

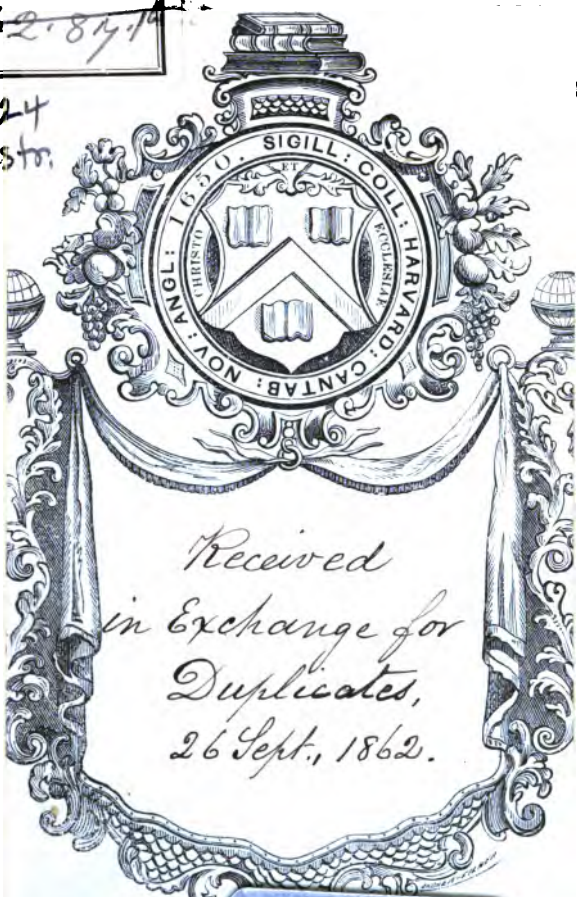
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THE
DESTRUCTION
OF
JERUSALEM,

INCLUDING A NARRATIVE
OF THE CALAMITIES WHICH BEFELL
THE JEWS.

WITH A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE
CITY AND TEMPLE.

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P R E F A C E .

HISTORY records few events more generally interesting than the destruction of Jerusalem, and the subversion of the Jewish State, by the arms of the Romans. Many eminent and learned men have employed their pens in the illustration of it; but the fruits of their labors are, for the most part, contained in large and expensive works, out of the reach of numbers, to whom the discussion might prove equally interesting and improving. For the use and gratification of such, the present Treatise, in a more accessible and familiar form, is diffidently offered to the public.

G. H.

LONDON, 1st Jan. 1805.

THE

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.



OF the prophecies of our Lord which have already been fulfilled, few, perhaps, are so interesting in themselves, or so striking in their accomplishment, as those which relate to the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, and the signal calamities which every where befell the Jewish nation. The chief of our LORD'S predictions, relative to these events, are contained in the following chapters, viz: Matt. XXIV: Mark XIII: Luke XXI, XIX, 41—44: Luke XXIII, 27—30: and we may with confidence appeal to the facts which verify them as conclusive and incontrovertible proofs of the divinity of his mission. Before, however, we enter upon this illustration, it may be gratifying to the reader, and add considerably to the interest of many of the subsequent pages, to

give in this place a brief description of that renowned city and its temple.

Jerusalem was built on two mountains. Three celebrated walls surrounded the city on every side, except that which was deemed inaccessible, and there it was defended by one wall only. The most ancient of these walls was remarkable for its great strength, and was moreover, erected on a hanging rock, and fortified by sixty towers. On the middle wall there were fourteen towers only; but on the third, which was also distinguished by the extraordinary merit of its architecture, there were no less than ninety. The celebrated tower of Psephinos, before which Titus at first encamped, was erected on this latter wall, and even excelled it in the superior style of its architecture: it was seventy cubits high, and had eight angles, each of which commanded most extensive and beautiful prospects. In clear weather, the spectator had from them a view of the Mediterranean sea, of Arabia, and of the whole extent of the Jewish dominions. Besides this there were three other towers of great magnitude, named Hippocos, Phasaël, Mariamne. The two former, famed for their strength and grandeur, were near ninety cubits high; the latter, for its valuable curiosities, beauty and elegance, was about fifty-five cubits. They were all built of white marble;

and so exquisite was the workmanship, that each of them appeared as if it had been hewn out of an immense single block of it. Notwithstanding their great elevation, they yet must have appeared, from the surrounding country, far loftier than they really were. The old wall, it has just been remarked, was built upon a high rock: but these towers were erected upon the top of a hill, the summit of which was itself thirty cubits above the top of the old wall! Such edifices, so situated, it is easy to conceive, must have given to the city a very great degree of grandeur and magnificence. Not far distant from these towers stood the royal palace, of singular beauty and elegance. Its pillars, its porticoes, its galleries, its apartments, were all incredibly costly, splendid and superb; while the groves, gardens, walks, fountains and aqueducts, with which it was encompassed, formed the richest and most delightful scenery that can possibly be imagined. The situation of these structures was on the north side of Jerusalem. Its celebrated temple, and the strong fort of Antonia, were on the east side, and directly opposite to the Mount of Olives. This fort was built on a rock fifty cubits in height, and so steep as to be inaccessible on every side; and to render it still more so, it was faced with thin slabs of marble, which, being slippery, proved at once a defence and

an ornament. In the midst of the fort stood the castle of Antonia, the interior parts of which, for grandeur, state, and convenience, resembled more a palace than a fortress. Viewed from a distance it had the appearance of a tower, encompassed by four other towers, situated at the four angles of a square. Of these latter, three were fifty cubits high, and the fourth seventy cubits.

The tower last mentioned commanded an excellent view of the whole temple, the riches, grandeur, and elegance of which it is not in the power of language to describe. Whether we consider its architecture, its dimensions, its magnificence, its splendor, or the sacred purposes to which it was dedicated, it must equally be regarded as the most astonishing fabric that was ever constructed. It was erected partly on a solid rock, which was originally steep on every side. The foundations of what was called the lower temple were 300 cubits in depth, and the stones of which they were composed, more than sixty feet in length, while the superstructure contained, of the whitest marble, stones nearly sixty-eight feet long, more than seven feet high, and nine broad. The circuit of the whole building was four furlongs; its height one hundred cubits; one hundred and sixty pillars, each twenty-seven feet high, ornamented and sustained the im-

mense and ponderous edifice. In the front, spacious and lofty galleries, wainscotted with cedar, were supported by columns of white marble; in uniform rows. In short, says Josephus, nothing could surpass even the exterior of this temple, for its elegant and curious workmanship. It was adorned with solid plates of gold that rivalled the beauty of the rising sun, and were scarcely less dazzling to the eye than the beams of that luminary. Of those parts of the building which were not gilt, when viewed from a distance, some, says he, appeared like pillars of snow, and some like mountains of white marble. The splendor of the interior parts of the temple corresponded with its external magnificence. It was decorated and enriched by every thing that was costly, elegant and superb. Religious donations and offerings had poured into this wonderful repository of precious stores from every part of the world, during many successive ages. In the lower temple were placed those sacred curiosities, the seven branched candlestick of pure gold, the table for the shewbread, and the altar of incense; the two latter of which were covered with plates of the same metal. In the sanctuary were several doors, fifty-five cubits high, and sixteen in breadth, which were all likewise of gold. Before these doors hung a veil of the most beautiful Baby-

lonian tapestry, composed of scarlet, blue, and purple, exquisitely interwoven, and wrought up to the highest degree of art. From the top of the ceiling depended branches and leaves of vines, and large clusters of grapes, hanging down five or six feet, all of gold and of most admirable workmanship. In addition to these proofs of the splendor and riches of the temple, may be noticed its eastern gate of pure Corinthian brass, more esteemed even than the precious metals—the golden folding doors of the chambers—the beautiful carved work, gilding, and painting of the galleries—golden vessels, &c., of the sanctuary—the sacerdotal vestments of scarlet, violet, and purple—the vast wealth of the treasury—abundance of precious stones, and immense quantities of all kinds of costly spices and perfumes. In short, the most valuable and sumptuous of whatever nature, or art, or opulence, could supply, was enclosed within the consecrated walls of this magnificent and venerable edifice.

So much concerning this celebrated city, and its still more celebrated temple. We shall now consider our LORD'S prophecies relating to their destruction.

On the Monday immediately preceding his crucifixion, our blessed SAVIOUR made his public and triumphant entry into Jerusalem, amidst the acclamations of a very great mul-

titude of his disciples, who hailed him KING OF SION, and with palm-branches, the emblems of victory, in their hands, rejoiced and gave praises to God for all the mighty works they had seen, singing "Hosanna! blessed be the KING that cometh in the name of the LORD! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!" But while the people thus exulted, and triumphantly congratulated the MESSIAH, he, struggling with the deepest emotions of pity and compassion for Jerusalem, beheld the city and wept over it, saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes; for the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee round, and keep thee in on every side; and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."* On the Wednesday following, being only two days before his death, he went for the last time into the temple to teach the people: while he was thus employed, the High Priests and the Elders, the Herodians, Sadducees, and Pharisees, successively came to him, and questioned him with subtilty, being desirous to "entangle him in his talk;"

*Luke XIX. 42—44.

to whom, with his accustomed dignity and wisdom, he returned answers which carried conviction to their hearts, and at once silenced and astonished them. Then, turning to his disciples, and the whole multitude, he addressed to them a discourse of very uncommon energy, in which, with most exquisite keenness of reproof, he exposed and condemned the cruelty and pride, the hypocrisy and sensuality of the Pharisees and Scribes. Having next foretold the barbarous treatment which his apostles would receive at their hands, he proceeded to denounce against Jerusalem the dire and heavy vengeance, that had for ages been accumulating in the vials of divine displeasure, expressly declaring that it should be poured out upon the then existing generation, adding that inimitably tender and pathetic apostrophe to this devoted city, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold! your house is left unto you desolate; for I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"* Having said this, he

*Matt. xxiii. 37—39.

went out of the temple, and as he departed, his disciples drew his attention to the wonderful magnitude and splendor of the edifice. They spake, "how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts;" and said unto him, "Master, see! what manner of stones and buildings are here! And JESUS said unto them, see ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down."

When we consider the antiquity and sanctity of the temple, its stupendous fabric, its solidity, and the uncommon magnitude of the stones of which it was composed, we may in some measure, conceive of the amazement which this declaration of our Lord must have excited in the mind of his disciples. Nevertheless, this remarkable prediction, as we shall see in the sequel, was literally fulfilled, and, as our Lord had foretold, even during the existence of the generation to which he addressed it.

Our Lord now retired to the Mount of Olives, to which place the disciples followed him, in order to make more particular inquiries relative to the time when the calamitous events, foretold by him, would come to pass.

"Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" Such were the questions of the disciples, in answer to which our Lord

condescended to give them a particular account of the several important events that would precede.

“And fearful sights and great signs shall there be from Heaven.”* Josephus has collected the chief of these portents together, and introduces his account by a reflection on the strangeness of that infatuation, which could induce his countrymen to give credit to impostors, and unfounded reports, whilst they disregarded the divine admonitions, confirmed, as he asserts they were, by the following extraordinary signs:

1. “A meteor, resembling a sword,† hung over Jerusalem during one whole year.”

2. “On the eighth of the month Zanthicus, (before the feast of unleavened bread) at the ninth hour of the night, there shone round about the altar, and the circumjacent buildings of the temple, a light equal to the brightness of the day, which continued for the space of half an hour.”

3. “As the High Priests were leading a heifer to the altar to be sacrificed, she brought forth a lamb, in the midst of the temple.” Such is the strange account given by the historian. Some may regard it as a “Grecian fable,” while others may think that they discern

*Luke, **XXI. II.**

†Vide **I Chron. XXI. XVI.**

in this prodigy a miraculous rebuke of Jewish infidelity and impiety, for rejecting the ANTI-TYPICAL LAMB, who had offered up HIMSELF as an atonement, "once for all," and who, by thus completely fulfilling their design, had virtually abrogated the Levitical sacrifices. However this may be, the circumstances of the prodigy are remarkable. It did not occur in an obscure part of the city, but in the temple; not at an ordinary time, but at the Passover, the season of our Lord's crucifixion—in the presence, not of the vulgar merely, but of the High Priests and their attendants, and when they were leading the sacrifice to the altar.

4. "About the sixth hour of the night, the eastern gate of the temple was seen to open without human assistance." When the guards informed the Curator of this event, he sent men to assist them in shutting it, who with great difficulty succeeded. This gate, as hath been observed already, was of solid brass, and required twenty men to close it every evening. It could not have been opened by a "strong gust of wind," or a "slight earthquake;" for Josephus says, "it was secured by iron bolts and bars, which were let down into a large threshold, consisting of one entire stone."*

5. "Soon after the feast of the Passover,

*The conclusion which the Jews drew from this event was, that the security of the temple was gone.

in various parts of the country, before the setting of the sun, chariots and armed men were seen in the air, passing round about Jerusalem."

6. "At the subsequent feast of Pentecost, while the priests were going, by night, into the inner temple to perform their customary ministrations, they first felt, as they said, a shaking, accompanied by an indistinct murmuring, and afterwards voices as of a multitude, saying, in a distinct and earnest manner, 'LET US DEPART HENCE.'"

7. As the last and most fearful omen, Josephus relates that one Jesus, the son of Ananus, a rustic of the lower class, during the feast of tabernacles, suddenly exclaimed in the temple, "A voice from the east—a voice from the west—a voice from the four winds—a voice against Jerusalem and the temple—a voice against bridegrooms and brides—a voice against the whole people!" These words he incessantly proclaimed aloud both day and night, through all the streets of Jerusalem, for seven years and five months together, commencing at a time (A. D. 62) when the city was in a state of peace, and overflowing with prosperity, and terminating amidst the horrors of the siege. This disturber, having excited the attention of the magistracy, was brought before Albinus, the Roman governor, who commanded that he should be scourged. But the

severest stripes drew from him neither tears nor supplications. As he never thanked those who relieved, so neither did he complain of the injustice of those who struck him, and no other answer could the governor obtain to his interrogatories, but his usual denunciation of "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" which he still continued to proclaim through the city, but especially during the festivals, when his manner became more earnest, and the tone of his voice louder. At length, on the commencement of the siege, he ascended the walls, and, in a more powerful voice than ever, exclaimed, "Woe, woe to this city, this temple, and this people!" And then, with a presentiment of his own death, added, "Woe, woe to myself!" He had scarcely uttered these words when a stone from one of the Roman engines killed him on the spot.

Such, briefly, is the account that history gives of the several events and signs, which our Lord had foretold would precede the destruction of the Holy City. No sooner were his predictions accomplished, than a most unaccountable infatuation seized upon the whole Jewish nation; so that they not only provoked, but seemed even to rush into the midst of those unparalleled calamities, which at length totally overwhelmed them. In an essay of this sort, it is impossible to enter into a minute de-

tail of the origin and progress of these evils; but such particulars as illustrate the fulfilment of the remaining part of the prophecy, and justify the strong language in which it is couched, shall be presented to the reader.

From the conquest of their country by Pompey, about sixty years B. C., the Jews had, on several occasions, manifested a refractory spirit; but after Judas, the Gaulonite, and Sadduc, the Pharisee, had taught them that submission to the Roman assessments would pave the way to a state of abject slavery, this temper displayed itself with increasing malignity and violence. Rebellious tumults and insurrections became more and more frequent and alarming; and to these the mercenary exactions of Florus, the Roman governor, not a little contributed. At length Eleazer, son of the High Priest, persuaded those who officiated in the temple, to reject the sacrifices of foreigners, and no longer to offer up prayers for them. Thus an insult was thrown upon Cæsar, his sacrifice rejected, and the foundation of the Roman war laid. The disturbances among the Jews still continuing, Cestius Gallus, president of Syria, marched an army into Judea, in order to quell them, and his career was every where marked with blood and desolation. As he proceeded, he plundered and burnt the beautiful city of Zabulon, Joppa, and all the

villages which lay in his way. At Joppa he slew of the inhabitants eight thousand four hundred. He laid waste the district of Narbatene, and, sending an army into Galilee, slew there two thousand of the seditious Jews. He then burnt the city of Lydda; and after having repulsed the Jews, who made a desperate sally upon him, encamped, at length, at the distance of about one mile from Jerusalem. On the fourth day he entered its gates, and burnt three divisions of the city, and might now by its capture, have put a period to the war; but through the treacherous persuasions of his officers, instead of pursuing his advantages, he most unaccountably raised the siege, and fled from the city with the utmost precipitation. The Jews, however, pursued him as far as Antipatris, and, with little loss to themselves, slew of his army nearly six thousand men. After this disaster had befallen Cestius, the more opulent of the Jews (says Josephus) forsook Jerusalem as men do a sinking ship. And it is with reason supposed, that on this occasion many of the Christians, or converted Jews, who dwelt there, recollecting the warnings of their divine Master, retired to Pella, a place beyond Jordan, situated in a mountainous country,* whither (according to

*Such was our Lord's admonition: "Let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains," &c. Matt. xxiv. 16—22.

Eusebius, who resided near the spot) they came from Jerusalem, and settled, before the war (under Vespasian) began. Other providential opportunities for escaping afterwards occurred, of which, it is probable, those who were now left behind availed themselves; for it is a striking fact, and such as cannot be contemplated by the pious mind without sentiments of devout admiration, that history does not record that even one Christian perished in the siege of Jerusalem. Enduring to the end faithful to their blessed MASTER, they gave full credit to his predictions, and escaped the calamity. Thus were fulfilled the words of our LORD, Matt. xxiv. 13: "He that shall endure unto the end (i. e. of the scene of this prophecy) shall be saved," i. e. from the calamities which will involve all those who shall continue obstinate in unbelief.

Nero, having been informed of the defeat of Cestius, immediately appointed Vespasian, a man of tried valor, to prosecute the war against the Jews, who, assisted by his son Titus, soon collected at Ptolemais an army of sixty thousand men. From hence, in the spring of 67 A. D., he marched into Judea, every where spreading the most cruel havoc and devastation; the Roman soldiers, on various occasions, sparing neither infants nor the aged. For fifteen months Vespasian proceeded in this san-

guinary career, during which period he reduced all the strong towns of Galilee, and the chief of those in Judea, destroying at least one hundred and fifty thousand of the inhabitants. Among the terrible calamities which at this time happened to the Jews, those which befell them at Joppa, which had been rebuilt, deserve particular notice. Their frequent piracies had provoked the vengeance of Vespasian. The Jews fled before his army to their ships; but a tempest immediately arose, and pursued such as stood out to sea, and upset them, while the rest were dashed vessel against vessel, and against the rocks, in the most tremendous manner. In this perplexity some were drowned, some were crushed by the broken ships, others killed themselves, and such as reached the shore were slain by the merciless Romans. The sea for a long space was stained with blood; four thousand two hundred dead bodies were strewed along the coast, and, dreadful to relate, not an individual survived to report this great calamity at Jerusalem. Such events were foretold by our LORD, when he said, "There shall be distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring. Luke XXI. 25.

Vespasian, after proceeding as far as Jericho, returned to Cæsarea, in order to make preparations for his grand attempt against Je-

rusalem. While he was thus employed, he received intelligence of the death of Nero; whereupon, not knowing what the will of the future emperor might be, he prudently resolved to suspend, for the present, the execution of his design. Thus the ALMIGHTY gave the Jews a second respite, which continued nearly two years; but they repented not of their crimes, neither were they in the least degree reclaimed, but rather proceeded to acts of still greater enormity. The flame of civil dissension again burst out, and with more dreadful fury. In the heart of Jerusalem two factions, contending for the sovereignty, raged against each other with rancorous and destructive animosity. A division of one of these factions having been excluded from the city, forcibly entered it during the night. Athirst for blood, and inflamed by revenge, they spared neither age, sex, nor infancy; and the morning sun beheld eight thousand five hundred dead bodies lying in the streets of the holy city. They plundered every house, and having found the chief priests, Ananus and Jesus, not only slew them, but insulting their bodies, cast them forth unburied. They slaughtered the common people as unfeelingly as if they had been a herd of the vilest beasts. The nobles they first imprisoned, then scourged, and when they could not by these means attach them to their party,

they bestowed death upon them as a favor. Of the higher classes twelve thousand perished in this manner; nor did any one dare to shed a tear, or utter a groan openly, through fear of a similar fate. Death, indeed, was the penalty of the lightest and heaviest accusations, nor did any escape through the meanness of their birth, or their poverty. Such as fled were intercepted and slain; their carcasses lay in heaps on all the public roads; every symptom of pity seemed utterly extinguished, and with it all respect for authority, both human and divine.

While Jerusalem was a prey to these ferocious and devouring factions, every part of Judea was scourged and laid waste by bands of robbers and murderers, who plundered the towns, and, in case of resistance, slew the inhabitants, not sparing either women or children. Simon, son of Gioras, commander of one of these bands, at the head of forty thousand banditti, having with some difficulty entered Jerusalem, gave birth to a third faction, and the flame of civil discord blazed out again, with still more destructive fury. The three factions, rendered frantic by drunkenness, rage and desperation, trampling on heaps of slain, fought against each other with brutal savageness and madness. Even such as brought sacrifices to the temple were murdered. The

dead bodies of priests and worshippers, both natives and foreigners, were heaped together, and a lake of blood stagnated in the sacred courts. John, of Gischala, who headed one of the factions, burnt storehouses full of provisions; and Simon, his great antagonist, who headed another of them, soon afterwards followed his example. Thus they cut the very sinews of their own strength. At this critical and alarming conjuncture, intelligence arrived that the Roman army was approaching the city. The Jews were petrified with astonishment and fear; there was no time for counsel, no hope of pacification, no means of flight—all was wild disorder and perplexity; nothing was to be heard but “the confused noise of the warrior,”—“nothing to be seen but garments rolled in blood,”—nothing to be expected from the Romans but signal and exemplary vengeance. A ceaseless cry of combatants was heard day and night, and yet the lamentations of mourners were still more dreadful. The consternation and terror which now prevailed, induced many of the inhabitants to desire that a foreign foe might come, and effect their deliverance. Such was the horrible condition of the place when Titus and his army presented themselves, and encamped before Jerusalem; but, alas! not to deliver it from its miseries, but to fulfill the prediction, and

vindicate the benevolent warning of our Lord: "When ye see (he had said to his disciples) the abomination of desolation, spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place,* and Jerusalem surrounded by armies, (or camps) then let those who are in the midst of Jerusalem depart, and let not those who are in the country enter into her," for "then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." Matt. xxiv. 15—21: Luke xxi. 20—21. These armies, we do not hesitate to affirm, were those of the Romans, who now invested the city. From the time of the Babylonian captivity, idolatry had been held as an abomination by the Jews. This national aversion was manifested even against the images of their gods and emperors, which the Roman armies carried in their standards; so that, in a time of peace, Pilate, and afterwards Vitellius, at the request of some eminent Jews, on this account avoided marching their forces through Judea. Of the desolating disposition which now governed the Roman army, the history of the Jewish war, and especially of the final demolition of the holy city, presents an awful and signal example. Jerusalem was not captured merely, but, with its celebrated temple, laid in ruins. Lest,

*Not only was the temple and the mountain on which it stood accounted holy, but also the whole city of Jerusalem, and several furlongs of land round about it. Vide Neh. xi. 1; Isaiah liii. 1; Daniel ix. 24; and Matt. xxvii. 53.

however, the army of Titus should not be sufficiently designated by this expression, our LORD adds: "Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Matt. XXIV. 28. The Jewish state, indeed, at this time, was fitly compared to a carcass. The scepter of Judea, i. e. its civil and political authority, the life of its religion, and the glory of its temple were departed. It was, in short, morally and judicially dead. The eagle, whose ruling instinct is rapine and murder, as fitly represented the fierce and sanguinary temper of the Romans, and, perhaps, might be intended to refer also to the principal figure on their ensigns, which, however obnoxious to the Jews, were at length planted in the midst of the holy city, and finally on the temple itself.

The day on which Titus encompassed Jerusalem, was the feast of the Passover; and it is deserving of the very particular attention of the reader, that this was the anniversary of that memorable period in which the Jews crucified their MESSIAH! At this season multitudes came up from all the surrounding country, and from distant parts, to keep the festival. How suitable, and how kind, then, was the prophetic admonition of our LORD, and how clearly he saw into futurity when he said, "Let not them that are in the countries enter into Jerusalem." Luke XXI. 21. Neverthe-

less, the city was at this time crowded with Jewish strangers, and foreigners from all parts, so that the whole nation may be considered as having been shut up in one prison, preparatory to the execution of the Divine vengeance; and, according to Josephus, this event took place suddenly; thus, not only fulfilling the predictions of our Lord, that these calamities should come like the swift-darting lightning "that cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west," and "as a snare on all them (the Jews) who dwelt upon the face of the whole earth;" (Matt. xxiv. 27, and Luke xxi. 35,) but justifying, also, his friendly direction, that those who fled from the place should use the utmost possible expedition.

On the appearance of the Roman army, the factious Jews united, and, rushing furiously out of the city, repulsed the tenth legion, which was with difficulty preserved. This event caused a short suspension of hostilities, and, by opening the gates, gave an opportunity to such as were so disposed to make their escape; which before this they could not have attempted without interruption, from the suspicion that they wished to revolt to the Romans. This success inspired the Jews with confidence, and they resolved to defend their city to the very uttermost; but it did not prevent the renewal of their civil broils. The faction under

Eleazer having dispersed, and arranged themselves under the two other leaders, John and Simon, there ensued a scene of the most dreadful contention, plunder, and conflagration; the middle space of the city being burnt, and the wretched inhabitants made the prize of the contending parties. The Romans at length gained possession of two of the three walls which defended the city, and fear once more united the factions. This pause to their fury had, however, scarcely begun, when famine made its ghastly appearance in the Jewish army. It had for some time been silently approaching, and many of the peaceful and the poor had already perished for want of necessaries. With this new calamity, strange to relate, the madness of the factions again returned, and the city presented a new picture of wretchedness. Impelled by the cravings of hunger, they snatched the staff of life out of each other's hands, and many devoured the grain unprepared. Tortures were inflicted for the discovery of a handful of meal; women forced food from their husbands, and children from their fathers, and even mothers from their infants, and while sucking children were wasting away in their arms, they scrupled not to take away the vital drops which sustained them! So justly did our LORD pronounce a woe on "them that should give suck in those

days." (Matt. xxiv. 19.) This dreadful scourge at length drove multitudes of the Jews out of the city into the enemy's camp, where the Romans crucified them in such numbers, that, as Josephus relates, space was wanted for the crosses, and crosses for the captives; and it having been discovered that some of them had swallowed gold, the Arabs and Syrians, who were incorporated in the Roman army, impelled by avarice, with unexampled cruelty ripped open two thousand of the deserters in one night. Titus, touched by these calamities, in person entreated the Jews to surrender, but they answered him with revilings. Exasperated by their obstinacy and insolence, he now resolved to surround the city by a circumvallation, (a trench of 39 furlongs in circuit, and strengthened with 13 towers) which, with astonishing activity, was effected by the soldiers in three days. Thus was fulfilled another of our LORD'S predictions, for he had said, while addressing this devoted city, "Thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round about, and keep thee in on every side." Luke xix. 43. As no supplies whatever could now enter the walls, the famine rapidly extended itself, and, increasing in horror, devoured whole families. The tops of houses, and the recesses of the city, were covered with the carcasses of women, children,

and aged men. The young men appeared like specters in the places of public resort, and fell down lifeless in the streets. The dead were too numerous to be interred, and many expired in the performance of this office. The public calamity was too great for lamentation. Silence, and, as it were, a black and deadly night, overspread the city. But even such a scene could not awe the robbers; they spoiled the tombs, and stripped the dead of their grave-clothes, with an unfeeling and wild laughter. They tried the edges of their swords on their carcasses, and even on some that were yet breathing; while Simon Gioras chose this melancholy and awful period to manifest the deep malignity and cruelty of his nature, in the execution of the High Priest Matthias, and his three sons, whom he caused to be condemned as favorers of the Romans. The father, in consideration of his having opened the city gates to Simon, begged that he might be executed previously to his children; but the unfeeling tyrant gave orders that he should be dispatched in the last place, and in his expiring moments insultingly asked him, whether the Romans could then relieve him.

While the city was in this dismal situation, a Jew named Mannæus fled to Titus, and informed him, that from the beginning of the siege (14th April) to the 1st of July follow-

ing, one hundred and fifteen thousand eight hundred and eighty dead bodies had been carried through one gate only, which he had guarded. This man had been appointed to pay the public allowance for carrying the bodies out, and was therefore obliged to register them. Soon after, several respectable individuals deserted to the Romans, and assured Titus that the whole number of the poor who had been cast out at the different gates was not less than six hundred thousand. The report of these calamities excited pity in the Romans, and in a particular manner affected Titus, who, while surveying the immense number of dead bodies which were piled up under the walls, raised his hands towards Heaven, and appealing to the ALMIGHTY, solemnly protested that he had not been the cause of these deplorable calamities; which, indeed, the Jews, by their unexampled wickedness, rebellion, and obstinacy, had brought down upon their own heads.

After this, Josephus, in the name of Titus, earnestly exhorted John and his adherents to surrender; but the insolent rebel returned nothing but reproaches and imprecations, declaring his firm persuasion that Jerusalem, as it was God's own city, could never be taken: thus literally fulfilling the declaration of Micah, that the Jews, in their extremity, notwith-

standing their crimes, would presumptuously "lean upon the LORD, and say, 'Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.'" (Micah III. 11.)

Meanwhile the horrors of famine grew still more melancholy and afflictive. The Jews, for want of food, were at length compelled to eat their belts, their sandals, the skins of their shields, dried grass, and even the ordure of oxen. In the depth of this horrible extremity, a Jewess of noble family, urged by the intolerable cravings of hunger, slew her infant child, and prepared it for a meal; and had actually eaten one half thereof, when the soldiers, allured by the smell of food, threatened her with instant death if she refused to discover it. Intimidated by this menace, she immediately produced the remains of her son, which petrified them with horror. At the recital of this melancholy and affecting occurrence, the whole city stood aghast, and poured forth their congratulations on those whom Death had hurried away from such heart-rending scenes. Indeed, humanity at once shudders and sickens at the narration, nor can any one of the least sensibility reflect upon the pitiable condition to which the female part of the inhabitants of Jerusalem must at this time have been reduced, without experiencing the tenderest emotions of sympathy, or refrain from tears while he reads

our SAVIOUR'S pathetic address to the women who "bewailed him," as he was led to Calvary; wherein he evidently refers to these very calamities: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but for yourselves and for your children: for, behold, the days are coming in which ye shall say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the breasts that never gave suck.'" Luko XXIII. 29.

The above melancholy fact was also literally foretold by Moses: "The tender and delicate woman among you (said he, addressing Israel) who would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil — toward her young one — which she shall bear," and "eat for want of all things, secretly, in the siege and straitness wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates." (Deut. XXVIII. 56, 57.) This prediction was partially fulfilled, when Samaria, the capital of the revolted tribes, was besieged by Benhadad; and afterwards at Jerusalem, previously to its capture by Nebuchadnezzar; but its exact and literal accomplishment in relation to a lady of rank, delicately and voluptuously educated, was reserved for the period of which we are now speaking. And it deserves particular regard, as a circumstance which very greatly enhances

the importance of this prophecy, that the history of the world does not record that a parallel instance of unnatural barbarity ever occurred during the siege of any other place, in any other age or nation whatsoever. Indeed, Josephus himself declares that, if there had not been many credible witnesses of the fact, he would not have recorded it, "because," as he remarks, "such a shocking violation of nature never having been perpetrated by any Greek or barbarian," the insertion of it might have diminished the credibility of his history.

While famine continued thus to spread its destructive rage through the city, the Romans, after many ineffectual attempts, at length succeeded in demolishing part of the inner wall possessed themselves of the great tower of Antonia, and advanced toward the Temple, which Titus, in a council of war, had determined to preserve as an ornament to the empire, and as a monument of his success; but the Almighty had determined otherwise; for now, in the revolution of ages, was arrived that fatal day, (the 10th of August) emphatically called "a day of vengeance," (Luke XXI. 21.) on which the Temple had formerly been destroyed by the king of Babylon. A Roman soldier, urged, as he declared, by a divine impulse, regardless of the command of Titus, climbed on the shoulders of another, and threw a flaming

brand into the golden window of the Temple, which instantly set the building on fire. The Jews, anxious above all things to save that sacred edifice, in which they superstitiously trusted for security, with a dreadful outcry, rushed in to extinguish the flames. Titus, also, being informed of the conflagration, hastened to the spot in his chariot, attended by his principal officers and legions; but in vain he waved his hand and raised his voice, commanding his soldiers to extinguish the fire; so great was the uproar and confusion, that no attention was paid even to him. The Romans, willfully deaf, instead of extinguishing the flames, spread them wider and wider. Actuated by the fiercest impulses of rancor and revenge against the Jews, they rushed furiously upon them, slaying some with the sword, trampling others under their feet, or crushing them to death against the walls. Many, falling amongst the smoking ruins of the porches and galleries, were suffocated. The unarmed poor, and even sick persons, were slaughtered without mercy. Of these unhappy people numbers were left weltering in their gore. Multitudes of the dead and dying were heaped about the altar, to which they had formerly fled for protection, while the steps that led from it into the outer court were literally deluged with their blood.

Finding it impossible to restrain the impetu-

osity and cruelty of his soldiers, the commander-in-chief proceeded with some of his superior officers, to take a survey of those parts of the edifice which were still uninjured by the conflagration. It had not at this time reached the inner Temple, which Titus entered and viewed with silent admiration. Struck with the magnificence of its architecture, and the beauty of its decorations, which even surpassed the report of fame concerning them, and perceiving that the sanctuary had not yet caught fire, he redoubled his efforts to stop the progress of the flames. He condescended even to entreat his soldiers to exert all their strength and activity for this purpose, and appointed a centurion of the guards to punish them if they again disregarded him; but all was in vain. The delirious rage of the soldiery knew no bounds. Eager for plunder and for slaughter, they alike contemned the solicitations and menaces of their General. Even while he was thus intent upon the preservation of the sanctuary, one of the soldiers was actually employed in setting fire to the door posts, which caused the conflagration to become general. Titus and his officers were now compelled to retire, and none remained to check the fury of the soldiers or the flames. The Romans, exasperated to the highest pitch against the Jews, seized every person whom they could

find, and, without the least regard to sex, age, or quality, first plundered and then slew them. The old and the young, the common people and the priests, those who surrendered and those who resisted, were equally involved in this horrible and indiscriminate carnage. Meanwhile the Temple continued burning, until at length, vast as was its size, the flames completely enveloped the whole building; which, from the extent of the conflagration, impressed the distant spectator with an idea that the whole city was now on fire. The tumult and disorder which ensued upon this event, it is impossible (says Josephus) for language to describe. The Roman legions made the most horrid outcries; the rebels, finding themselves exposed to the fury of both fire and sword, screamed dreadfully; while the unhappy people who were pent up between the enemy and the flames, deplored their situation in the most pitiable complaints. Those on the hill and those in the city seemed mutually to return the groans of each other. Such as were expiring through famine, were revived by this hideous scene, and seemed to acquire new spirits to deplore their misfortunes. The lamentations from the city were réechoed from the adjacent mountains and places beyond Jordan. The flames which enveloped the Temple were so violent and impetuous, that the lofty

hill on which it stood, appeared, even from its deep foundations, as one large body of fire. The blood of the sufferers flowed in proportion to the rage of this destructive element; and the number of the slain exceeded all calculation. The ground could not be seen for the dead bodies, over which the Romans trampled in pursuit of the fugitives; while the crackling noise of the devouring flames mingled with the clangor of arms, the groans of the dying and the shrieks of despair, augmented the tremendous horror of a scene, to which the pages of history can furnish no parallel.

Among the tragical events which at this time occurred, the following is more particularly deserving of notice. A false prophet, pretending to a divine commission, affirmed that if the people would repair to the Temple, they should behold signs of their speedy deliverance. Accordingly about six thousand persons, chiefly women and children, assembled in a gallery, that was yet standing, on the outside of the building. Whilst they waited in anxious expectation of the promised miracle, the Romans, with the most wanton barbarity, set fire to the gallery; from which multitudes, rendered frantic by their horrible situation, precipitated themselves on the ruins below, and were killed by the fall; while, awful to relate, the rest, without a single exception,

perished in the flames. So necessary was our LORD'S second premonition not to give credit to "false prophets," who should pretend "to show great signs and wonders." In this last caution, as the connection of the prophecy demonstrates, he evidently refers to the period of the siege; but in the former to the interval immediately preceding the Jewish war. (Vide Matt. xxiv. compare 5, and 23, 24, 25, 26, verses.)

The Temple now presented little more than a heap of ruins; and the Roman army, as in triumph on the event, came, and reared their ensigns against a fragment of the eastern gate, and with sacrifices of thanksgiving, proclaimed the imperial majesty of Titus, with every possible demonstration of joy.

Thus terminated the glory and existence of this sacred and venerable edifice, which from its stupendous size, its massy solidity, and astonishing strength, seemed formed to resist the most violent operations of human force, and to stand, like the pyramids, amid the shocks of successive ages, until the final dissolution of the globe.*

*From its first foundation by king Solomon, until its destruction under Vespasian, were one thousand and thirty years, seven months, and fifteen days; and from its re-erection by Haggai, to the same period, six hundred and thirty-nine years and forty-five days. It has been already hinted, that, by a very singular coincidence, it was now reduced to ashes in the same month, and on the same day of the month,

For five days after the destruction of the Temple, the priests who had escaped, sat pining with hunger, on the top of one of its broken walls; at length, they came down, and humbly asked the pardon of Titus, which, however, he refused to grant them, saying, that "as the Temple, for the sake of which he would have spared them, was destroyed, it was but fit that its priests should perish also:" whereupon he commanded that they should be put to death.

The leaders of the factions being now pressed on all sides, begged a conference with Titus, who offered to spare their lives, provided that they would lay down their arms. With this reasonable condition, however, they refused to comply; upon which Titus, exasperated by their obstinacy, resolved that he would hereafter grant no pardon to the insurgents, and ordered a proclamation to be made to this effect. The Romans had now full license to ravage

on which it had formerly been burnt by the Babylonians. These two eras are distinguished also by another extraordinary coincidence, which Josephus, in one of his addresses to the Jews, pointed out to them as one of the signs which foreboded the destruction of their city. "The fountains," said he, "flow copiously for Titus, which to you were dried up; for, before he came, you know that both Siloam failed, and all the springs without the city, so that water was brought by the *amphora* [a vessel containing about seven gallons]; but now they are so abundant to your enemies, as to suffice, not only for themselves and their cattle, but also for their gardens. This wonder you also formerly experienced when the king of Babylon laid siege to your city."

and destroy. Early the following morning they set fire to the castle, the register-office, the council-chamber, and the palace of the queen Helena; and then spread themselves throughout the city, slaughtering wherever they came, and burning the dead bodies which were scattered over every street, and on the floors of almost every house. In the royal palace, where immense treasures were deposited, the seditious Jews murdered eight thousand four hundred of their own nation, and afterwards plundered their property. Prodigious numbers of deserters, also, who escaped from the tyrants, and fled into the enemy's camp, were slain. The soldiers, however, at length, weary of killing, and satiated with the blood which they had spilt, laid down their swords, and sought to gratify their avarice. For this purpose they took the Jews, together with their wives and their families, and publicly sold them, like cattle in a market, but at a very low price; for multitudes were exposed to sale, while the purchasers were few in number. And now were fulfilled the words of Moses: "And ye shall be sold for bond-men and bond-women, and no man shall buy you." (Deut. xxviii. 68.)

The Romans having become masters of the lower city, set it on fire. The Jews now fled to the higher, from whence, their pride and

insolence yet unabated, they continued to exasperate their enemies, and even appeared to view the burning of the town below them with tokens of pleasure. In a short time, however, the walls of the higher city were demolished by the Roman engines, and the Jews, lately so haughty and presumptuous, now, trembling and panic-struck, fell on their faces, and deplored their own infatuation. Such as were in the towers, deemed impregnable to human force, beyond measure affrighted, strangely forsook them, and sought refuge in caverns and subterraneous passages; in which dismal retreats no less than two thousand dead bodies were afterwards found. Thus, as our LORD had predicted, did these miserable creatures, in effect, say, "to the mountains, 'Fall on us;' and to the rocks, 'Cover us.'" (Luke XXIII. 20.

The walls of the city being now completely in possession of the Romans, they hoisted their colors upon the towers, and burst forth into the most triumphant acclamations. After this, all annoyance from the Jews being at an end, the soldiers gave an unbridled license to their fury against the inhabitants. They first plundered, and then set fire to the houses. They ranged through the streets with drawn swords in their hands, murdering every Jew whom they met, without distinction; till at length, the bodies

of the dead choked up all the alleys and narrow passes, while their blood literally flowed down the channels of the city in streams. As it drew towards evening, the soldiers exchanged the sword for the torch, and, amidst the darkness of this awful night, set fire to the remaining divisions of the place. The vial of divine wrath, which had been so long pouring out upon this devoted city, was now emptying, and Jerusalem, once "a praise in all the earth," and the subject of a thousand prophecies, deprived of the staff of life, wrapt in flames, and bleeding on every side, sunk into utter ruin and desolation. This memorable siege terminated on the eighth day of September, A. D. 70; its duration was nearly five months, the Romans having invested the city on the fourteenth day of the preceding April.

Before their final demolition, however, Titus took a survey of the city and its fortifications; and, while contemplating their impregnable strength, could not help ascribing his success to the peculiar interposition of the **ALMIGHTY HIMSELF**. "Had not GOD himself," exclaimed he, "aided our operations, and driven the Jews from their fortresses, it would have been absolutely impossible to have taken them; for what could men, and the force of engines, have done against such towers as these?" After this he commanded that the city should be

razed to its foundations, excepting only the three lofty towers, Hippocos, Phasaël, and Mariamne, which he suffered to remain as evidences of its strength, and as trophies of his victory. There was left standing, also, a small part of the western wall, as a rampart for a garrison, to keep the surrounding country in subjection. Titus now gave orders that those Jews only who resisted should be slain; but the soldiers, equally void of pity and remorse, slew even the sick and the aged. The robbers and seditious were all punished with death. The tallest and most beautiful youths, together with several of the Jewish nobles, were reserved by Titus to grace his triumphal entry into Rome. After this selection, all above the age of seventeen were sent in chains into Egypt, to be employed there as slaves, or distributed throughout the empire, to be sacrificed as gladiators in the amphitheatres; whilst those who were under this age, were exposed to sale.

During the time that these things were transacted, eleven thousand Jews, guarded by one of the generals, named Fronto, were literally starved to death. This melancholy occurrence happened partly through the scarcity of provisions, and partly through their own obstinacy, and the negligence of the Romans.

Of the Jews destroyed during the siege, Josephus reckons not less than one million and

one hundred thousand, to which must be added above two hundred and thirty-seven thousand who perished in other places, and innumerable multitudes who were swept away by famine and pestilence, and of which no calculation could be made. Not less than two thousand laid violent hands upon themselves. Of the captives the whole number was about ninety-seven thousand. Of the two great leaders of the Jews, who had both been made prisoners, John was doomed to a dungeon for life; while Simon, after being led, together with John, in triumph at Rome, was scourged, and put to death as a malefactor.

In executing the command of Titus, relative to the demolition of Jerusalem, the Roman soldiers not only threw down the buildings, but even dug up their foundations, and so completely levelled the whole circuit of the city, that a stranger would scarcely have known that it had ever been inhabited by human beings. Thus was this great city, which only five months before, had been crowded with nearly two millions of people, who gloried in its impregnable strength, entirely depopulated, and levelled with the ground. And thus, also, was our LORD'S prediction, that her enemies should "lay her even with the ground," and "should not leave in her one stone upon another," (Luke XIX. 44.) most strikingly and

fully accomplished! This fact is confirmed by Eusebius, who asserts that he himself saw the city lying in ruins; and Josephus introduces Eleazer as exclaiming, "Where is our great city, which, it was believed, God inhabited? It is altogether rooted and torn up from its foundations; and the only monument of it that remains, is the camp of its destroyers pitched amidst its relics!"

Concerning the Temple, our LORD had foretold, particularly, that, notwithstanding its wonderful dimensions, there should "not be left one stone upon another that should not be thrown down;" and, accordingly, it is recorded in the Talmud, and by Maimonides, that Terentius Rufus, captain of the army of Titus, absolutely ploughed up the foundations of the Temple with a ploughshare. Now, also, was literally fulfilled that prophecy of Micah, "Therefore shall Zion, for your sakes (i. e. for your wickedness) be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the LORD's house as the high places of the forest." (Micah III. 12.)

Thus awfully complete and severe beyond example, were the calamities which befell the Jewish nation, and especially the city of Jerusalem. With what truth, then, did our Lord declare, that there should "be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the

world, no, nor never shall be!" (Matt. xxiv. 21.) Such was the prediction. The language in which Josephus declares its fulfillment is an exact counterpart to it: "If the misfortunes," says he, "of all nations, from the beginning of the world, were compared with those which befell the Jews, they would appear far less in comparison;" and again, "No other city ever suffered such things, as no other generation, from the beginning of the world, was ever more fruitful in wickedness." These were indeed, "the days of vengeance," that all things which are written (especially by Moses, Joel, and Daniel) "might be fulfilled." Luke xxi. 22. Nor were the calamities of this ill-fated nation even now ended; for there were still other places to subdue; and our LORD had thus predicted, "wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Matt. xxiv. 28. After the destruction of Jerusalem seventeen hundred Jews who surrendered at Macherus were slain, and of fugitives not less than three thousand in the wood of Jarden. Titus having marched his army to Cæsarea, he there, with great splendor, celebrated the birth-day of his brother Domitian; and according to the barbarous manner of those times, punished many Jews in honor of it. The number who were burnt, and who fell by fighting with wild beasts, and in mutual combats,

exceeding two thousand five hundred. At the siege of Massada, Eleazer, the commander, instigated the garrison to burn their stores, and to destroy first the women and children, and then themselves. Dreadful as it is to relate, this horrid design was executed. They were in number nine hundred and sixty. Ten were chosen to perform the bloody work; the rest sat on the ground, and embracing their wives and children, stretched out their necks to the sword; one was afterwards appointed to destroy the remaining nine, and then himself. The survivor, when he had looked round to see that all were slain, set fire to the place, and plunged his sword into his own bosom. Nevertheless, two women and five children successfully concealed themselves, and witnessed the whole transaction. When the Romans advanced to the attack in the morning, one of the women gave them a distinct account of this melancholy affair, and struck them with amazement at the contempt of death which had been displayed by the Jews. After this event, if we except the transitory insurrection of the Sicarii, under Jonathan, all opposition on the part of the Jews every where ceased. It was the submission of impotence and despair. The peace that ensued was the effect of the direst necessity. The rich territory of Judea was converted into a desolate waste.

Every where ruin and desolation presented itself to the solitary passenger, and a melancholy and death-like silence reigned over the whole region.

The mournful and desolate condition of Judea, at this time, is exactly described by the prophet Isaiah, in the following passage of his prophecy: "The cities were wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without a man, and the land was utterly desolate, and the LORD had removed men far away, and there was a great forsaking in the midst of the land." (Isaiah vi. 11, 12.)

The catastrophe which has now been reviewed, cannot but be deemed one of the most extraordinary that has happened since the foundation of the world; and as it has pleased the ALMIGHTY to make it the subject of a very large proportion of the prophecies, both of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, so he has ordained that the particular events which accomplished them should be recorded, with very remarkable precision, and by a man most singularly preserved,* qualified, and circumstanced for this purpose. But with respect to this latter point, he shall speak for himself. "At first," says Josephus, "I fought against the Romans, but was afterwards forced to be present in the Roman camp. At the time I

*Three several times his life was preserved as by a miracle.

surrendered, Vespasian and Titus kept me in bonds, but obliged me to attend them continually. Afterwards I was set at liberty, and accompanied Titus when he came from Alexandria to the siege of Jerusalem. During this time nothing was done which escaped my knowledge. What happened in the Roman camp I saw, and wrote down carefully. As to the information the deserters brought out of the city, I was the only man that understood it. Afterwards I got leisure at Rome; and when all my materials were prepared, I procured the help of one to assist me in writing Greek. Thus I composed the history of those transactions, and I appealed both to Titus and Vespasian for the truth of it; to which also Julius Archelaus, Herod, and king Agrippa, bore their testimony." All remark here is needless; but it should not be forgotten, that Josephus was a Jew, obstinately attached to his religion; and that, although he has circumstantially related every remarkable event of that period, he seems studiously to have avoided such as had any reference to JESUS CHRIST, whose history, and even the genuineness of this is disputed, he sums up in about twelve lines. No one, therefore, can reasonably entertain a suspicion, that the service he has rendered to Christianity, by his narrative of the transactions of the Jewish war, was at

all the effect of design. The fidelity of Josephus, as an historian, is indeed, universally admitted; and Scaliger even affirms, that, not only in the affairs of the Jews, but in those of foreign nations also, he deserves more credit than all the Greek and Roman writers put together.

Nor is the peculiar character of Titus, the chief commander in this war, unworthy of our particular regard. Vespasian, his father, had risen out of obscurity, and was elected emperor, contrary to his avowed inclination, about the commencement of the conflict; and thus the chief command devolved upon Titus, the most unlikely man throughout the Roman armies to become a scourge to Jerusalem. He was eminently distinguished for his great tenderness and humanity, which he displayed in a variety of instances during the siege. He repeatedly made pacific overtures to the Jews, and deeply lamented the infatuation that rejected them. In short, he did every thing which a military commander could do, to spare them, and to preserve their city and temple, but without effect. Thus was the will of God accomplished by the agency, although contrary to the wish, of Titus; and his predicted interposition, to punish his rebellious and apostate people, in this way rendered more conspicuously evident.

The history of the Jews, subsequently to the time of Josephus, still further corroborates the truth of our SAVIOUR'S prophecies concerning that oppressed and persecuted people. Into this inquiry, however, the limits of the present essay will not allow us to enter particularly. Our LORD foretold, generally, that they should "fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations; and that Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled;" (Luke XXI. 24.) and these predictions may be regarded as a faithful epitome of the circumstances of the Jews, and also of their city, from the period in which it was delivered, down even to our own times.

In order to demonstrate the accomplishment of these predictions, we appeal, therefore, to universal history, and to every country under heaven.

"In the reign of Adrian," says Bishop Newton, "nine hundred and eighty-five of their best towns were sacked and demolished, five hundred and eighty thousand men fell by the sword, in battle, besides an infinite multitude who perished by famine, and sickness, and fire; so that Judea was depopulated, and an almost incredible number of every age, and of each sex, were sold like horses, and dispersed over the face of the earth." (Newton, vol.

II. dis. XVIII.) The war which gave rise to these calamities happened about sixty-four years after the destruction of Jerusalem; during which time the Jews had greatly multiplied in Judea. About fifty years after the latter event, Ælius Adrian built a new city on Mount Calvary, and called it Ælia, after his own name; but no Jew was suffered to come near it. He placed in it a heathen colony, and erected a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus, on the ruins of the temple of JEHOVAH. This event contributed greatly to provoke the sanguinary war to which we have just alluded. The Jews afterwards burnt the new city; which Adrian, however, rebuilt, and reestablished the colony. In contempt of the Jews, he ordered a marble statue of a sow to be placed over its principal gate, and prohibited them entering the city under pain of death, and forbade them even to look at it from a distance. He also ordered fairs to be held annually for the sale of captive Jews, and banished such as dwelt in Canaan into Egypt. Constantine greatly improved the city, and restored to it the name of Jerusalem; but still he did not permit the Jews to dwell there. To punish an attempt to recover the possession of their capital, he ordered their ears to be cut off, their bodies to be marked as rebels, and dispersed them through all the provinces of the

empire as vagabonds and slaves. Jovian having revived the severe edicts of Adrian, which Julian had suspended, the wretched Jews even bribed the soldiers with money, for the privilege only of beholding the sacred ruins of their city and temple, and weeping over them, which they were particularly solicitous to do on the anniversary of that memorable day, on which they were taken and destroyed by the Romans. In short, during every successive age, and in all nations, this ill-fated people have been constantly persecuted, enslaved, contemned, harassed, and oppressed — banished from one country to another, and abused in all — while countless multitudes have, at different periods, been barbarously massacred, particularly in Persia, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt; and in Germany, Hungary, France, and Spain.

The undisputed facts are, that Jerusalem has not since been in possession of the Jews, but has been successively occupied by the Romans, Arabic Saracens, Franks, Mamalukes, and lastly by the Turks, who now possess it. It has never regained its former distinction and prosperity. It has always been trodden down. The eagles of idolatrous Rome, the crescent of Mahomet, and the banner of Popery, have by turns been displayed amidst the ruins of the sanctuary; and a Mahomedan mosque, to the extent of a mile in circumference, now

covers the spot where the Temple formerly stood. The territory of Judea, then one of the most fertile countries on the globe, has for more than seventeen hundred years continued a desolate waste. The Jews themselves, still miraculously preserved a distinct people, are, as we see, scattered over the whole earth, invigorating the faith of the Christian, flashing conviction in the face of the infidel, and constituting a universal, permanent, and invincible evidence of the truth of Christianity.

In order to invalidate this evidence, the apostate emperor Julian, impelled by a spirit of enmity against the Christians, about A. D. 363, made an attempt to rebuild the city and temple of Jerusalem, and to recall the Jews to their own country. He assigned immense sums for the execution of this great design, and commanded Alypius of Antioch (who had formerly served as a lieutenant in Britain) to superintend the work, and the governor of the province to assist him therein. "But," says Ammianus Marcellinus, "whilst they urged with vigor and diligence the execution of the work, horrible balls of fire, breaking out near the foundation, with frequent and reiterated attacks, rendered the place, from time to time, inaccessible to the scorched and blasted workmen; and the victorious element continuing in this manner obstinately and resolutely bent,

as it were, to drive them to a distance, the undertaking was abandoned." Speaking of this event, even Gibbon, who is notorious for his skepticism, acknowledges that "an earthquake, a whirlwind, and a fiery eruption, which overturned and scattered the new foundations of the Temple, are attested, with some variations, by contemporary and respectable evidence, by Ambrose, bishop of Milan, Chrysostom, and Gregory Nazianzen, the latter of whom published his account before the expiration of the same year."* To these may be added the names of Zemuch David, a Jew, (who confesses that "Julian was hindered by GOD in the attempt,") of Ruffinus, a Latin, of Theodoret and Sozomen among the orthodox, of Philostogius, an Arian, and of Scocrates, a favorer of the Novatians, who all recorded the same wonderful interposition of Providence, while the eye-witnesses of the fact were yet living. The words of Sozomen to this purport are remarkable: "If it seem yet incredible to any one," says he, "he may repair both to witnesses yet living, and them who have heard it from their mouths; yea, he may view the foundations, lying yet bare and naked." Besides, it may be added, that no other reason has ever been alleged why Julian should abandon his magnificent but impious design.

**Decline and Fall*, vol. 4, 8vo. page 107.

Thus was this celebrated Emperor "taken in his own craftiness," and his presumptuous attempt to frustrate the plans, and falsify the declarations of infinite Omnipotence and Wisdom, converted into a new and striking evidence of their certainty and truth.

It may be alleged, that the prophecies, whose fulfillment has been demonstrated, were not written until after the events, to which they refer, were past.

Assertion is not proof; and even a conjecture to this effect, in the face of the historic testimony, and general sentiment of seventeen ages, would be ridiculous. On the faith, then, of all antiquity, we affirm, that the Gospels containing these predictions were written before the destruction of Jerusalem, and we confirm this assertion by a particular proof. The Gospel of St. Matthew, who died previously to that event, supposed to have been written about eight years after the ascension of our SAVIOUR, was published before the dispersion of the apostles; for Eusebius says, that St. Bartholomew took a copy of it with him to India; and the dispersion of the apostles took place within twelve years after the ascension of our LORD. St. Mark must have written his Gospel at the latest in the time of Nero, for he died in the eighth year of that emperor's reign. The Gospel by St. Luke was writ-

ten before the Acts, as the first verses of that narrative prove; and the Acts were written before the death of Paul, for they carry down his history only to A. D. 63; whereas he was not crucified until the 12th of Nero, the very year before the Jewish war commenced. Of Luke's death the time is uncertain. As to the Evangelist John, he both lived and wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem; but then, as if purposely to prevent this very cavil, his Gospel does not record the prophecies which foretold it! Learned men, indeed, differ with regard to the precise year in which the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke, wrote their respective Gospels; but they universally agree that they were both written and published before the destruction of Jerusalem. As to the Gospel by St. John, some are of opinion that it was written before, and some after that event.

If it be objected, that, although the Gospel narratives might be written and published before the destruction of Jerusalem, yet that the predictions relating to that event may be subsequent interpolations; we reply, that this cannot but be considered as a preposterous supposition, because those predictions are not confined to the particular chapters to which we have referred, but are closely and inseparably interwoven with the general texture of the his-

tory — because the character of the style is uniform — because there is no allusion, in conformity to the practice of the sacred historians, to the fulfillment of these prophecies (vide, particularly, Acts XI. 28.) — because such an attempt must have destroyed the cause it professed to serve — and lastly, because “no unbeliever of the primitive times, whether Jew or Gentile, when pressed as both frequently were, by this prophecy, appear to have had recourse to the charge of forgery or interpolation.” It may be added also, that, in modern times, no distinguished unbeliever (not even the arch infidels Voltaire and Gibbon) has had the temerity so much as to insinuate a charge of this nature.

It may be alleged, that the accomplishment of our LORD'S predictions relative to the destruction of Jerusalem, ought not to be deemed supernatural, inasmuch as the distresses of all great cities, during a siege, are similar, and because it is probable that, some time or other, such should be the fate of every city of this description; and that since the obstinacy of the Jews was great, and their fortifications strong, when war did come, Jerusalem was more likely to suffer under that form of it than any other.

In answer to this objection, we remark, that it was not merely foretold that Jerusalem was

to be destroyed, but that it was to be destroyed by the Romans; and so it was. But was this then a likely event? When our LORD delivered his predictions, Judea was already completely in their hands. Was it a probable thing that it should be desolated by its own masters? Or was it a natural thing that they should be indifferent to the revenue which was derived from a country so populous and so fertile? Again, was it likely that this petty province should provoke the wrath, and defy the power, of the universal empire? Or was it to be supposed that the mistress of the world, irresistible to all nations, instead of controlling, should deem it worthy of her utterly to exterminate a state comparatively so insignificant? Or did it accord with the disposition or custom of the Romans, like Goths, to demolish buildings famed for their antiquity and magnificence? Rather was it not to have been expected that they would preserve them, to maintain the renown and glory of their empire? Nevertheless, as we have seen, they did destroy them, and even the illustrious temple of Jerusalem, the chief ornament of Asia, and the wonder of the world. But it was predicted that "thus it must be;" and therefore Titus himself, with all his authority and exertions, could not preserve it.

But there are a number of very material

circumstances closely interwoven with this prophecy, that still further identify the events which fulfilled it, and demonstrate that the prophecy itself was something very different from a happy conjecture, suggested by the aspect of the times, or conclusions from past experience. For,

1st. Our LORD foretold, as "the beginning of sorrows," and as alarming harbingers of his "coming," as "the Son of Man," to destroy Jerusalem, that terrible calamities would prevail in various parts of the world, during the intermediate period; and unquestionably, this was the case. But it is very material to remark here, that our LORD did not describe these calamities in general terms merely, as an impostor might have done, but distinctly specified them thus: rumors of wars—actual wars—nation rising against nation—kingdom against kingdom—famines—pestilence—and earthquakes in divers places—which all came to pass accordingly, and nearly in the very order in which they were foretold. False prophets, also, were not merely to arise—but to personate the Messiah, to pretend to miraculous powers, and to deceive many; and such were the character and success of those who actually appeared. Again the prognostics are not described as "sights" merely, but as "fearful sights;" not generally as "signs,"

but as "great signs from heaven;" and such they were. These wonderful appearances stand last in the prophecy, and they occurred, according to Josephus, on the very eve of the Jewish war.

2. The investment of Jerusalem was to take place "suddenly," "as a snare;" which predictions, as we have seen, were accomplished in the most surprising and extraordinary manner.

3. Our LORD declared also, that "except those days (i. e. the 'days of vengeance') should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elects' sake" (i. e. for the sake of the Christians, who no doubt prayed ardently for the termination of these calamities) said he, "those days shall be shortened." And they were shortened accordingly: 1st, by the determination of Titus vigorously to push the siege by assault, in opposition to the opinions of his officers, who recommended the more tedious plan of blockade; 2nd, by the conduct of the Jews themselves, who accelerated the capture of the city by intestine divisions and mutual slaughters, contrary to what is usual upon such emergencies, in which a common sense of danger ordinarily tends to unite contending parties against the common foe; 3rd, by the madness of the factions in burning storehouses full of provisions, and thus wasting the strength which was necessary for the defence

of the place ; 4th, by the extraordinary panic by which the Jews were seized when the Romans made their final attack on the higher city, in consequence of which they fled affrighted out of their strong holds, which Titus afterwards pronounced to be impregnable ; and lastly, by the crowded state of the city during the siege, which, as we have before remarked, occasioned pestilential disorders, and hastened the approach of famine.

4. Our LORD likewise foretold that his followers should escape the destruction of Jerusalem ; and, accordingly, whilst countless multitudes of unbelieving Jews were fatally involved in this calamity, not a single Christian perished therein ; for He that “ knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished,” (2 Peter II. 9.) had said, that “ not a hair of their heads should perish.” (Luke XXI. 13.) Who, that seriously meditates on these equitable arrangements of Providence, can help exclaiming, with the devout Psalmist, ‘ Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.’

5. Our LORD declared also, that the extreme miseries of the Jews should be without a parallel ; and they certainly were, as Josephus himself repeatedly testifies, and as his history abundantly proves.

