet if it be neglected or overlooked, it will cause the reader greatly to mistake and misunderstand his meaning, and will also render the sense very perplexed. Mr. Locke, and Dr. Macknight, in their elaborate works on the Epistles, are particularly useful in pointing out these various transitions of persons and subjects.

7. No article of faith can be established from metaphors, parables, or single obscure and figurative texts.

Instead of deriving our knowledge of Christianity from parables and figurative passages; an intimate acquaintance with the doctrines of the Gospel is necessary, in order to be capable of interpreting them. The beautiful parable of the man who fell among thieves (Luke x. 30—37.) is evidently intended to influence the Jews to be benvolent and kind like the good Samaritan, and nothing more. And yet, regardless of every principle of sound interpretation, that parable has by some writers been considered as a representation of Adam's fall, and of man's recovery, through the interposition and love of Jesus Christ!

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE MORAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

SECTION I. — On the Interpretation of the Moral Parts of Scripture.

The Moral Parts of Scripture are replete with the most important instructions for the government of life. They are to be interpreted precisely in the same manner as all other moral writings; regard being had to the peculiar circumstances of the sacred writers, viz. the age in which they wrote, the nation to which they belonged, their style, genius, &c. In the examination of the moral parts of Scripture, the following more particular rules will be found useful:—

1. Moral propositions or discourses are not to be urged too far, but must be understood with a certain degree of latitude, and with various limitations.

For want of attending to this canon, how many moral truths have been pushed to an extent, which causes them altogether to fail of the
THE MORAL PARTS OF SCRIPTURE.

effect they were designed to produce! It is not to be denied that
universal propositions may be offered: such are frequent in the Scrip-
tures as well as in profane writers, and also in common life; but it is
in explaining the expressions by which they are conveyed, that just
limits ought to be applied, to prevent them from being urged too far.
The nature of the thing, and various other circumstances, will always
afford a criterion by which to understand moral propositions with the
requisite limitations.

2. Principals include their accessories, that is, whatever ap-
proaches or comes near to them, or has any tendency to them.

Thus, where any sin is forbidden, we must be careful not only to
avoid it, but also every thing of a similar nature, and whatever may
prove an occasion of it, or imply our consent to it in others: and we
must endeavour to dissuade or restrain others from it. Compare Matt.
v. 21—31. 1 Thess. v. 22. Jude 23. Ephes. v. 11. 1 Cor. viii.
13. Levit. xiv. 17. James v. 19, 20. So, where any duty is en-
joined, all means and facilities enabling either ourselves or others to
discharge it, according to our respective places, capacities, or oppor-
tunities, are likewise enjoined.

3. Negatives include affirmatives, and affirmatives include ne-
gatives:—in other words, where any duty is enjoined, the con-
trary sin is forbidden; and where any sin is forbidden, the con-
trary duty is enjoined.

Thus, in Deut. vi. 13, where we are commanded to serve God, we
are forbidden to serve any other. Therefore, in Matt. iv. 10. it is said,
"Him only shalt thou serve."

4. Negatives are binding at all times, but not affirmatives;
that is, we must never do that which is forbidden, though good
may ultimately come from it. (Rom. iii. 8.) We must not speak
wickedly for God. (Job, xiii. 7.)

5. When an action is either required or commended, or any
promise is annexed to its performance, such action is supposed
to be done from proper motives, and in a proper manner.

The giving of alms may be mentioned as an instance; which, if
done from ostentatious motives, we are assured, is displeasing in the

6. When the favour of God, or salvation, is promised to any
deed or duty, all the other duties of religion are supposed to be
rightly performed.
7. When a certain state or condition is pronounced blessed, or any promise is annexed to it, a suitable disposition of mind is supposed to prevail.

Thus, when the poor or afflicted are pronounced to be blessed, it is because such persons, being poor and afflicted, are free from the sins usually attendant on unsanctified prosperity, and because they are, on the contrary, more humble and more obedient to God. If, however, they be not the characters described: as unquestionably there are many to whom the characters do not apply, the promise in that case does not belong to them. *Vice versa*, when any state is pronounced to be wretched, it is on account of the sins or vices which generally attend it.

8. Some precepts of moral prudence are given in the Scriptures, which nevertheless admit of exceptions, on account of some duties of benevolence or pietv that ought to preponderate.

We may illustrate this rule by the often-repeated counsels of Solomon, respecting becoming surety for another. (See Prov. vi. 1, 2. xi. 15. xvii. 18. and xx. 16.) In these passages he does not condemn suretyship, which, in many cases, is not only lawful, but, in some instances even an act of justice, prudence, and charity; but Solomon forbids his disciple to become surety rashly, without considering for whom or how far he binds himself, or how he could discharge the debt, if occasion should require it.

9. Many things in morals, which are not spoken comparatively, are nevertheless to be thus understood.

In Matt. ix. 13. and xii. 7., Jesus Christ citing Hosea v. 6. says, that God desired mercy, and not sacrifice: yet he had prescribed that victims should be offered. This therefore must be understood comparatively, sacrifice being compared with mercy, or with acts of humanity and benevolence; which the context shows are here intended. The sense then of the passage in question is this: I require mercy, and not sacrifice; in other words, I prefer acts of charity to matters of positive institution, when in any instance they interfere with each other.

Section II. — On the Interpretation of the Promises and Threatenings of Scripture.

I. Distinction between Promises and Threatenings.

A promise in the Scriptural sense of the term, is a declaration or assurance of the divine will, in which God
signifies what particular blessings or good things he will freely bestow, as well as the evils which he will remove. The promises therefore differ from the threatenings of God, inasmuch as the former are declarations concerning good, while the latter are denunciations of evil only: at the same time it is to be observed, that promises seem to include threats, because, being in their very nature conditional, they imply the bestowment of the blessing promised, only on the condition being performed, which blessing is tacitly threatened to be withheld on non-compliance with such condition. Further, promises differ from the commands of God, because the latter are significations of the divine will concerning a duty enjoined to be performed, while promises relate to mercy to be received.

There are four classes of promises mentioned in the Scriptures, particularly in the New Testament: viz. 1. Promises relating to the Messiah; 2. Promises relating to the church; 3. Promises of blessings, both temporal and spiritual, to the pious; and, 4. Promises encouraging to the exercise of the several graces and duties that compose the Christian character. The two first of these classes, indeed, are many of them predictions as well as promises; consequently the same observations will apply to them, as are stated for the interpretation of scripture prophecies: but in regard to those promises which are directed to particular persons, or to the performance of particular duties, the following remarks are offered to the attention of the reader.

1. "We must receive God's promises in such wise as they be generally set forth in the Holy Scripture." (Art. xvii.)

To us the promises of God are general and conditional: if, therefore, they be not fulfilled towards us, we may rest assured that the fault does not rest with Him "who cannot lie," but with ourselves, who have failed in complying with the conditions either tacitly or expressly annexed to them.

2. Such promises as were made in one case, may be applied in
other cases of the same nature, consistently with the analogy of faith.

It is in promises as in commands; they do not exclusively concern those to whom they were first made; but being inserted in the Scriptures, they are made of public benefit: for, "whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our use; that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope." (Rom. xiv. 6.) Thus, what was spoken to Joshua (ch. i. 5.) on his going up against the Canaanites, lest he should be discouraged in that enterprise, is applied by St. Paul to the believing Hebrews (Heb. xiii. 5.), as a remedy against covetousness or inordinate cares concerning the things of this life; it being a very comprehensive promise that God will never fail us nor forsake us. But if we were to apply the promises contained in Psal. xciv. 14. and Jer. xxxii. 40. and John x. 28. as promises of indefectible grace to believers, we should violate every rule of sober interpretation, as well as the analogy of faith.

3. God has suited his promises to his precepts.

By his precepts we see what is our duty, and what should be the scope of our endeavours; and by his promises we see what is our inability, what should be the matter or object of our prayers, and where we may be supplied with that grace which will enable us to discharge our duty. Compare Deut. x. 16. with Deut. xxx. 6. Eccles. xii. 13. with Jer. xxxii. 40. Ezek. xviii. 31. with Ezek. xxxvi. 37. and Rom. vi. 12. with v. 14.

4. Where any thing is promised in case of obedience, the threatening of the contrary is implied in case of disobedience: and where there is a threatening of any thing in case of disobedience, a promise of the contrary is implied upon condition of obedience.

In illustration of this remark, it will be sufficient to refer to, and compare Exod. xx. 7. with Psal. xv. 1—4. and xxiv. 3, 4. and Exod. xx. 12. with Prov. xxx. 17.

Chapter VIII.

On the Interpretation of Passages of Scripture, which are Alleged to be Contradictory.

Although the sacred writers, being divinely inspired, were necessarily exempted from error in the important
CONTRADICTION PASSAGES.

truths which they were commissioned to reveal to mankind, yet it is not to be concealed, that, on comparing Scripture with itself, some detached passages are to be found which appear to be contradictory; and these have ever been a favourite topic of cavil with the enemies of Christianity from Spinosa down to Voltaire, and the opposers of Divine Revelation in our days, who have copied their objections. Unable to disprove or subvert the indisputable facts on which Christianity is founded, and detesting the exemplary holiness of heart and life which it enjoins, its modern antagonists insidiously attempt to impugn the credibility of the sacred writers, by producing what they call contradictions. It is readily admitted that real contradictions are a just and sufficient proof that a book is not divinely inspired, whatever pretences it may make to such inspiration. In this way we prove that the Koran of Mohammed could not be inspired, much as it is extolled by his admiring followers: for the whole of that rhapsody was framed by the wily Arab to answer some particular exigencies. Hence not a few real contradictions crept into the Koran; the existence of which is not denied by the Mussulman commentators, who are not only very particular in stating the several occasions on which particular chapters were produced, but also, where any contradiction occurs which they cannot solve, affirm that one of the contradictory passages is revoked. And they reckon in the Koran upwards of one hundred and fifty passages thus revoked. Now this fact is a full evidence that the compiler of that volume could not be inspired: but no such thing can be alleged against the Scriptures. They were indeed given at sundry times and in divers manners, and the authors of them were inspired on particular occasions; but nothing was ever published as a part of it, which was afterwards revoked; nor is there any thing in them which we need to have annulled. Errors in the transcription of copies as well as in printed editions and translations, do un-
questionably exist: but the contradictions objected are only seeming, not real, nor do we know a single instance of such alleged contradictions that is not capable of a rational solution. A little skill in criticism, in the original languages of the Scriptures, their idioms and properties, (of which the modern opposers of revelation, it is well known, have for the most part been and are notoriously ignorant,) and in the times, occasions, and scopes of the several books, as well as in the antiquities and customs of those countries which were the scenes of the transactions recorded, will clear the principal difficulties: solutions of which will be found at length in Volume II. Part II. Chapter VII. of the Author's larger Introduction, to which the reader is necessarily referred, as the explanations of the passages alleged to be contrary do not admit of abridgement. The following general observations, however, will enable an attentive reader, who will compare things spiritual with spiritual, easily to solve for himself many seeming contradictions.

1. Wherever one text of Scripture seems to contradict another, we should, by a serious consideration of them, endeavour to discover their harmony: for the only way, by which to judge rightly of particular passages in any book, is, first, to ascertain whether the text be correct, and in the next place to consider its whole design, method, and style, and not to criticise some particular parts of it, without bestowing any attention upon the rest. Such is the method adopted by all who would investigate with judgment any difficult passages occurring in a profane author: and if a judicious and accurate writer is not to be lightly accused of contradicting himself for any seeming inconsistencies, but is to be reconciled with himself if possible,—unquestionably the same equitable principle of interpretation ought to be applied in the investigation of Scripture difficulties.

2. Some passages are explained by the Scriptures themselves, which serve as a key to assist us in the elucidation of others.

Thus, in one place it is said that Jesus baptised, and in another it is stated that he baptised not: the former passage is explained to be intended not of baptism performed by himself, but by his disciples, who baptised in his name. Compare John iii. 22. with iv. 1, 2.
3. Frequently, also, a distinction of the different senses of words, as well as of the different subjects and times, will enable us to obviate the seeming discrepancy.

Thus, when it is said, It is appointed unto all men once to die (Heb. ix. 27.); and elsewhere, If a man keep Christ's saying, he shall never see death, there is no contradiction; for, in the former place, natural death, the death of the body, is intended, and, in the latter passage, spiritual or eternal death. Again, when Moses says, God rested on the seventh day from all his works (Gen. ii. 2.), and Jesus says, My Father worketh hitherto (John v. 17.), there is no opposition or contradiction; for Moses is speaking of the works of creation, and Jesus of the works of providence. So, Samuel tells us God will not repent (1 Sam. xv. 29.); and yet we read in other parts of the Old Testament that It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth (Gen. vi. 6.); and that he had set up Saul to be king (1 Sam. xv. 11.). But in these passages there is no real contradiction; repentance in the one place signifies a change of mind and counsel, from want of foresight of what would come to pass, and thus God cannot repent; but then he changes his course as men do when they change their minds, and so he may be said to repent. In these, as well as in other instances, where personal qualities or feelings are ascribed to God, the Scriptures speak in condescension to our capacities, after the manner of men; nor can we speak of the Deity in any other manner, if we would speak intelligibly to the generality of mankind.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE PRACTICAL READING OF SCRIPTURE.

The sense of Scripture having been explained and ascertained, it only remains that we apply it to purposes of practical utility; which may be effected either by deducing inferences from texts, or by practically applying the Scriptures to our personal edification and salvation: for, if serious contemplation of the Scriptures and practice be united together, our real knowledge of the Bible must necessarily be increased, and will be rendered progressively more delightful. This practical reading may be prosecuted by every one with advantage: for the ap-
plication of Scripture which it recommends is connected with our highest interest and happiness.

The simplest practical application of the word of God will, unquestionably, prove the most beneficial; provided it be conducted with a due regard to those moral qualifications which have already been stated and enforced, as necessary to the right understanding of the Scriptures. Should, however, any hints be required, the following may, perhaps, be consulted with advantage.

1. In reading the Scriptures, then, with a view to personal application, we should be careful that it be done with a pure intention.

He, however, who peruses the sacred volume, merely for the purpose of amusing himself with the histories it contains, or of beguiling time, or to tranquillise his conscience by the discharge of a mere external duty, is deficient in the motive with which he performs that duty, and cannot expect to derive from it either advantage or comfort amid the trials of life. Neither will it suffice to read the Scriptures with a mere design of becoming intimately acquainted with sacred truths, unless such reading be accompanied with a desire, that, through them, he may be convinced of his self-love, ambition, or other faults to which he may be peculiarly exposed, and that, by the assistance of divine grace, he may be enabled to eradicate them from his mind.

2. In reading the Scriptures for this purpose, it will be advisable to select some appropriate lessons from its most useful parts; not being particularly solicitous about the exact connexion or other critical niceties that may occur, (though at other times, as ability and opportunity offer, these are highly proper objects of inquiry,) but simply considering them in a devotional or practical view.

After ascertaining, therefore, the plain and obvious meaning of the lesson under examination, we should first consider the present state of our minds, and carefully compare it with the passage in question: next, we should inquire into the causes of those faults which such perusal may have disclosed to us; and should then look around for suitable remedies to correct the faults we have thus discovered.

3. In every practical reading and application of the Scriptures to ourselves, our attention should be fixed on Jesus Christ, both
as a gift to be received by faith for salvation, and also as an exemplar, to be copied and imitated in our lives.

We are not, however, to imitate him in all things. Some things he did by his divine power, and in those we cannot imitate him: other things he performed by his sovereign authority, in those we must not imitate him: other things also he performed by virtue of his office as a Mediator, and in these we may not, we cannot follow him. But, in his early piety, his obedience to his reputed earthly parents, his unwearied diligence in doing good, his humility, his unblameable conduct, his self-denial, his contentment under low circumstances, his frequency in private prayer, his affectionate thankfulness, his compassion to the wretched, his holy and edifying discourse, his free conversation, his patience, his readiness to forgive injuries, his sorrow for the sins of others, his zeal for the worship of God, his glorifying his heavenly Father, his impartiality in administering reproof, his universal obedience, and his love and practice of holiness,—in all these instances, Jesus Christ is the most perfect pattern for our imitation.

4. We should carefully distinguish between what the Scripture itself says, and what is only said in the Scripture, and also, the times, places, and persons, when, where, and by whom any thing is recorded as having been said or done.

In Mal. iii. 14. we meet with the following words:—"It is in vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance?"

And in 1 Cor. xv. 32. we meet with this maxim of profane men—"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." But, when we read these and similar passages, we must attend to the characters introduced, and remember that the persons who spoke thus were wicked men. Even those, whose piety is commended in the sacred volume, did not always act in strict conformity to it. Thus, when David vowed that he would utterly destroy Nabal's house, we must conclude that he sinned in making that vow: and the discourses of Job's friends, though in themselves extremely beautiful and instructive, are not in every respect to be approved; for we are informed by the sacred historian, that God was wroth with them, because they had not spoken of him the thing that was right. (Job xlii. 7.)

5. As every good example recorded in the Scriptures has the force of a rule, so when we read therein of the failings as well as of the sinful actions of men, we may see what is in our own nature: for there are in us the seeds of the same sin, and similar tendencies to its commission, which would bring forth similar fruits, were it not for the preventing and renewing grace of God.
And as many of the persons, whose faults are related in the volume of inspiration, were men of infinitely more elevated piety than ourselves, we should learn from them not only to "be not high-minded, but fear" (Rom. xi. 20.): but, further, to avoid being rash in censuring the conduct of others.

The occasions of their declensions are likewise deserving of our attention, as well as the temptations to which they were exposed, and whether they did not neglect to watch over their thoughts, words, and actions, or trust too much to their own strength (as in the case of Peter's denial of Christ); what were the means that led to their penitence and recovery, and how they demeaned themselves after they had repented. By a due observation, therefore, of their words and actions, and of the temper of their minds, so far as this is manifested by words and actions, we shall be better enabled to judge of our real progress in religious knowledge, than by those characters which are given of holy men in the Scriptures, without such observation of the tenour of their lives, and the frame of their minds.

6. In reading the promises and threatenings, the exhortations and admonitions, and other parts of Scripture, we should apply them to ourselves in such a manner as if they had been personally addressed to us.

For instance, are we reading any of the prophetic Sermons? Let us so read and consider them, and, as it were, identify ourselves with the times and persons when and to whom such prophetic discourses were delivered, as if they were our fellow-countrymen, fellow-citizens, &c., whom Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and other prophets rebuke in some chapters; while in others they labour to convince them of their sinful ways, and to convert them, or, in the event of their continuing disobedient, denounce the divine judgments against them. So, in all the precepts of Christian virtue recorded in Matt. v. vi. and vii. we should consider ourselves to be as nearly and particularly concerned, as if we had personally heard them delivered by Jesus Christ on the Mount. Independently, therefore, of the light which will thus be thrown upon the prophetic or other portions of Scripture, much practical instruction will be efficiently obtained; for, by this mode of reading the Scriptures, the promises addressed to others will encourage us, the denunciations against others will deter us from the commission of sin, the exhortations delivered to others will excite us to the diligent performance of our duty, and, finally, admonitions to others will make us walk circumspectly.

7. The words of the passage selected for our private reading,
after its import has been ascertained, may beneficially be summed up or comprised in very brief prayers or ejaculations.

The advantage resulting from this simple method has been proved by many who have recommended it. If we pray over the substance of Scripture, with our Bible before us, it may impress the memory and heart the more deeply. Should any references to the Scriptures be required, in confirmation of this statement, we would briefly notice that the following passages, among many others which might be cited, will, by addressing them to God, and, by a slight change also in the person, become admirable petitions for divine teaching; viz. Col. i. 9, 10. — Eph. i. 17, 18, 19. — 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. — The hundred and nineteenth Psalm contains numerous similar passages.

8. In the practical reading of the Scriptures, all things are not to be applied at once, but gradually and successively; and this application must be made, not so much with the view of supplying us with materials for talking, as with matter for practice.

Finally, this practical reading and application must be diligently continued through life; and we may, with the assistance of divine grace, reasonably hope for success in it, if to reading we add constant prayer and meditation on what we have read. With these we are further to conjoin a perpetual comparison of the sacred writings: daily observation of what takes place in ourselves, as well as what we learn from the experience of others; a strict and vigilant self-examination; together with frequent conversation with men of learning and piety, who have made greater progress in saving knowledge; and, lastly, the diligent cultivation of internal peace.

Other observations might be offered: but the preceding hints, if duly considered and acted upon, will make us "neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. i. 8.) And if, to some of his readers, the author should appear to have dilated too much on so obvious a topic, its importance must be his apology. Whatever relates to the confirmation of our faith, the improvement of our morals, or the elevation of our affections, ought not to be treated lightly or with indifference.
A COMpendium OF bIBLICAL gEOGRAPHY AND
tagQuITIES.

BOOK I.—A SKETCH OF THE GEOGRAPHY OF
THE hOLY LAND.

C HAPtER I.

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE hOLY LAND.

Grotto at Nazareth, said to have been the House of Joseph and Mary.

This country has in different ages been called by various
Names, which have been derived either from its inhabitants, or from the extraordinary circumstances attached
to it. Thus, in Jer. iv. 20. it is termed generally the land:
and hence, both in the Old and New Testament, the
original word, which is sometimes rendered earth, land,
or country, is by the context in many places determined
to mean the promised land of Israel; as in Josh. ii. 3.
Matt. v. 5., and Luke iv. 25. But the country occupied
by the Hebrews, Israelites, and Jews, is in the sacred
volume more particularly called.

1. The Land of Canaan, from Canaan, the youngest
son of Ham, and grandson of Noah, who settled here after
the confusion of Babel, and divided the country among
his eleven children." (Gen. xi. 15. et seq.)

2. The Land of Promise (Heb. xi. 9.), from the pro-
mise made by Jehovah to Abraham, that his posterity
should possess it (Gen. xii. 7. and xiii. 15.); who being
termed Hebrews, this region was thence called the Land
of the Hebrews. (Gen. xi. 15.)

3. The Land of Israel, from the Israelites, or posterity
of Jacob, having settled themselves there. This name is
of most frequent occurrence in the Old Testament: it is
also to be found in the New Testament (as in Matt. ii. 20,
21.) Within this extent lay all the provinces or countries
visited by Jesus Christ, except Egypt, and consequently
almost all the places mentioned or referred to in the four
Gospels. After the separation of the ten tribes, that
portion of the land which belonged to the tribes of Judah
and Benjamin, who formed a separate kingdom, was dis-
tinguished by the appellation of Judæa, or the land of
Judah (Psal. lxxvi. 1.), which name the whole country
retained during the existence of the second temple, and
under the dominion of the Romans.

4. The Holy Land, which appellation is to this day con-
ferred on it by all Christians, as having been hallowed by
the presence, actions, miracles, discourses, and sufferings
of Jesus Christ. This name is also to be found in the
Old Testament (Zech. ii. 12.), and in the Apocryphal
books of Wisdom (xii. 3.), and 2 Maccabees (i. 7.). The
whole world was divided by the antient Jews into two
general parts, the land of Israel and the land out of Israel, that is, all the countries inhabited by the nations of the world, or the Gentiles: to this distinction there seems to be an allusion in Matt. vi. 32. All the rest of the world, together with its inhabitants (Judæa excepted), was accounted as profane, polluted, and unclean (see Isa. xxxv. 8. iii. 1. with Joel iii. 17. Amos vii. 7. and Acts x. 1.); but, though the whole land of Israel was regarded as holy, as being the place consecrated to the worship of God, and the inheritance of his people, whence they are collectively styled saints and a holy nation or people, (in Exod. xix. 6. Deut. vii. 6. xiv. 2. xxvi. 19. xxxiii. 3. 2 Chron. vi. 41. Psal. xxxiv. 9. 1. 5. 7. lxxix. 2. and cxlviii. 4.) yet the Jews imagined particular parts to be vested with more than ordinary sanctity, according to their respective situations. Thus the parts situated beyond Jordan were considered to be less holy than those on this side: walled towns were supposed to be more clean and holy than other places, because no lepers were admissible into them, and the dead were not allowed to be buried there. Even the very dust of the land of Israel was reputed to possess such a peculiar degree of sanctity, that when the Jews returned from any heathen country, they stopped at its borders, and wiped the dust of it from their shoes, lest the sacred inheritance should be polluted with it: nor would they suffer even herbs to be brought to them from the ground of their Gentile neighbours, lest they should bring any of the mould with them, and thus defile their pure land. To this notion, our Lord unquestionably alluded when he commanded his disciples to shake off the dust of their feet, (Matt. x. 14.) on returning from any house or city that would neither receive nor hear them; thereby intimating to them, that when the Jews had rejected the Gospel, they were no longer to be regarded as the people of God, but were on a level with heathens and idolaters.

5. The appellation of Palestine, by which the whole
land appears to have been called in the days of Moses, (Exod. xv. 14.) is derived from the Philistines, a people who migrated from Egypt, and having expelled the aboriginal inhabitants, settled on the borders of the Mediterranean: where they became so considerable as to give their name to the whole country, though they in fact possessed only a small part of it. The Philistines were for a long time the most formidable enemies of the children of Israel; but about the year of the world 3841, (b.c. 159,) the illustrious Judas Maccabæus subdued their country; and about sixty-five years afterwards Jannæus burnt their city Gaza, and incorporated the remnant of the Philistines with such Jews as he placed in their country.

The Boundaries of the land promised to Abraham are, in Gen. xv. 18., stated to be from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates. Of this tract, however, the Israelites were not immediately put in possession: and although the limits of their territories were extended under the reigns of David and Solomon (2 Sam. viii. 3. et seq. 2 Chron. ix. 26.), yet they did not always retain that tract. It lies far within the temperate zone, and between 31 and 33 degrees of north latitude, and was bounded on the west by the Mediterranean or Great Sea, as it is often called in the Scriptures; on the east by Arabia; on the south by the river of Egypt (or the river Nile, whose eastern branch was reckoned the boundary of Egypt, towards the great desert of Shur, which lies between Egypt and Palestine,) and by the Desert of Sin or Beersheba, the southern shore of the Dead Sea, and the river Arnon; and on the north by the chain of mountains termed Antilibanus, near which stood the city of Dan: hence in the sacred writings we frequently meet with the expression, "from Dan to Beersheba," to denote the whole length of the land of Israel.

The land of Canaan, previously to its occupation by the Israelites, was possessed by the descendants of Canaan,
the youngest son of Ham, and grandson of Noah; who divided the country among his eleven sons, each of whom was the head of a numerous clan or tribe. (Gen. x. 15—19.) Here they resided upwards of seven centuries, and founded numerous republics and kingdoms. In the days of Abraham, this region was occupied by ten nations: the Kenites, the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, to the east of Jordan; and westward, the Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaims, Amorites, Canaanites, Gergashites, and the Jebusites. (Gen. xv. 18—21.) These latter in the days of Moses were called the Hittites, Gergashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. (Deut. vii. 1. Josh. iii. 10. xxiv. 11.) Besides these devoted nations there were others, either settled in the land at the arrival of the Israelites, or in its immediate environs, with whom the latter had to maintain many severe conflicts: they were six in number, viz. the Philistines, already noticed; the Midianites, or descendants of Midian, the fourth son of Abraham, by Keturah (Gen. xxv. 2.): the Moabites and Ammonites, who sprung from the incestuous offspring of Lot (Gen. xix. 30—38.); the Amalekites, who were descended from Amalek, the son of Ham, and grandson of Noah; and the Edomites, or descendants of Esau or Edom.

On the conquest of Canaan by the children of Israel, Joshua divided it into twelve parts, which the twelve tribes drew by lot. The tribe of Levi, indeed, possessed no lands: God assigned to the Levites, who were appointed to minister in holy things without any secular encumbrance, the tenths and first-fruits of the estates of their brethren. Forty-eight cities were appropriated to their residence, thence called Levitical cities: these were dispersed among the twelve tribes, and had their respective suburbs with land surrounding them. Of these cities the Kohathites received twenty-three, the Gershomites thirteen, and the Merarites twelve; and six of them, three on each side of Jordan, were appointed
to be cities of refuge, whither the inadvertent man-slayer might flee, and find an asylum from his pursuers, and be secured from the effects of private revenge, until cleared by a legal process. (Numb. xxxv. 6—15. Deut. xix. 4—10. Josh. xx. 7, 8.) In this division of the land into twelve portions, the posterity of Ephraim and Manasseh (the two sons of Joseph) had their portions as distinct tribes, in consequence of Jacob having adopted them; and these two are reckoned instead of Joseph and Levi. The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half tribe of Manasseh, had their portion beyond Jordan; the rest settled on this side of the river. Dan was reputed to be the furthest city to the north of the Holy Land, as Beersheba was to the south.

Another division of the Holy Land took place after the death of Solomon, when ten tribes revolted from Rehoboam, and erected themselves into a separate kingdom under Jeroboam. This was called the kingdom of Israel, and its metropolis was Samaria. The other two tribes of Benjamin and Judah, continuing faithful to Rehoboam, formed the kingdom of Judah, whose capital was Jerusalem. But this rested on the subversion of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser king of Assyria, after it had subsisted two hundred and fifty-four years, from the year of the world 3030 to 3284. (n. c. 716.)

In the time of Jesus Christ, the whole of this country was divided into four separate regions, viz. Judæa, Samaria, Galilee, and Peræa, or the country beyond Jordan.

1. Judæa.

Of these regions, Judæa was the most distinguished, comprising the territories which had formerly belonged to the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Simeon, and part of the tribe of Dan. The southern part of it was called Idumæa, and it extended westward from the Dead Sea to the Great (or Mediterranean) Sea. Its metropolis was Jerusalem, of which a separate notice will be found in a
subsequent page: and of the other towns or villages of note contained in this region, the most remarkable were Arimathea, Azotos or Ashdod, Bethany, Bethlehem, Bethphage, Emmaus, Ephraim, Gaza, Jericho, Joppa, Lydda, and Rama.

2. Samaria.

This division of the Holy Land derives its name from the city of Samaria, and comprises the tract of country which was originally occupied by the two tribes of Ephraim and Manassach within Jordan, lying exactly in the middle between Judæa and Galilee; so that it was absolutely necessary for persons, who were desirous of going expeditiously from Galilee to Jerusalem, to pass through this country. This sufficiently explains the remark of St. John (iv. 4.) The three chief places of this division noticed in the Scriptures are, Samaria, Sichem or Shechem, and Antipatris.


This portion of the Holy Land is very frequently mentioned in the New Testament; it exceeded Judæa in extent, but its limits probably varied at different times. It comprised the country formerly occupied by the tribes of Issachar, Zebulon, Naphtali, and Asher, and part of the tribe of Dan; and is divided by Josephus into Upper and Lower Galilee.

Upper Galilee abounded in mountains; and, from its vicinity to the Gentiles who inhabited the cities of Tyre and Sidon, it is called Galilee of the Gentiles (Matt. iv. 15.) and the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. (Mark vii. 31.) The principal city in this region was Cæsarea Philippi, through which the main road lay to Damascus, Tyre, and Sidon.

Lower Galilee was situated in a rich and fertile plain, between the Mediterranean Sea and the lake of Gennesareth; and, according to Josephus, this district was very
populous, containing upwards of two hundred cities and towns. This country was most honoured by our Saviour's presence.

The principal cities of Lower Galilee, mentioned in the New Testament, are Tiberias, Capernaum, Chorazin, Bethsaida, Nazareth, Cana, Nain, Caesarea of Palestine, and Ptolemais.

4. PEREA.

This district comprised the six following provinces or cantons, viz. Abilene, Trachonitis, Ituraea, Gaulonitis, Batanaea, and Perea, strictly so called, to which some geographers have added Decapolis.

(1.) Abilene was the most northern of these provinces, being situated between the mountains of Libanus and Antilibanus, and deriving its name from the city Abila. It is one of the four tetrarchies mentioned by Saint Luke. (iii. 1.)

(2.) Trachonitis was bounded by the desert Arabia on the east, Batanea on the west, Ituraea on the south, and the country of Damascus on the north. It abounded with rocks, which afforded shelter to numerous thieves and robbers.

(3.) Ituraea antiently belonged to the half tribe of Manasseh, who settled on the east of Jordan; it stood to the east of Batanaea and to the south of Trachonitis. Of these two cantons Philip the son of Herod the Great was tetrarch at the time John the Baptist commenced his ministry. (Luke iii. 1.) It derived its name from Jetur the son of Ishmael, (1 Chron. i. 31.) and was also called Auranitis from the city of Hauran. (Ezek. xlvii. 16. 18.)

(4.) Gaulonitis was a tract on the east side of the lake of Gennesareth and the river Jordan, which derived its name from Gaulan or Golan the city of Og, king of Bashan. (Josh. xx. 8.) This canton is not mentioned in the New Testament.
(5.) **BATAEA**, the antient kingdom of Bashan, was situated to the north-east of Gaulonitis: its limits are not easy to be defined. It was part of the territory given to Herod Antipas, and is not noticed in the New Testament.

(6.) **PEREA**, in its restricted sense, includes the southern part of the country beyond Jordan, lying south of Ituræa, east of Judæa and Samaria; and was antiently possessed by the two tribes of Reuben and Gad. Its principal place was the strong fortress of Machærus, erected for the purpose of checking the predatory incursions of the Arabs. This fortress, though not specified by name in the New Testament, is memorable as the place where John the Baptist was put to death. (Matt. xiv. 3—12.)

The canton of **DECAPOLIS** (Matt. iv. 25. Mark v. 20. and vii. 31.), which derives its name from the ten cities it contained, was part of the region of Peræa. Concerning its limits, and the names of its ten cities, geographers are by no means agreed: among them, however, we may safely reckon Gadara, where our Saviour wrought some miracles, and perhaps Damascus, chiefly celebrated for the conversion of Saint Paul, which took place in its vicinity.

Of the whole country thus described, **JERUSALEM** was the metropolis during the reigns of David and Solomon; after the secession of the ten tribes, it was the capital of the kingdom of Judah, but during the time of Christ, and until the subversion of the Jewish polity, it was the metropolis of Palestine.

Jerusalem is frequently styled in the Scriptures, the **Holy City**, (Isa. xlviii. 2. Dan. ix. 24. Nehem. xi. 1. Matt. iv. 5. Rev. xi. 2.) because the **Lord chose it out of all the tribes of Israel to place his name there**, his temple and his worship (Deut. xii. 5. xiv. 23. xvi. 2. xxvi. 2.); and to be the centre of union in religion and government for all the tribes of the commonwealth of Israel. It is held in the highest veneration by Christians for the miraculous and important transactions which happened there, and also
by the Mohammedans, who to this day never call it by any other appellation than \textit{El-Kods}, or the Holy, sometimes adding the epithet \textit{El-Sheriff}, or The Noble. The original name of the city was \textit{Salem}, or Peace (Gen. xiv. 18.): the import of Jerusalem is, the vision or inheritance of peace; and to this it is not improbable that our Saviour alluded in his beautiful and pathetic lamentation over the city. (Luke xix. 41.) It was also formerly called Jebus from one of the sons of Canaan. (Josh. xviii. 28.) After its capture by Joshua (Josh. x.) it was jointly inhabited both by Jews and Jebusites (Josh. xv. 63.) for about five hundred years, until the time of David; who, having expelled the Jebusites, made it his residence (2 Sam. v. 6—9.), and erected a noble palace there, together with several other magnificent buildings, whence it is sometimes styled the \textit{City of David}. (1 Chron. xi. 5.)

Jerusalem, after its destruction by the Chaldeans, was rebuilt by the Jews, on their return from the Babylonish captivity. The city was built on three principal hills: viz. 1. \textit{Sion} on the southern side, which was the highest, and contained the citadel, the king’s palace, and the upper city. 2. \textit{Moriah}, on which was the temple, a smaller eminence on the east of the northern part of Sion, and separated from it by a valley over which was a bridge; and 3. \textit{Acre}, so called in a later age, lying north of Sion, and covered by the lower city, which was the most considerable portion of the whole metropolis.

On the south side stood the mount of Corruption, where Solomon, in his declining years, built temples to Moloch, Chemosh, and Ashtaroth. (1 Kings xi. 7. 2 Kings xxiii. 13.)

Towards the west, and without the walls of the city, agreeably to the law of Moses, (Levit. iv.) lay mount Calvary or Golgotha, that is, the place of a skull. (Matt. xxvii. 33.)

During the time of our Saviour, Jerusalem was adorned with numerous edifices, some of which are mentioned or
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alluded to in the New Testament; but its chief glory was the Temple (described in a subsequent page), which magnificent and extensive structure occupied the northern and lower eminence of Sion, as we learn from the Psalmist, (xlvi. 2.) Beautiful for situation, the delight of the whole earth, is Mount Sion. On her north side is the city of the great king.

Next to the temple in point of splendour was the very superb palace of Herod, which is largely described by Josephus; it afterwards became the residence of the Roman procurators, who for this purpose generally claimed the royal palaces in those provinces which were subject to kings. These dwellings of the Roman procurators in the provinces were called pretoria: Herod's palace therefore was Pilate's praetorium (Matt. xxvii. 27. John xviii. 28.) and in some part of this edifice was the armoury or barrack of the Roman soldiers that garrisoned Jerusalem, whither Jesus was conducted and mocked by them. (Matt. xxvii. 27. Mark xv. 16.) In the front of this palace was the tribunal, where Pilate sat in a judicial capacity to hear and determine weighty causes: being a raised pavement of Mosaic work, (λιθοστρώτων, lithostrotōn), the evangelist informs us, that in the Hebrew language it was on this account termed gabbatha, (John xix. 13.) i. e. an elevated place. On a steep rock, adjoining the north-west corner of the temple, stood the Tower of Antonia, a strong citadel, in which a Roman legion was always quartered. It overlooked the two outer courts of the temple, and communicated with its cloisters by means of secret passages, through which the military could descend and quell any tumult that might arise during the great festivals. This was the guard to which Pilate alluded in Matt. xxviii. 65. The tower of Antonia was thus named by Herod, in honour of his friend Mark Antony: and this citadel is the castle into which St. Paul was conducted (Acts xxvi. 34, 35.), and of which mention is made in Acts xxii. 24. As the temple was a fortress
that guarded the whole city of Jerusalem, so the tower of Antonia was a guard that entirely commanded the temple. According to the Jewish Historian Josephus, the circumference of Jerusalem, previously to its being besieged and destroyed by the Roman army, was thirty-three furlongs, or nearly four miles and a half; and the wall of circumvallation, constructed by order of the Roman general, Titus, he states to have been thirty-nine furlongs, or four miles eight hundred and seventy-five paces.

During the reigns of David and Solomon, Jerusalem was the metropolis of the land of Israel; but, after the defection of the ten tribes under Jeroboam, it was the capital of the kings of Judah, during whose government it underwent various revolutions. It was captured four times without being demolished, viz. by Shishak sovereign of Egypt, (2 Chron. xii.) from whose ravages it never recovered its former splendour; by Antiochus Epiphanes, who treated the Jews with singular barbarity; by Pompey the Great, who rendered the Jews tributary to Rome; and by Herod, with the assistance of a Roman force under Sosius. It was first entirely destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and again by the emperor Titus, the repeated insurrections of the turbulent Jews having filled up the measure of their iniquities, and drawn down upon them the implacable vengeance of the Romans. Titus ineffectually endeavoured to save the temple: it was involved in the same ruin with the rest of the city, and, after it had been reduced to ashes, the foundations of that sacred edifice were ploughed up by the Roman soldiers. Thus literally was fulfilled the prediction of our Lord, that not one stone should be left upon another that should not be thrown down. (Matt. xxiv. 2.) On his return to Rome, Titus was honoured with a triumph; and, to commemorate his conquest of Judæa, a triumphal arch was erected, which is still in existence. Numerous medals of Judæa vanquished were struck in honour of
the same event. A representation of one of these is given in page 28. supra.

The emperor Adrian erected a city on part of the former site of Jerusalem, which he called Ælia Capitolina: it was afterwards greatly enlarged and beautified by Constantine the Great, who restored its ancient name. During that emperor’s reign, the Jews made various efforts to rebuild their temple, which however were always frustrated; nor did better success attend the attempt made A.D. 363, by the apostate emperor Julian. An earthquake, a whirlwind, and a fiery eruption, compelled the workmen to abandon their design.

From the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans to the present time, that city has remained, for the most part, in a state of ruin and desolation; “and has never been under the government of the Jews themselves, but oppressed and broken down by a succession of foreign masters — the Romans, the Saracens, the Franks, the Mamelukes, and last by the Turks, to whom it is still subject. It is not therefore only in the history of Josephus, and in other antient writers, that we are to look for the accomplishment of our Lord’s predictions: — we see them verified at this moment before our eyes, in the desolated state of the once celebrated city and temple of Jerusalem, and in the present condition of the Jewish people, not collected together into any one country, into one political society, and under one form of government, but dispersed over every region of the globe, and everywhere treated with contumely and scorn.” (Bp. Porteus.)
Mount Tabor, as seen from the Plain of Esdraelon.

CHAPTER II.

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE HOLY LAND.

The surface of the Holy Land being diversified with mountains and plains, its climate varies in different places; though in general it is more settled than in our more western countries. Generally speaking, the atmosphere is mild; the summers are commonly dry, and extremely hot: intensely hot days, however, are frequently succeeded by intensely cold nights; and it is to these sudden vicissitudes, and their consequent effects on the human frame, that Jacob refers, when he says that in the day the drought consumed him, and the frost by night. (Gen. xxxi. 40.)

Six several seasons of the natural year are indicated in Gen. viii. 22. viz. seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter; and as agriculture constituted the principal employment of the Jews, we are informed by the rabbinical writers, that they adopted the same di-
vision of seasons, with reference to their rural work. These divisions also exist among the Arabs to this day.

1. **Seed-time** comprised the latter half of the Jewish month Tisri, the whole of Marchesvan, and the former half of Kisleu or Chisleu, that is, from the beginning of October to the beginning of December. During this season the weather is various, very often misty, cloudy, with mizzling or pouring rain.

2. **Winter** included the latter half of Chisleu, the whole of Tebeth, and the former part of Shebeth, that is, from the beginning of December to the beginning of February. In this season, snows rarely fall, except on the mountains, but they seldom continue a whole day; the ice is thin, and melts as soon as the sun ascends above the horizon. As the season advances, the north wind and the cold, especially on the lofty mountains, which are now covered with snow, is intensely severe, and sometimes even fatal: the cold is frequently so piercing, that persons born in our climate can scarcely endure it. The cold, however, varies in the degree of its severity, according to the local situation of the country.

3. The **cold season** comprises the latter half of Shebeth, the whole of Adar, and the former half of Nisan, from the beginning of February to the beginning of April. At the commencement of this season, the weather is cold, but it gradually becomes warm and even hot, particularly in the plain of Jericho. Thunder, lightning, and hail are frequent. Vegetable nature now revives; the almond tree blossoms, and the gardens assume a delightful appearance. Barley is ripe at Jericho, though but little wheat is in the ear.

4. The **harvest** includes the latter half of Nisan, the whole of Jyar (or Zif), and the former half of Sivan, that is, from the beginning of April to the beginning of June. In the plain of Jericho the heat of the sun is excessive, though in other parts of Palestine the weather is most
delightful; and on the sea-coast the heat is tempered by
morning and evening breezes from the sea.

5. The summer comprehends the latter half of Sivan,
the whole of Thammuz, and the former half of Ab, that
is, from the beginning of June to the beginning of
August. The heat of the weather increases, and the
nights are so warm that the inhabitants sleep on their
house-tops in the open air.

6. The hot season includes the latter half of Ab, the
whole of Elul, and the former half of Tisri, that is, from
the beginning of August to the beginning of October.
During the chief part of this season the heat is intense,
though less so at Jerusalem than in the plain of Jericho:
there is no cold, not even in the night, so that travellers
pass whole nights in the open air without inconvenience.
Lebanon is for the most part free from snow, except in
the caverns and defiles where the sun cannot penetrate.

During the hot season, it is not uncommon in the East
Indies for persons to die suddenly, in consequence of the
extreme heat of the solar rays (whence the necessity of
being carried in a palanquin). This is now commonly
termed a coup-de-soleil, or stroke of the sun. The son of
the woman of Shunem appears to have died in con-
sequence of a coup-de-soleil (2 Kings iv. 19, 20.); to
which there is an allusion in Psalm cxxi. 2.

Rain falls but rarely, except in autumn and spring; but
its absence is partly supplied by the very copious dews
which fall during the night. The early or autumnal
rains and the latter or spring rains are absolutely ne-
cessary to the support of vegetation, and were .conse-
quently objects greatly desired by the Israelites and Jews.
The early rains generally fall about the beginning of
November, when they usually ploughed their lands and
sowed their corn; and the latter rains fall sometimes
towards the middle and sometimes towards the close
of April; that is, a short time before they gathered
in their harvest. These rains, however, were always
chilly (Ezra x. 9. and Song ii. 11.), and often preceded by whirlwinds (2 Kings iii. 16, 17.) that raised such quantities of sand as to darken the sky, or, in the words of the sacred historian, to make the heavens black with clouds and wind. (1 Kings xviii. 45.) In the figurative language of the Scripture, these whirlwinds are termed the command and the word of God (Psalm cxlvii. 15. 18.); and as they are sometimes fatal to travellers who are overwhelmed in the deserts, the rapidity of their advance is elegantly employed by Solomon to show the certainty as well as the suddenness of that destruction which will befall the impenitently wicked. (Prov. i. 27.) The rains descend in Palestine with great violence; and as whole villages in the east are constructed only with palm-branches, mud, and tiles baked in the sun, (perhaps corresponding to and explanatory of the untempered mortar noticed in Ezek. xiii. 11.) these rains not unfrequently dissolve the cement, such as it is, and the houses fall to the ground. To these effects our Lord probably alludes in Matt. vii. 25—27. Very small clouds are likewise the forerunners of violent storms and hurricanes in the east as well as in the west: they rise like a man's hand, (1 Kings xviii. 44.) until the whole sky becomes black with rain, which descends in torrents. In our Lord's time, this phenomenon seems to have become a certain prognostic of wet weather. See Luke xii. 54.

In consequence of the paucity of showers in the east, water is an article of great importance to the inhabitants. Hence, in Lot's estimation, it was a principal recommendation of the plain of Jordan that it was well watered everywhere (Gen. xiii. 10.): and the same advantage continued in later ages to be enjoyed by the Israelites, whose country was intersected by numerous brooks and streams.

Although rivers are frequently mentioned in the sacred writings, yet, strictly speaking, the only river in the Holy Land is the Jordan, which is sometimes designated
in Scripture as the river without any addition; as also is the Nile (Gen. xli. 1. Exod. i. 22. ii. 5. iv. 9. vii. 18. and viii. 3. 9. 11.) and, occasionally, the Euphrates, (as in Jer. ii. 18.) in the passages here referred to, the tenour of the discourse must determine which is the river actually intended by the sacred writers. The name of river is also given to inconsiderable streams and rivulets, as to the Kishon (Judges iv. 7. and v. 21.) and the Arnon. (Deut. iii. 16.)

The principal river which waters Palestine is the Jordan or Yar-Dan, i.e. the river of Dan, so called because it takes its rise in the vicinity of the little city of Dan. Its true source is in the lake Phiala near Caesarea Philippi, at the foot of Antilibanus, or the eastern ridge of mount Lebanon, whence it passes underground, and, emerging to the light from a cave in the vicinity of Paneas, it flows due south through the centre of the country, intersecting the lake Merom and the sea or lake of Galilee, and (it is said) without mingling with its waters; and it loses itself in the lake Asphaltites or the Dead Sea, into which it rolls a considerable volume of deep water, and so rapid as to prevent a strong, active, and expert swimmer from swimming across it. The course of the Jordan is about one hundred miles; its breadth and depth are various. All travellers concur in stating that its waters are turbid, from the rapidity with which they flow.

Antiently, the Jordan overflowed its banks about the time of barley-harvest (Josh. iii. 15. iv. 18. 1 Chron. xii. 15. Jer. xliv. 19.), or the feast of the passover; when, the snows being dissolved on the mountains, the torrents discharged themselves into its channel with great impetuosity. Its banks are covered with various kinds of bushes and shrubs, which afford an asylum for wild animals now, as they did in the time of Jeremiah, who alludes to them. (Jer. xliv. 19.)

The other remarkable streams or rivulets of Palestine
are the following: viz. 1. The Arnon, which descends from the mountain of the same name, and discharges itself into the Dead Sea:—2. The Sihor (the Belus of antient geographers, at present called the Kordanah,) has its source about four miles to the east of the heads of the river Kishon. It waters the plains of Acre and Esdraelon, and falls into the sea at the gulph of Keilah:—3. The brook Jabbok takes its rise in the same mountains, and falls into the river Jordan:—4. The Kanah, or brook of reeds, springs from the mountains of Judah, but only flows during the winter: it falls into the Mediterranean Sea near Caesarea:—5. The brook Besor (1 Sam. xxx. 9,) falls into the same sea between Gaza and Rhinocorura:—6. The Kishon issues from the mountains of Carmel, at the foot of which it forms two streams; one flows eastward into the sea of Galilee, and the other, taking a westerly course through the plain of Jezreel or Esdraelon, discharges itself into the Mediterranean Sea. This is the stream noticed in 1 Kings xviii. 40.:—7. Kedron, Kidron, or Cedron, as it is variously termed (2 Sam. xv. 23. 1 Kings xv. 13. 2 Kings xxiii. 6. 12. 2 Chron. xxix. 16. Jer. xxxi. 40. John xviii. 1.), runs in the valley of Jeshaphat, eastward of Jerusalem, between that city and the mount of Olives: except during the winter, or after heavy rains, its channel is generally dry; but when swollen by torrents, it flows with great impetuosity.

Of the Lakes mentioned in the Scriptures, three are particularly worthy of notice; that of Gennesareth and the lake of Sodom are termed seas agreeably to the Hebrew phraseology, which gives the name of sea to any large body of water.

1. The Sea of Galilee, through which the Jordan flows, was antiently called the Sea of Chinnereth (Numb. xxxiv. 11.) or Cinneroth (Josh. xii. 3.) from its vicinity to the town of that name; afterwards Genesar (1 Mac.xi. 67.), and in the time of Jesus Christ Genesareth or Gennesareth (Luke v. 1.) from the neighbouring land of the same.
name (Matt. xiv. 34. Mark xv. 53.); and also the sea of Tiberias (John vi. 1. xxii. 1.), from the contiguous city of Tiberias. The waters of this lake are very sweet, and abound with fish: this circumstance marks the propriety of our Lord's parable of the net cast into the sea (Matt. xiii. 47—49.), near the shore. Pliny states this lake to be sixteen miles in length by six miles in breadth. Dr. D. E. Clarke, by whom it was visited nearly thirty years since, describes it as longer and finer than our Cumberland and Westmorland lakes, although it yields in majesty to the stupendous features of Loch Lomond in Scotland: like our Windermere the lake of Gennezareth is often greatly agitated by winds. (Matt. viii. 23—27.)

The Waters of Merom, mentioned in Josh. xi. 5. 7., are generally supposed to be the lake, afterwards called Sænochonitis, which lies between the head of the river Jordan and the Sea of Tiberias. According to Josephus, it is thirty furlongs broad, and sixty furlongs in length; and its marshes extend to the place called Daphne, where the Jordan issues from it.

3. The Lake or Sea of Sodom, or the Dead Sea, is about 72 English miles in length, and nearly 19 in breadth. It was antiently called in the Scriptures the Sea of the Plain (Deut. iii. 17. iv. 49.), being situated in a valley with a plain lying to the south of it; the Salt Sea (Deut. iii. 17. Josh. xv. 5.), from the extremely saline, bitter, and nauseous taste of its waters; the Salt Sea eastward (Numb. xxxiv. 3.) and the East Sea. (Ezek. xlvii. 18. Joel ii. 20.) By Josephus and other writers it is called the lake Asphaltites, from the abundance of bitumen found in it; and also the Dead Sea, from antient traditions, erroneously though generally received, that no living creature can exist in its stagnant and sulphureous waters. Here formerly stood the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, which, with two other cities of the plain, were consumed by fire from heaven: to this destruction there are numerous allusions in the Scriptures.
Besides the preceding rivers and lakes, the Scriptures mention several Fountains and Wells: of these the most remarkable are the fountain or pool of Siloam and Jacob’s Well.

Siloam was a fountain under the walls of Jerusalem, east, between the city and the brook Kedron: it is supposed to be the same as the fountain En-Rogel, or the Fuller’s Fountain. (Josh. xv. 7. and xviii. 16. 2 Sam. xvn. 17. and 1 Kings i. 9.) “The spring issues from a rock, and runs in a silent stream, according to the testimony of Jeremiah.”

Jacob’s Well or fountain is situated at a small distance from Sichem or Shechem, also called Sychar, and at present Napolose: it was the residence of Jacob before his sons slew the Shechemites. It has been visited by pilgrims of all ages, but especially by Christians, to whom it has become an object of veneration from the memorable discourse of our Saviour with the woman of Samaria. (John iv. 5—30.)

In our own time it is the custom for the oriental women, particularly those who are unmarried, to fetch water from the wells, in the mornings and evenings; at which times they go forth adorned with their trinkets. This will account for Rebecca’s fetching water (Gen. xxiv. 15.), and will farther prove that there was no impropriety in Abraham’s servant presenting her with more valuable jewels than those she had before on her hands. (Gen. xxiv. 22—47.)

Palestine is a mountainous country, especially that part of it which is situated between the Mediterranean or Great Sea and the river Jordan. The principal Mountains not already mentioned, are those of Lebanon, Carmel, Tabor, the mountains of Israel and of Gilead.

1. Lebanon, by the Greeks and Latins termed Libanus, is a long chain of limestone mountains, extending from the neighbourhood of Sidon on the west to the vicinity of Damascus eastward, and forming the extreme northern