### L I F E

OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR

# JESUS CHRIST:

WITH CONSIDERATIONS AND DISCOURSES UPON THE CONCEPTION, NATIVITY, CIRCUMCISION, BAPTISM, TEMPTATION, PREACHING, MIRACLES, PASSION, RESURRECTION, AND ASCENSION UNTO HEAVEN.

OBVIOUS TO THE MEANEST CAPACITY, IN DEFENCE OF THE DIVINITY OF OUR HOLY REDEEMBR, AND THE TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

LIKEWISE, THE LIVES, ACTS AND DEATHS OF THE HOLY EVANGELISTS AND APOSTLES,
AS RECORDED BY THE PRIMITIVE FATHERS, AND ANCIENT WRITERS
OF UNQUESTIONABLE VERACITY.

By J. TAYLOR, B. D.

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#### TO THE

## READER.

THE whole duty of man is to fear God, and keep his commandments, and the principal defign of his creation is, That he may glorify Ged upon earth, and by the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ may enjoy eternal bappiness in the presence of God in the world to come, wherein is fulness of joy, and at whose right band are pleasures forevermore. To attain this everlasting inheritance, it is absolutely necessary to acquaint ourselves with Ges, and our bleffed Saviour, and to be fully persuaded of the truth of the divinity of Jesus, and of the certainty of his being the Miffiah, promised to the patriarchs and apostles some thousands of years before; who, in the fulness of time, made his appearance for the salvation of all that fincerely believe in bim, and walk in obedience to his holy precepts and do Erines. This small tract is designed for the purposes aforenamed, that all true Christians may know in whom they have believed. For subsch many underiable arguments and confiderations are admanced, which may be comprehended by the meanest understanding, and may put to filence such ahandoned voretches as deny the Lord that bought them; who being resolved to continue in a course of prophaneness and irreligion, endeavour to harden their consciences, and persuade themselves, that there is no God, nor future state of punishment, because they desire it may be so. I have also added the lives of the boly Evangelists and Apostles, with their martyrdom for preaching and publishing the good tidings of jaluation to the barbarous nations with such mighty success,

#### ir. To THE READER.

that thousands were converted, and afterwards suffered death for the profession of the gospel, and asserting the truth and certainty of the Christian religion, against all its opposers: These things are written for our instruction, and may so fortify us, that it may not be in the power of those deceivers who are abroad in the world, to weaken our faith and considence in the mercy of God, and the merits of our blessed Saviour, that we shall at last attain everlasting life and happiness.

J. TAYLOR.



#### THE

L I F E

OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR

# JESUS CHRIST.



It is undeniable, that through the whole body of the Old Testament, the Jews had a Messiah promised, the same that we call Christ, or a person anointed and sent from God to be a Saviour, a Redeemer, a Pacifier of God's wrath, a Mediator between God and man, a Satisfier for the sins and offences of the whole world, a Restorer of our innocency lost in Paradise, a Master and Instructor, a Lawgiver, a spiritual and enternal King, that should sit and rule and reign in our hearts, to conquer the power and tyranny of Satan, the enemy of mankind, who overcame our sirst parents in Paradise, and never ceasest to assail us with his temptations. For the first covenant that ever God made with man, was, In the day thou eatest of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt surely die.

This envenant being broken by our common progenitor, he received judgment accordingly, but with this benign promise: That the seed of the avenant bould break the serpent's head, who had beguiled them; and he should lie in wait to hurt the heel of mankind: That is, the time shall come, when one shall proceed out of the seed of the woman who shall conquer death and sin, the weapons of the devil, and shall make void all his temptations, and trample them under his feet, and this shall be Christ, the Messiah of the world.

For whatseever the latter Jews dreamed, That the Messiah should set up a temporal kingdom, and restore them to their country and former government: It is evident the ancient Rabbies of that nation, in the old Chaldee paraphrase, called the Jerusalem Targum, apply these words, That the devil that deceived Adam, saying, Mankind has an infallible and present remedy against thee, O Satan! For the time will come that

they shall tread thee down with their heels, by the

's help of the Messiah, who shall be their King.'

The very same promise is seven times repeated and established to Abraham, who lived near two thousand years after Adam, and again to Isaac, his son, after him. Gen. xii. 18, 22. In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; which had been a small benediction to Abraham, or to the Jews after him, that never actually saw the Messiah) if he had been a temporal King over the Jews only: And a much less blessing to the Gentile world, if he was to subdue and destroy all that would not submit to the Jewish constitution.

But Jacob prophecieth plainly, at his death, of the coming of Christ, in these words; 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, till Shiloh, or the Messiah come, and to him shall the gathering of the people be.' Which latter words the fore-named Chaldee paraphrase, and the great Onkelos, (both of singular authority among the Jews) interpret, 'Until Christ and the Messiah come,' who

who is the expectation of all nations. Now, if he be the hope and expectation of the Jews as well as the Gentiles, then can he not be a temporal King to destroy the Gentiles, as the late Jews imagine: But a spiritual King to reign over them, and to bring into subjection their spiritual enemies, namely, the world, the flesh and the devil, as all true christians believe.

But to leave this controversy with the latter Rabbies, and to proceed to shew that Christ was foretold and promifed to the Jews: It is to be observed, that after the death of Jacob, little is recorded of the doings of the Jews, during the four hundred years that they were in bondage in Egypt; yet that nation have a tradition, that as foon as they were delivered out of that flavery, and come into that wilderness in their travels toward the land of Canaan, the three fons of Korah, Affir, Elkanah, and Abiafaph, mentioned in Exod. vi. and in other places, composed divers songs and psalms in the praises and expectations of the Messiah to come, and the holy men of that time folaced themselves with finging of the fame; and that king David afterward in the second part of his psalms, from the 45th to the 87th pfalms, collected most of these old fongs together as they now stand.

Moses likewise prophecied of Christ, Deut. xviii. 15. The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a propher from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me unto him ye shall hearken, in all things whatforver he finall lay unto you; and it shall come to pass, that every foul that will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people.' Deut. xviii. Acts iii. which words cannot be understood of any prophet that ever lived after Moses among the Jews, as is manifest by what the Holy Ghost fays of him: And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like umo Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.' Deut. XXXIV.

David, who lived about four hundred years after Moses, a man after God's own heart, and the first king of Judah, out of which tribe, and of whose lineage the

Mediah

Media was to come, had this mystery more plainly willialed to him than to any before him: For he was affered, that Christ should be born of that stock, as God had promised him by the prophet Nathan, saying, 'Thy feed will I establish forever, and build up thy 'throne in all generations; for I have made a covenant ' with my chosen, and have sworn to David my servant:' Which words the latter Jews apply to king Solomon, and may in some sense be true, since Solomon was a type of Christ to come, but cannot be verified in him, whose earthly kingdom was rest and divided by Jerobosm, and must therefore be understood of an eternal King, which should rife out of David's seed; and therefore it is said in Psalm ii. 'Thou are my son, this day have I begotten thee, I will give thee the heathen For thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy polletion: Which was never fulfilled in Solomon, nor in any other temporal king after him. And much less what is written in Pfal. 1xxii. 'He shall reign from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth. All kings shall fall down before him; s all nations shall worship him. His name shall endure \* forever, as long as the fan; and all nations shall call 'him bleffed.' All these promises and expressions can never be applied to any but Jefus Christ alone.

This promife made to David for Christ to come of his feed, is repeated after his death by many of his prophets, particularly by Jeremiah, Chap. xxiii. Beheld the days come, faith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a King shall reign and prosper; and this is his name, whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. All this was spoken of David's seed above four hundred

vears after his death.

Ezekiel, likewise, who was co-temporary with lefemiah, calls the Messah by the name of David himself; Ezek. xxxiv. I will save my slock, and they shall be no more a prey: And I will set up one stephend over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David, and he shall be their shepkend, and a Prince among them, them, and he shall feed them: Which words, both Christians and the modern Jews in the Talmud, confess to be meant of the Messiah, and we believe to be foretold of Christ; David being four handred years before, and could not come again to govern and feed the people of God.

Haiah the prophet, who lived above one hundred years before Jeremiah or Ezekiel, had plain and emiment discoveries of the Messiah, in the xlix, I, Ii, Iii, and liii chapters of that prophecy; wherein he fays, That Christ being sent to the Jews, he complains of them; and .at he is fent to the Gentiles with gracious promifes. He shews that the occasion of the Jews being cast off is not to be imputed to the Messiah, hehaving ability to fave, by his obedience in that work, and by confidence of God's affiftance. Christ there persuaded his church to believe his free redemption; to receive the ministers thereof to joy in the power thereof, and that his kingdom shall be exalted. prophet also complains of the incredulity of the people, excuseth the scandal of the cross, by the benefit of Christ's passion, and the good success thereof: The same prophet particularly expresses the graces and di-vine properties, of Christ, as that 'He shall forever overthrow and destroy death; he shall open the eyes. of the blind, and the ears of the deaf; he shall not cry nor contend, nor shall except the person of any eman, but in truth he shall bring forth truth in righteousness.' And Daniel lived in the end of the captivity of Babylon, some time before Haggai, Zachary or Malachi, who were the last prophets that ever hourished among the Jews, almost five hundred years before the coming of Christ; speaks plainly of his being cut off, and put to death, Dan. ix. And to infift upon no more, the whole scripture centres in his point, to foretel and manifest Christ to be the Messiah, by signs, figures, parables, and prophecies.

But to be more particular in the demonstration of this momentous and fundamental truth: That this Jesus of whom the sour evangelists treat, is the true Messiah;

let us compare the christian's gospel with the Jewish law; or the histories of Christ under the one, with the prophecies of the Messah under the other; and thence conclude, that is whatsoever was foretold concerning the Messah, was fulfilled in this Jests Christ; then he was undoubtedly the Messah who was to come into the world for the salvation of mankind; to make which comparison the more exact, let us run through the several circumstances that attended his birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension, and observe how punctually the prophecies of them were sulfilled in every particular:

And fift, For the birth of the Messich; the law saith 'He was to be born of the feed of Abtaham,' Gen. xxii. 18. and David, 2 Sam. vii. 12. and of the feed of Jesse, Isaiah xi. 3. From whence he is frequently called, by the Jews, 'The fon of David.' The gospel faith, Jesus Christ was the son of David, the son of 'Abraham,' Matt. i. 2. The law, 'That he was to be The golpel, That bora of a virgin,' Ifa. vii. 14. Mary, a virgin, brought forth this Jesus, Matt. i. 18. Lake i. 17, 31, 35. Chap. ii. v. vi. vii. The law, That he was to be born at Bethlehem Ephratah, Mich. v. 2. The gospel, That this Jesus was born "there,' Matt. ii. 1. Luke iv. 5, 6. The law fays, That he was to be brought out of Egypt,' Holes, xi. 1. The gospel, 'That Jesus was called thence,' Matt. ii. 19, 20. The law, That one should go before the Mediah,' Mal. iii.' c. 'and should cry in the wilderness,' Ist. xi. 3. The gospel, That John Baptist did so before Christ,' Matt. iii. 1. 3, Mark i. 2, 3. The law, That the Messiah should preach the doctrine of salvation in Galilee, who, fitting before in darkness, shali 'see great light,' Isa. ix. 1, 2. The gospel, 'That 'Jesus did so,' Matt. xviii. 12, 23. The law, 'That in the days of the Messiah, the eyes of the blind should ' be opened, and the ears of the deaf should be unstopped, the lame leap, and the tongue of the dumb fing, Isa. xxxv. 5. The gospel, That it was so in the days of Jesus Christ,' Matt. iv. 23. and Chap. xi. 5. But

But for all these wonders and miracles, the law saith. They shall hear but not understand, and see yet not: perceive. Ifa. vi. 9. And the polpel, That feeing, they did not see, and hearing, they did not hear, nor 'yet understand,' Matt. xiii. 13. The law, 'That he 's should be despised and rejected of men, a man of forrow, 'and acquainted with grief,' Ila. liii. 3. The gospel, "That Jesus Christ had not where to lay his head," Matt. viii. 20. 'His foul was exceeding forrosviii, even unto death, Mate. xxvi. 38. 'Yea, he was in. an agony, and his fweat was as drops of blood, Luke xxii. 24. So well was he acquainted with grief. law fays, 'That he hould ride into Jerusalem upon an. ale, and upon a solt, the foal of an ale, Zech. xi. o... And the golpel, 'That Jesus Christ, as he was going. to Jernfalem, having found an als, lat thereon, John xii. 14. Matt. xxi. & At which time the law faith, 'The people should cry, Hosanna: Blessed is he that cometh is the name of the Lord, Plal cxviii. 26. The gospel, 'That they did to to Christ,' Matt. xxi. q. The law foretels, 'That one of his own familiar friends, 'in whom he trusted, which did eat of his bread, did. betray him into the hands of the Jews," Matt. xxvi. 47. Lake xxii. 46. The law, That he should be prized at, and fold for thirty pieces of filver, with. 'which should be bought the Potter's Field,' Zech. xi. The gospel, 'That they covenanted with 12, 13. ' Judas to betray Jefus for thirty pieces of filver, Matt. xxvi. 15. with which they afterwards bought the. 'Potter's Field,' Chap. xxvii. 7. The law, 'That he. 'should be numbered among the transgressors,' Isa. liii. The gospel, 'That Jelius Christ was crucified ' between two thieves,' Mark xv. 27. Matt. xxvii. 38. The law, 'That he should be wounded and bruised,' The gospel, 'That they scourged Jesus,' lia. lili. 5. Matt. xxvii. 26. 'and imote him,' Mark xv. 10. The law faith, 'They should pierce his hands and feet,' Pfal. xxii. 19. Zech. xii. 19. The gospel, That they crucified Jesus,' Matt. xxvii. 35. Luke xxiii. Whereby they used to pierce the hands and sect of those that were

put to this death, and nail them to the cross: But though they thould pierce his flesh, yet the law saith, "They shall not break his bones, no, not one of them," Exod. xii. 46. Numb. ix. 12. Pfal. xxxiv. 20. gospel, 'That they break not the legs of Christ,' John xix. 33. 36. The law, That they should see him, ' should laugh him to scora, thoot out their lips, and ' shake their heads, faying, " He trusted in the Lord, " that he would detver him: Let him deliver him, " feeing he delighted in him," Pfal. xxii. 8. The gospel, 'That the scribes and pharisees did so by Christ,' Matt. xxvii. 42. 43. The law faith, 'They should 'give gall for meat, and vinegar to drink,' Pfai. xlix. 21. And the goipel, 'That they gave Christ vinegar to drink, mingled with gall, Matt. xxvii. 34. 38. The law, 'That they should part his garments among them, and cast lots upon his vesture, Ffal. xvii. 19. The gospel, 6 That they parted Jesus's garments among 'them, and cast lots,' Matt. xxvii. 35. John xix. 23. Mark xv. 21.

And as for the time of this Jefus coming into the world; it is certain, that he came before the second temple was demolished, for it is said, 4 That he went into the temple, Matt. xix. 45. 'yea, he him elf taught daily in it,' ver. 47. By which means the glory of the second temple was greater than the glory of the first, according to the prophery of Haggai xi. o. And as for Jacob's prophecy, 'That the sceptre should ' not depart from Judah, nor the law-giver, till Shiloh, or the Messiah come, Gen. lxix. 10. It is certain that it did not depart from Judah, 'till Herod was, by Augustus and the senate of Rome, made King of Judea, in those days this Jesus was born, Matt. ii. 2. Luke i. 5. And so Daniel's seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, did exactly reach unto, and were determined in the days of this Jesus, as might eafily be demonstrated. So that all the old prophecies concerning the time of the Messiah's coming, are persocily fulfilled in this Jesus of Nazan th.

Furthermore the law fays, That the the Meffiah

was crucifled, eyet God would not leave his foul in hell, nor fuffer his holy one to fee correption', Pfal. zvi. 10. And that when God thould make his foul a facrifice for fin, he should see his seed, and prolong 'his days,' Isa liii. 10. which plainly implies, That though the Mellish should die, yet he should rife again, and that within a few days too, otherwife he would have seen corruption. Now the gospel says, That this 'Jesus rose from the dead,' Mait. zaviii. 6. Luke xxiv. 6. 'and that he was seen of several after his refurrection, as of Mary Maginton, Matt. xxviii. 9. of the eleven disciples, ver. 16, 17, 18, Wark xvi. 14. of the two that were going to Emmany, Luke xxiv. 13, 14, 15. 'of Simon Perer along,' ver. 24. 'and of all the disciples grainited together, the doors being that, John xx. 19. And to be fure that it was himself, and not an apparition, Thomas, one of the twelve, thrust his hands into his side, and found it sleib and blood indeed, and he did eat and drink before them, Luke xxiv. 43. which it is impossible that a spirit should do. He was seen of Peter and John, and other disciples, while they were ashing, and eat and drank with them. John xxi. Of five handred brethrea at once, and of Paul himself,' I Cor. xv. 6. Neither did he lie fo long as to fee corruption, for he was buried but the day before the Sabbath, Mark xv. 42. and role the day after, Chap. xvi. 1.

Again, Jesus was not only to rile again, but the law saith, 'He was to ascend on high, to lead captivity captive, and to give gifts unto men,' Pfal. xvi. 18. Now this cannot but be an undoubted character of the Messiah, not only to the from the dead, but to ascend up to heaven, and then to disperse his gifts among the children of men, and that Christ did io, is evident from the gospel; for after he had spoken with them, 'He was received up into heaven, and there sat at the right hand of God,' Acts i. 6. Luke xxiv. 51. He gave such gifts to men, as that his disciples of a sudden were enabled to speak all manner of languages, Acts ii. 8.

To work 'many figns and wonders,' Chap. v. 12. 'To heal all manner of diseases, ver. 15, 16. Yea, with a word speaking to cure a man lame from his

mother's womb, Chap. iii. 6, 7.

These considerations seem to make the gospel a perfect transcript of the law, and the histories of Jesus are nothing else but the prophecies of Christ turned into a history, and certainly the piety of his life, the purity of his doctrine, and his miraculous works, are a further confirmation of the truth of what is here related: For the miracles that he wrought, as the healing the fick with a word of his mouth, raising the dead, seeding so many thousands with five loaves, and the like, were fo powerful and convincing, that his very enemies who would not believe him to be the Messiah, could scarce deny him to be a God; as Josephus, the Jewish historian, testines in his antiquiries, Lib. 18. Chap. iv. And, it is a tenet to this day among some of them, That the miracles which Jesus did were not delusions or juggles of Satan, but real miracles, wrought, as they pretend, by the virtue of the name of God, Jehovah, which they say Jesus got out of the temple; whereby it is plain, that they acknowledged God to be the author of them, which doubtless could not be unless they were agreeable to his will, and for the glory of his name.

Neither was the doctrine of the gospel only established at the sirst, but propagated afterward by miracles, that a doctrine so contrary to slesh and blood, as proposing nothing in this life, but that the professors of it should have troubles in this world, should be as sheep among wolves, should be persecuted, imprisoned, focurged, put to death, and be hated of all men for their master's sake; and this doctrine propagated by a company of saple illiterate men, who had neither power to force, nor eloquence to persuade men to the belief of it, or embracing it; that yet such persons as these were, should ever make any of the Jews, who expected a King for their Messiah, to advance them to temporal dignities, to believe that this Jesus whom themselves

themselves scourged and crucified at Jerusalem, was that person; or that they should be able to propagate the gospel among the Gentiles also, who neither believed in the true God, nor expected any thing of a Messiah to come and redeem them: Yet this they did, and brought over not only many people, but whole rations, and countries to the profession of the gospel, spreading this most holy doctrine among the most barbarous and finful people in the world, maugre all the opposition that the world, the sless, and the devil

could make against it.

Now, no man that exerciseth his reason, can imagine, that they did all this purely by their own strength; nor that these wonderful effects could ever have been produced by any thing less than the wildom, and power, and saithfulness of their Lord and matter, whose service they were engaged in, and who promised to be with them to the end of the world, Matt. xivil. 20. Doubtless it was nothing else but the spirit of the most high God that assisted them, and accompanied the world fuch a deep impression upon the hearts of them that heard it, as not only to command their attentions, but to hinder them from resisting (when they strove and endeavoured to do it) that power and authority by which the disciples spake.

So that it is evident, that all the books of the ancient law, with all those which have been received into the canon of the scriptures, by the church of God, lince the coming of Christ, which we call the New Testament, (which testify the truth of the divinity of our Saviour) I say that all these books from the beginning of Genesis, to the end of the Revelations, are indeed the written word of the eternal God, dictated by his own spirit, such as himself was pleased to employ in the writing of them, and that they contain in them a perfect rule of saith and manners, upon the due observance of which no man can sail of worshipping and serving God in such a manner, as will be acceptable to him here, and enjoying hereaster

those 'exceeding great and precious promises,' that he has reserved in heaven for such as do so.

And as to the time of the coming of the Messiah, it is evident, That about one thousand six hundred years ago, the Jews did generally expect it, and that many did pretend to be the person, as one Barcozbah at this time declaring himself to be the man; almost all the whole nation unanimously joined themselves to him, insomuch, that the Jews report, there were no less than four or sive hundred thousand of them slain by the emperor Adrain, in the city Bitter, all sighting in defence of this counterseit Messiah; many others likewise pretended to be he, and some to this day hold, that he is already come, but that by reason of their sins he is not revealed to them.

Now it is to be observed. That by the consent of all christian writers, Jesus, whom we believe and con-fels to be the true Christ, was born the 25th of Desember, in the forev second year of Augustus Cæsar, the Roman Emperer, and sisteen before his death; in the thirty third year of the reign of Herod, King of Julea; and from the ciention about four thousand years; the state of the world being thus at Christ's Dativity: The three monarchies of the world, the Affyrians, Persians, and Grecians, were passed away and ended, and the Roman, greater than all the former, was begun according to the prophecy of Daniel, five hundred years before Augustus; who after five civil wars; and infinite bloodshed and devastations, in the world, reigned alone in peace many years; and in token of universal peace over the earth, the temple of Janus (or war) was thut, which happened but twice before fince the building of Rome, and the very fame day that Christ was born in Judea, Augustus commanded in Rome (as was afterwards observed) that no man should call him Lord, thereby fignifying the liberty and fecusily which mankind now enjoyed, after the world had sustained such wosul desolations by wars, for so many years, and faying, unknowing, That a greater Lord than he, was now born into the world; which agreed

spreed exactly to the prophecy of Daniel, that there should be three monarchies, and the last the greatest, at whose appearance the Messiah should come and build up God's kingdom throughout the whole world; and Isaiah, one hundred years before, foreteld, that at the coming of Christ, 'The people should sit in peace, and that there should be no end of peace;' and king David, Psalm laxi, says, In his days shall the righteous shourish, and there shall be abundance of peace,' which was then very necessary for the quiet planting and publishing of the gospel of Christ; the wars which had so long disturbed the earth, miraculously almost ceasing at this very time, to make way for the coming of the Prince of Peace. To conclude this point of Christ's

appearing; About his birth, there concurred so many circumstances, as the general peace of the Roman empire; the expiration of the line of Judah, the falfilling of Daniel's weeks; the public same and expectation of the Jews, with their vain expectations for one thouland fix handred years of another Messah. Their being disperfed all over the world, without temple, law, sacrifice, prophet, or promise for their redemption, which never happened to them in all their former captivities, before the death of Jesus, and which promises they had for their consolation in their miseries; these things being laid together, we may afforedly conclude, that Christ was born at the just time predicted by the spirit of God: and consequently, that he only was the true Messah and Saviour of the world. So that when the fulness of time was come, after the frequent repetition of promifes; the expiration of the Jewish nation; the longing and earnest waitings of all hely persons; God having great compassion towards mankind, remembering his promises, and our great necessities, sent his son into the world, to take upon him our nature, and that guilt of an which it had contracted, and all that punishment which was consequent thereto; which came to pass after the following market:

### THE CONCEPTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

In the days of Herod the King, the Angel Gabriel was fent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a holy maid espoused to Joseph, and sound her in a capacity and excellent disposition to receive the greatest honour that was ever bestowed on the daughters of men. Her employment was holy and pious, her person young, her years storid and springing, her hody chaste, her mind humble, and a rare nepository of divine graces, and God poured upon har a full measure of honour in making her the mother of the Messiah: For the angel came to her and said, Hail, thou art highly savoured, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women. Which message is paraphrased by the poet, in a dialogue between Gabriel and Mary, as follows:

Gab, Hail, bleffed Mary.

Mary. What celestial tongue calls finfu! Mary blessed & Gab. It is I.

Mary. Who art thou?

Gab. I am Gabriel, that belongs to the high choir of heaven.

Mary. I faint, I die.

Gab. Fear not sweet virgin. Il the earth shall be Made debtors to thy worth, and blest in thec. Mary. How, Lord?

Gab. Thy virgin womb shall bear a son That shall redeem the world.

Mary. My Lord, how can fuch wonders come to pass, fuch things be done

By a poor virgin, never known by man-?

Gab. The Holy Ghost, at his appointed hour, Shall make thee pregnant by his facred pow'r.

Mary. Wonder of worders!

Gab. At whose height the choir of heav'n
Stands ravish'd, tremble and admire
Mary. O may it be according to thy word!

Gab.

Gab. Before ten months fully completed be,
Thou shalt be known the mother of our Lord,
And thou shalt have thy Saviour on thy knee.

Mary. Both heav'n and earth shall triumph, and the
frame

Of hell shall tremble at Maria's name. Gab. All ages—past, present, and to come, Shall joy in Mary, and in Mary's womb.

The virgin having now the Son of God in her chafte womb, and the holy Spirit in her heart, who had also overshadowed her, enabling her to a supernatural and miraculous conception, arole with hake and gladnels, to communicate that joy which was defigned for all the world, and found no breast so proper to pour forth the emanations of her overjoyed heart as her cousin Elizabeth, who had received this divine testimony, that she was righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, who had also a special portion in this great honour, for the was defigned to be the mother of John the Baptist, who was fent to be a forerunner, to prepare the ways of the Lord, and make his paths straight. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill-country with haste, into the city of Judah, and entered into the house of Zachariah, and saluted Elizabeth; the angel Gabriel having told her that she also had conceived a son in her old age, and this was the fixth month with her who was called barren; so that upon the falutation of Mary the habe leaped in her womb. It is not easy to imagine what ecstacies of joy there were at this blessed meeting; two mothers of two great Princes, the one the greatest that was born of a woman; the other his forerunner, to prepare his way; and their conversation was doubtless hely and divine, as they were both prophetically inspired, and all the faculties of nature turned into grace. After they had re-faluted each other, 'Mary abode with her cousin Elizabeth about three months, and then returned to her own house; where, when she appeared with her holy burthen to her hulband Joseph, and that he perceived

perceived her to be with child, and knew that he never unfealed that holy fountain of virginal purity, he was troubled, for aithough her deportment had been both pious and chaîte to a miracle, her carriage so reserved as drove away all temptations and impare thoughts from those that might ice or converse with her, yet he, confidering only the principles of nature, was sminded to put her away, but yet 'privily,' because he was a good man, and know her piety to be fuch, that he scened to offer rivience to his lendes, to believe what was yillble and plain, and would therefore do it privately. but while he thought on their things, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, faying, Joseph, thou fen of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And Joseph, being raised from sleep, ed as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took " unso him his wife."

The holy virgin could not but know, that Joseph would be troubled with forrow, and infecure apprehenions concerning her being with child, but such was her innocency and her confidence in God, that she held her peace, expecting, as we may suppose, which way God would provide a remedy for the inconvenience; for if we commit ourselves to God in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator, he will assert our innocency, and free us from scandal, if it be expedient for us; if it be not, it is not set that we should desire it, and accordingly this blessed virgin was soon freed from the least guilt in this transaction.

For Joseph was not hasty in the execution of his purpose, nor in the determining of his thoughts, but stood long in deliberation, and longer before he acted in this invidious matter, which had an appearance of rigour and serverity. He was first to have defamed and accused her publicly, and being convicted by the law, she was to die, if he had gone the ordinary way: But he who was a just man, which, in the stile of scripture and other wife writers, is, a good man, a charitable man, thought it more agreeable to justice, to treat

an offending person with the casiest sentence, than to put things to extremity, and render the person desperate and provoked by the worst of what she could fear, but waved the killing letter of the law, and secured his own interest and his justice too, by intending to dismis But before the thing was irremediable, her privily. God ended his doubts by an heavenly demonstration, in fending an angel to reveal to him the innocence of his sponse, and the divinity of her fon. Now although the manner of his conception, and the mellage or annumeration made to the mother by the angel, depend principality upon the relation and credit of the virgin herself, who can't was privy thereto, and upon the testimony of Toleph to whom it was revealed by the same angel aictribard, yet confidering the circumstances of the thing itself, namely the simplicity and honely of the reporters and that it was very unlikely that Joseph being jost, to he is called, would have conealed a thire to much against himself, and against the law, if he had not been fully assured of the truth of the affair. Again, the innocent age of the bleffed virgin, who ate Augustine and other ancient sathers write) was not above fourteen years old at that time; all these things make it very improbable, that the would revent fuch a matter of herselfs and finally the strange prophecy that she uttered in her Canticle or Magnificat, and which we see now fulfilled: Albeit at that time very unlikely, that all 'nations should call her blessed, &c. All these things considered, fully demonstrate the truth of this matter.

#### THE NATIVITY OF JESUS.

THE holy maid may be judged to long to be a glad mother, expecting when the Sun of Rightcoulness should break forth from his bed, where nine months he had hid himself behind a fruitful cloud. About the end of which, God, who, in his infinite wisdom,

causes all things to cooperate to divine purposes, brought the holy virgin to Bethlehem, the city of David, to be taxed with her husband Joseph, pursuant to a decree upon all the world, published by Augustus; which happened in this juncture of time, that the prophecy of Micah might be fulfilled; And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the Princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a governour that

' shall rule my people Israel.'

This rare act of providence is highly remarkable, because this taxing seems wholly ordered by God, to serve and minister to the circumstances of this birth. For this taxing was not in order to tribute. Herod was now King, and received all the revenues of Judah, paid a certain tribute to Augustus, as other Kings and Princes under the Roman dominion did; but this was only his sending commissioners to tax every city, in order to make an inquest of the strength of the empire, both in men and money, he having no other advantage by it; but seems to be directed in it by him who rules and turns the hearts of Princes, that he might, by verifying a prophecy, signify and publish the mission and birth of Jesus.

When the holy virgin perceived that the expectation of the nations was arrived at the very doors of revelation, she brought forth the blessed Jesus; and although all the world were concerned in the birth of this great Prince, yet we do not read of any that ministred at it, but the angels: And thus was Jesus born of a poor mother, in a poor place, in a cold winter's night, far from home, among strangers, with all the circumstances of humility, and poverty, naked as the innocency of Adam, whom his mother, after having cradled him in her arms, took and wrapt in swaddling clothes. For so was the design of his humility, that as the last scene of his life was numbered among thieves, so the first among beasts, the sheep and the oxen; which is thus presented by the poet:

O thou! who wert the King of heav'n and earth, How poorly wert thou 'tended at thy birth;

A manger was thy cradle, and a flable 'Thy petry chamber, Mary's knees thy table, Thieves were thy courtiers, and the crofs the throne; Thy diet gall, a wreathe of thoms thy crown: All this the King of glory endur'd, and more, To make us kings that were but flaves before.

No man, therefore, will have cause to complain of coarse clothing, if he remembers the swaddling clothes of this holy child; nor be disquiezed at his hard bed, when he coasiders Jesus laid in a manger; nor be discontented at his thin table, when he calls to mind the King of heaven and earth was sed with a hittle breastmilk. But times the eternal wisdom of the Father, who sknew to choose the good and resule the evil, did choose a life of poverty; it may demonstrate to us, that riches and honours, those idols in the world's esteem, are so far from creating true felicity, that they are not to be reckoned as real good things; neither ought any to be ashamed of innocent poverty, of which the holy Jesus made choice, and the apostles after him made

public profession.

Although the birth of Christ was destitute of the usual and lefs accessary posses, which generally illustrate the birth of princes, yet his first hemility was made glorious with prefages, miracles, and fignifications from heaven, besides those already mentioned: All the world did expect, that in Judah should be born their true Prince, informach that Augustus, their emperor, (as I have noted) about that very time, referred to be called Lord, which the christians were apt to believe, was occasioned by the prophecy of a female prophet, called a Sybil, foretelling the birth of a greater Prince, to whom all the world should pay adoration, who at that time was born in Judah: And when the oracle, which Augustus confulred, was struck dumb, and would not answer any of the questions he defined to be resolved in, he told him, unasked, that 'an Hebrew child should be his Lord and enemy."

The world being now at peace, and the temple of war

was thut up, the Prince of peace was born, and came to reconcile God with man, and man with his beother, by the sweetness of his example, and the influence of his holy doctrine, that the wolf and the lamb should lie down together.' But because the heavens as well as the earth are his creatures, and do serve him; at his birth he received a fign from heaven above, as well as in the earth beneath, as an homage paid to their common Lord. For as certain shepherds were keeping watch 'over their flocks at night,' near that part of the country (as it is thought) where Jacob used to seed his cattle when he was in the land of Canaan, the 'Angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were fore "afraid." And needs they muit, when an Angel came arrayed in glory, and clothed their persons in a robe of light, great enough to confound their understanding: But the Angel said unto them, sear not, for I bring \* unto you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.'

The shepherds needed not any invitation to see this wondrous sight; but lest their expectation should imagine he was a glorious Prince, the Angel told them a sign that might take off their admiration to see so great a Prince so poorly accommodated, he says, 'This 's shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapt

up in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger.

The angel brought the message to shepherds, persons innocent, mean and humble, who are more likely not to be scandaliz'd at the poverty of the Messiah; for those persons whose assections are set upon the pomps and vanities of the world, and are not used to charity and humility, are altogether removed from the understanding of spiritual excellencies, and can relish nothing but the grandeur of earthly sollies; they are prejudiced with God himself, if he appears poor and mean, as the scribes and pharisees were at our blessed Saviour's simplicity; with these men poverty is weakness, a mean birth an ignoble stain; beggary is a scandal, and the cross an unanswerable

poor shepherds to Bethlehem, is an evident intimation, that none are sit to come to Christ but the poor in spirit, despiters of the world, succeed in their hearts, without subtle or crastly designs; and therefore the angel did not bring the news to Herod, nor to the scribes and pharisees, whose ambitious projects were contradictory to the simplicity and poverty of the birth of Jesus.

The angel having delivered his bleffed melfage, fuddenly there was with him a multitude of the heavenly hoft, whose song was, Glory be to God on high, on earth peace and good will towards men: Referring not only to the prosound peace, which at that time all the world was in; but to the greatest peace which this new born Prince should make between his

Enther and all mankind.

As foon as the heavenly, choristers had ended their glorious hymn, they returned into heaven, and the thepherds went to Bethlehem, to fee this thing which the Lord had made known unto them: And they came with halte, and found Mary and Joseph, and 'the babe lying in a manger.' Having observed all to be verified that the angel had told them; and when they had feen it, their hearts were so filled with the oil of gladness, that they ran over with joy, and being too big to be confined in their own breafts, they communicated it to every one, and made known abroad the ' faying which was told them concerning the child.' But Mary having changed her first joy into wonder, kept all those savings and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds having seen and heard what the angels did upon the publication of the news, learnt also to fing to the honour of God for the nativity of Christ: Fur the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard or feen, as it was ' told them.'

But the angels had told the shepherds, that the nativity

' the beavens declared the glory of God, and the firma-'ment shewed his handy work;' this also was told abroad, even to the gentiles, by a figa from heaven. For there was a prophely of Balsam, famous in all the callern country, and recorded by Moles, Namb. xxiv. 17. There shall come a flar out of Jacob, and a sceptre ' shall arise out of Israel, out of Jacob shall come be that shall have dominion. Which though in its first sense it signified David, who was the conqueror of the Moabites, yet, in a more mytherious scale, it related to the for of David: And in expediation of the event of this prophely, the Atabians, the loos of Abraham by Keturah, who were great findents in aikronomy, and the motions of the planets, expedied with much foliciteds the revelation it a mighty Prince in Judah, at such a time as a mitaculous and extraordinary flar thould appear: And therefore when Jelus was born in Bethlehem of Judah, in the days of Herod the king, there came wife men (inspired by God, and aught by their science, and persuaded by prophess) from the east to Jerusalem, and, considently, and in great opennels, under the car and eye of a tyrant prince, bloody and timorous, jealous and ambitious, inquired Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we bave seen his flar in the east, and are come to worship 'him.' The Greeks suppose this star was an angel, or fuch a piliar of fire as went before the Ilraelites by night, during their travels in the wilderness.

These eastern princes, of whom St. Cyprian says, It was an old tradition of the church, that they were kings, or rather little lords of particular places (like those of whom Joshua slew thirty in one battle) declared the mysteriousness of the star, and that it was no prodigy or comet, foretelling diseases, plagues, wars and death, but only the happy birth of a most excellent Prince, yet it brought affrightment to Herod, ' and all Jerusalem with him," who, when he heard that a King was to be horn in Judah, thought he should be dispossessed

of his vsurped possession of the kingdom.

For Josephus relates, That his father, named Aatipster, was an Identess, and that Herod being a well monied man, industrious, factious, and well accomplished, he was in great favour with the Romans, and by his rare qualities, he at length matried the daughter of Hireanns, king of Judah, who descended lineally from the house of David, and tribe of Judah. Hircanes being afterwards defeated in a bettle by the Perfers, they carried him captive into that country; hereupon Herod hastens to Rome, and by the favour of Mark Anthony and Augustus, he was created king of Judsh by the sense of Rome, although Hircanus and his three fous, Antigonus, Alexander, Aristobulus, and divers others of the royal blood were all alive; but he foon found means to get Hircanus into his hands, and murdered him, with his younger brother Arishbelus, his wife Maximme, the daughter of Hircanni, and his three ions, all of the royal house of Judab; he likewise flew forty of the principal aoblemen, and all the Sanledrim, or feventy two fenators of the same tribe; he killed the chief of the fest of the pharties; he burnt the genealogies of all the kings and princes of Judah. and hired an hitherian to draw out a pedigree from his progenitors, as if they were descended from the ancient kings of Judzh; he fold the high pricithood to firangers, and made inch have of Judah, as no part of the govemment or dignity remained in any of them. And at this time Jeius, of the fame house, and line of Judah, was born in Bethlebern.

Now Herod imagining that an heir was sent from beaven to challenge the kingdom, who brought a itar and the learning of the east with him, as evidence and credentials of his title, moleved, if possible, to deseat the decrees of haven, either by policy or violence; and 'calling the chief priests and scribes of the people 'together,' he found they all determined, that Bethlebem of Judah was the place designed by the ancient prophesy, and God's decree, where Christ should be born: Next be enquired privately of the wife men what time the star appeared, which had no regular

motion

motion according to the course of nature, but guided the Magi in their journey, so that it stood when they stood, and moved not when they rested, making no more haste than they did, who carried much of the business and employment of the star along with them. And they having satisfied him in his questions, he sent them to Bethiehem, with instructions to search diliteration to Bethiehem, with instructions to search diliteration to the young child, and to bring him word, pretending that he would come and worship him also.

The wife men profecuted the business of their journey, and ' having heard the King, they departed,' and the flar (which, as it feems, still attended their metion) 'went before them, until it came and flood\_over where the young child was; where, when they faw the flar they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." Such a joy as wearied travellers find when they are come to the end of their journey, and entering their inn. A joy of nature, of wonder and religion, and their spirits being heightened with expectation, they ran into 'the house, where they saw the young child 'with Mary his mother;' and pesholy they might be under some surprise, when, instead of pomp and gaiety, they saw the great King's throne to be a manger, a stable his chamber of presence, a thin court, and no ministers, and the King himfelf a pretty babe, and but that he had a flar over his head, nothing to distinguish him from the miseries of a poor empty fortune.

This did not scandalize those wise persons, but being convinced by that testimony from heaven, and the union of circumstances, 'They sell down and worshipped him,' after the manner of the eastern people, when they pay veneration to their kings, not with a salutation and blessing in words only, but they 'bring presents, and come into his courts;' for when they had opened their treasures, they 'presented unto him gifts, gold, frank'incense and myrrh.' Seeming to declare their faith of three articles, by this oblation: By gold, that he was a King; by incense, that he was a God; and by myrrh, that he was a man: Or, as others imagine,

that

that if there was any mystery in these offerings, gold might fignify acts of mercy; myrsh, the chastity of the mind, or the purity of our bodies, to the incorruption of which myrrh is especially instrumental; and by his incense our prayers, as the most proper presents to the henour and service of this young King. But whatever mens' opinions were, the act of adoration was direct and religious; the myrth was medicinal to his tender body; and incense possibly then was necessary in a stable. the first throne of his humility; and the gold was a good antidote against the present indigencies of his poverty. Such presents as these were used in all the east, especially in Arabia and Saba, to which the growth of myrrh and frank-incense were proper, in their addresses to their gods and to their kings, with which, under the veil of flesh, they worshipped the eternal word, the wisdom of God, under infant innocency; the Almighty Power in so great weakness, and the height of Majesty and Divine Glory, under the lowness of human nature.

When the wife men had paid the tribute of their offerings and adoration, 'being warned in their fleep by an angel, not to return to Herod, they returned into their own country another way,' fully fatisfied of the truth of what they had heard and feen, and taught by this rare demonstration which was made by Christ, that man's happiness did not at all consist in the affluence of worldly riches, possessions and windy honour, having seen the eternal Son of God, poor and weak, and unclothed of all exterior ornaments, they renounced the world, and retired into the recesses of religion, and the delights of science.

And now the bleffed Saviour of the world having affuned the nature of finful man, who had broken the divine commands, he was to put that nature into faveable condition, by fulfilling his Father's preceptive will, and then to reconcile it actually, by fuffering the just deservings of its prevarications; he therefore addresses himself to all the parts of an active obedience, and

when eight days were accomplished, for the circumcifing of the child,' he exposed his tender body to the circumcifing-knife, and fined his blood in drops, giving an earnest of those streams of blood which he did afterwards pour out, for the cleanfing of human nature, and extinguishing the wrath of God. He had no fin, nor was he conceived by natural generation, and could have no stain in foul or body, which need be cleanfed by this mystery; neither, indeed, do we find it expressed, that circumcision was ordained for pardon of original fm, though it is prefumed to; but it was instituted to be a feal of a covenant between God and Abraham, and his posterity; a seal of the righteousness of faith, and therefore was not improper for him to fuffer, who was the child of Abraham, and who was the Prince of the covenant, and the author and finisher of that faith which was promifed to Abraham in circumcifion; but so mysterious are all the actions of Jesus, that this one ferved many ends. For, 1st. It gave demonstration of the verity of his human nature. 2. Hereby he began to fulfil the law. 3. It took from himfelf the scandal of uncircumvision, which would eternally have prejudiced the Jews against the entertainment and communion with him. 4. He then took upon him that name which declared him to be the Saviour of the world; which as it was finished in the blood of the circumcifion. For when the eight days were accomplished his name was called fesus:' This name his parents imposed upon him, which the angel told to his mother, a name above every name; for in old time God was known by the names of Power, of Nature, and of Majesty; but his mame of Mercy was referred till now, when God did purpose to pour out the whole treasure of his mercy, by the ministry of his holy Son.

But this holy family longed till they might be permitted to address to the temple, that there they might present the holy Babe to his Father, in his own house; for though while he was a child, he did differ nothing from a servant, yet he was Lord of the place, it being his Father's house, and indeed Lord of all. Therefore,

When the days of the purification were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusaiem, to present him to the Lord; to whom he was holy, as being the first born of his mother, the only begotten Son of his Father, and the first born of every creature; and they did with him according to the law of Moses, offering a

pair of turtle doves,' for his redemption.

And as there was no public act about this holy child, but it was attended by fomething miraculous and extraordinary; at this instant the spirit of God directed Simeon, a holy person, into the temple, that he might be fenfible of the fulfilling of a prophefy made to himfelf, That, 'before his death he might behold the Lord Christ, and embrace the glory and consolation of 'Ifrael, and the light of the gentiles in his arms;' and accordingly he spake glorious things of that child, and things sad and glorious concerning his mother, That the child was set ' for the rising and falling in Israel, for a fign that should be spoken against; and the bitterness of that contradiction, should pierce the heart of his holy virgin mother like a fword, that her joys might be a little allayed with the prefent revelation of her future trouble.

Old Anna, the prophetels, came also in, full of years and joy, and found the reward of her incessant prayers and fasting in the temple, the long-looked-for redemption of Israel being now present, and the with her eyes faw the light of the world, the heir of heaven, the long expected Messiah, whom the nations had defined and waited for, till their hearts were faint, and their eyes dim, as doubting he would be long in coming, the also prophesied, 'and gave thanks unto the Lord,' But Joseph and his mother 'marvelled at those things. 'which were spoken of him;' and Mary having received the greatest favour that any of the daughters of Adam ever did, and knowing from whence, and for whose giory she had received it, returned the holy Jefus in a present to God again, for the had nothing fo precious as himself to make oblation of, and because, by the law of Moses, every first-born among the males

a pair of turtle doves, or pigeons, to redeem the Lamb of God from the Anathema, because every first-born was to be offered to God, or redeemed if it was clean. This was a poor man's price, and the desired Jesus was never valued at an higher rate, while he was upon earth. For he that was Lord of the universe, chose his portion among the poor of this world, that he might advance the poor to the 'riches of his inheritance,' for at his birth he was poor, at his circumcision poor, and in the likeness of a sance; at his presentation poor, like a tinner; and a servant, for he chose to

be redecised at a very mean price.

Herod having long waited for the return of the wife men, to give him directions where to had the child, that his Iword might do certain execution upon him, when he saw he was mocked of them, he was exceed-'ing wroth: And the' he believed the divine oracles, foretelling that a King shoul! be born in Bethlehem; yet his ambition made him to stapid, that he attempted to cancel the decree of heaven, for if he did not believe the propheties, why was he troubled? If he did believe them, how could be possibly hinder the errand, which God had foretold himself, would certainly bring to pass? And therefore since Providence had prevented him from Lithing his own fword in the blood of the bleffed child, he refulved to fend a sword of indiscrimination and confusion, hoping that if he killed all the babes of Bethlehem, this young King's reign would foon termirate; he therefore ' feat forth and slew all the children that were in Betirkchem, and in all coasts thereof. from two years old and under, according to the time "which he had diligently enquired of the wife men." For this excition was in the beginning of the second year of Christ's nativity, as in all probability we guess, not at the two years end, as force furgioie; because as his malice was subtie, so he intended it should be secure, and was near the time of his computation.

The massacre was sad, cruel and universal, no comrassion was taken at the dreadful shricks of the mother;

so tender-bearted foldier was employed; no hard-hearted person was softened by the weeping eyes, and piteour begging looks of those mothers, that wondered how it was possible for any to hurt their pretty sucklings; there was no protection, no defence against these favage butchers, no indulgence to any; infomuch that Herod caused his own child, which was at nucle in the coalt of Bethlehem, to bleed to death, who is Phile, the Jew, writes) was descended by his mether's fide of the tribe of Indah, which barbarous crackty being told to Augustus, he said, that 'in Herod's family, it were ' better to be a hog than a fon,' fince being a jew, he was forbid to kill or eat fwine's flaft, though he was not ashamed to murder his child; the sword being thus made that by Herod's commission, slaughtered sensteen therefand innecent infants (so the Greeks in their calendar and the Abyffines of Æthiopia do commemorate in their liturgy.) For Herod, crafty and malicious, that is a finished tyrant, had caused all-the children to be brought together, which the poor credulous mother supposed was only to take an account of their age and number, in order to lay fome tax upon every head, unknowingly suffered themselves and their babes to be betrared to an irremediable butchery. was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeagury the prophet, ' faying, Lamentation and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not 'be comforted.' All the inflances of sadness were little enough to express the great weeping, when fourteen thousand mothers in one day, saw their pretty habes pouring forth their blood into that bosom, whence not long before they had sucked milk, and instead of those pretty smiles, which used to endear their affections, nothing but affrighting shricks and pele ghaftly looks. The mourning was great, like the mourning in the valley of Himnom, and there was no comforter; their forrow was too dead to receive any present consolation, and nothing but length of time could allay their wost! grief.

But the malice of Herod went farther into the hill country

country, and hearing that great things were spoken of John (called the Baptist) the son of Zachary, as if it was deligned to some eminent ministry about this great Prince, he defigned to make void the propheties concerning him also, and sent a messenger of death to find him out. But the mother's early care prevented his design, by conveying her son into defart places, where he continued ! till the time appointed for his manifestation "unto Hrael." But as the children of Bethlehem died in the flead of Christ, so did the father of the Baptist die for his child; so for Herod slew Zachary between the temple and the altar,' because he resuled to betray his fon to the fury of that raging beaft, though some eminent primitive Christians had a tradition, that a place being separated in the temple for virgins, Zachary suffered the blessed virgin to abide there after the birth of the holy Jetus, affirming her to be still a virgin, and that for this reason, not Herod, but the - scriber and pharisces did kill Zachary.

Terrullian reports, that the blood of Zachary had so belineared the stones of the pavement, which was the altas the good priest was facrificed on, that no art nor industry could wash the tincture out, the dye and guilt being both indelible; as if because God did intend to exact of that nation, all the blood of righteous perions from Abel to Zacharias, who was the last of the martyrs of the fynagogue, he would bear a character of their guilt in their fight, to upbraid their irreligion, cruelty and infidelity. Some there are, who affirm, that those werds of our Saviour do not relate to any Zachary who had been already slain, but to a prophesy of the lait of all the martyrs of the Jews, who should be flain immediately before the destruction of the last temple, and the extermination of their nation. Certifin it is, that such a Zachary, the son of Baruch sif we may believe Josephus) was slain in the middle of the temple a little before it was destroyed; and it is agreeable to the nature of the prophely, and the reproof here given by our bleffed Saviour, That from Abe! to Zachary, should take in all the righteous blocd, blood, from first to last, till the iniquity was complete; and it is not imaginable that the blood of our blessed Lord, and the apostle St. James, for whose death many of the Jews were of opinion, God destroyed their city, should be lest out of the account, which would certainly be, if any other Zachary should be meant than he whom they last slew; and therefore St. Cyprian expounds what we read in the past sense. to signify future, and instead of ye slew, reads shall stay, according to the stille often used by prophets, and as sometimes an uncer-

ain fignification will bear.

But the first great inflance of the divine vengeance, for those executions, was upon Herod, who in a very few years after was fmitten of God with so many plagues and tortures, that himself above seemed like an hospital of the incurable; for he was tormented with a left flow fire, like that of burning iron in his body; in his bowels with intelerable cholics and ulcers; in his shameful parts with worm; in his feet with goot; in his nerves with convultions; difficulty of breathing, and out of divers parts of his body iffued so noisome and ulcerous a stench, that the loathsomeness, pain, and indignation, made him once fnatch up a knife, with a purpose to have killed himself, but that he was prevented by a nephew of his, who then attended him; but the heart of Herod was only the more hardened by the loads of divine wrath: God began his hell here, and the pains of hell never made any man less wicked. For Herod, perceiving that he must now die, sirst put to death his son Antipater, under pretence that he would have poisoned him: And, that the last scene of his life might be cursed malice, and exalted villany, and outdo all the reft; because he believed the Jewish nation would rejoice at his death, he assembled all the nobles of the people, and put them in prison, giving strict charge to his fifter Salome, that when he was at the point of death, they should all be slain, that his death might be lamented with a real and universal sorrow. But God, who brings to nought the counsels of wicked princes, turned the delign against the intendment of Herod; for when he

was dead, and could not call his fifter to account for disobeying his bloody and unrighteous command, the released ail the imprisoned and despairing gentlemen, and made the day of her brother's death, a perfect jubilee, a day of joy, such as that when the Jews were delivered from the violence of Haman, in the days of Parim.

All this while God had provided a fanctuary for the haly child, Jefus, who, feeing the fecret purpoles of blood, which Herod had contrived, feat his 'Angel, ' who appeared to Joseph in a dream, taying, arife, and take the young child and his mother, and fly into 'Egyps, and be thou there until I bring thee word. \* For Herod will feek the young child to delitoy him. . Then he arose and took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt.' Joseph and Mary instantly arose, and without enquiring how they should live there, or when they should return, or how be secured, or what accommodations they should have in their journey, but in the night they began their pilgrimage with the cheerfulness of obedience, and the enaldence of hope, and joys of love, knowing themfelves (afficiently recompensed for all the trouble they could endure, by being inframents of the fafe: 7 of the hely lefus: The ancient fathers fay, they made their first abode in Hermopolis, in the country of Thebais; whether, when they first arrived, the child, Jesus, being by defign of Providence carried into a temple, all the statues of the idol gods fell down, like Dagon at the presence of the ark, and suffered their timely and just diffelution and dishonour, according to the prophely of Isiah; Behold the Lord shall come into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence. And in the life of the prophet Jeremiah, written by Epiphanius, it is reported that he told the Egyptian priests, That their idols should be broken to pieces, when a holy virgin, with her child, should enter into their country; which prophely possibly might be the cause that the Egyptians, besides their vain idols, and false gods, did worthip also an Infant in a manger, and a virgin in her bed. From

From Hermopolis to Maturza these kely pilgtims vent for their falety and fublishence, where it was reported, they dwelt in a garden of ballain, 'till Joseph being, at the end of feven years, (as in commonly believed) aftertained by an angel of the douth of Herod, and commanded to return to the land of liracl, he was obedient to the heavenly vision, and returned: But bearing that Archelans reigned in his father's flead, and knowing the creeky and ambition of Herod was bereditary, or intailed upon his son, he was warned to turn aside to the parts of Galilee, under the jurisdiction of Philip, the fon of Herod also, where Archites had no authority; the holy family were not folicitous about their return, nor districtful of divine Providence, but fall of poverty, fanctity and content, waited God's time, at the return of which God delayed not to recall them from exile, 'Out of Egypt he called his fon,' and direfled Joseph's fear and course, that he should drive to a place free from danger. And the fame Providence God expresses to all succee christians, and will stock them from all their pains, forrows, and troubles, if they wait his good time, and in the mean while do their duty, and depend upon his affiliance; the holy Jesus having gone before them, will aid them, and at length make their condition eternally happy.

From the return of this kely family to Judah, and their habitation in Nazaroth, till the bleffed child Jesus was twelve years of age, we have nothing transmitted to us of any authentic record, but that they went to Jerusalem every year at the seast of the passover. 'And 'when Jesus was twelve years old,' and was in the holy city, attending upon the paschast rites, and solemn facrisices of the law; his parents, 'having suissilled their 'days of the seast, went homeward, supposing the child 'to be in the caravan,' among his friends; going before, 'a whole day's journey, and when they sought and 'found him not, they returned to Jerusalem,' full of tears and forrows, and 'for three days could not find 'him;' at length entering into the temple to pray to Godo

God, who knew their defires, changed their forrows into jay and wonder, for the mother found the 'Holy 'Son fitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing 'them and asking them questions;' and when they 'saw 'him they were amazed,' and so were all that 'heard 'him, at his understanding and answers,' beyond his education, beyond his experience, beyond his years, and even beyond the common attainments of the best men, discoursing with the spirit of a prophet, the demonstration of an angel, and the height of inspiration; for kere in the very literal sense, 'God out of the mouth 'of Babes ordained strength.'

Glad were the parents of the Child to find him initiated with a miracle, and when he gave them account of his employment, which they understood not, saying, 'How is it that ye sought me? Wift ye not that I must be about my Father's business.' But 'Mary kept all

them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man; and no doubt lived in all holiness and humility, shewing great signs of wisdom, and thereby endearing himself to all that beheld his conversation, and consirmed them in the expectation which his miraculous birth had created of

him, increasing in proportion to his great beginnings to a miraculous excellency of grace, sweetness of de-

meanour, and excellency of understanding.

When Herod had drank so deep a draught of blood at Bethlehem, and sought for more in the hill-country, Elizabeth carried her son, John the Baptist, into the wilderness, there in the desart places to hide him from the sury of that beast, where, questionless, she attended him with as much care and tenderness, as the affections and sears of a mother could express in those barren solitudes: It is recorded, That the child was about eighteen months old when he first sled to this melancholy sanctuary, but after forty days his mother died, and his stather Zachary, slain at his ministration, which happened about this time, in the court of the temple; so that the

shild was exposed to all the dangers and infelicities of an orphan, in a place of solitariness and discomfort, in a time when a bloody king meditated his destruction; But when his father and mother were taken from him the Lord took him up.' For the Greeks have a tradition, that God deputed an angel to be his guardian and nourisher, as he had formerly done to lihmael, who dwelt in the wilderness; and to Elias, when he sed from the rage of Ahab; so to this child who came in the spirit of Elias, to make demonstration that there can be no want nor danger, where God undertakes the

care and provision for his children.

The entertainment he met with in the wilderness, was fech as might dispose him to a life of austerity, to holy contemplations, prayers, and communion with God; his 'Raiment being of camel's hair, and a leath-'ern girdle about his loins, and his meat was localis 'and wild honey:' And thus he continued till he was about thirty years of age, and then, in the lifteenth-year of Tiberius, ' Pontius Pilate being governour of Judea, ' the word of God came unto John in the wilderness, ' and he came into all the country of Judea, preaching 'and baptizing.' This John, according to the prophesize of him, and designation of his person by the Hely Ghost, was the fore-runner of Christ, seas to dispose the people for his entertainment, and prepare his ways; whom all the Jewish writers of that time, mention with exceeding praises; and Josephus, who lived soon after the death of Christ, says, That he was a most excellent man, of whom it is written by the prophet Malachi, ' Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare ' the way before me:' It was therefore necessary that he should be a person of consummate virtue and holiness, that the purity of his life might gain credit and reputation to the testimony he was to give concerning his Lord, the Saviour of the world, which happened accordingly.

For as the Baptist, while he was in the wilderness, became the pattern of a solitary, contemplative life, and as an example of sanctity and singular austerity;

fo when he appeared to the world, he seemed to be a very extraordinary man, and the wonders which were great at his birth, and the prediction of his conception, which had never before happened, but in the persons of Issac and Sampson, the contempt of the world, his mortified countenance and deportment, his auftere and folitary life, his vehement and zealous preaching, created to high an opinion of him in the people, 'That 'all held him for a prophet,' and a rare example for a holy life; and all this was rendered more awful by his solemn baptism, whereby he so prevailed, that he made apt and admirable preparations for the Lord's appearing; for there went out ' to him Jercsalem, and all Judah, and all the regions round about Jordan, and were baptized of him, confessing their fins. By these icavealy means he so won upon the affections of all men shat his fermons and his tokimony concerning Christ were the more prevalent and acceptable; the sum of his discourses reading to persuade them to repent of their sine, and bring forth the fruits of an holy life; he was a severe reprehender of the phatisees and sadducees; he exhanted the people to do works of mercy, the publicant to do justice, and oppress no man; the soldiers so ableam from plundering, violence, and rapine; and publicly declared that he was not Christ, that he only bassined with water, but that the holy Jesus should beprize with the Hely Ghoft, and with fire,' and finally denounced eternal wrath and punishment to all that were impenitent; and from this day forward, that is, From the days of John Baptist, the kingdom of · heaven suffered violence and the violent take it by orce."

For now the gospel began to dawn, John being like the morning ilar, foretelling the approach of the Son of Righteousness; for as St. John the Baptist laid the arist rough and unhown stone in this spiritual building, in mortification, self-denial, and doing violence to our satural affections, so the Master-Builder himself contineed the same by propounding the glosses of the hearenly kingdom, to those only, who, by hearing the

erose, should obtain the same. Now was the time that multitudes should throng and crowd to enter into the strain gate; and the younger brothers, the gentiles, should snatch the inheritance from the Jews our elder brothers; strangers from natives; the publicans and harlots from the scribes and pharisees; who, like violent persons, shall, by their importunity, obedience, watchfulness and diligence, gain the kingdom from them to whom it was first offered, and Jacob shall be loved, and Esau hated.

From the disputation of Jelus with the doctors, to the time of his manifolistion to Israel, which was about eighteen years, the Holy Child dweit in Nazareth, in great obedience to his parents, working, as is supposed, with his hands, in his supposed father, Joseph's trade, for the support of his own and his mother's necessities. and that he might bear the curle of Adam, that, in the ' fweat of his brows he should eat his bread : But now the full time being come, he took his leave of his mother, and his employment, to begin his Father's work, and his prophetical office, in order to the redemption of the world, and when John was haptizing in Jordan, Jesus came to John to be baptized of him. And though the Baptist had never seen his face, because they had been from their infancy driven to feveral places, and defigued to several offices, yet the Holy Ghost immediately inspired John with a discerning, knowing spirit, so that at his first arrival he knew him, and did him worthip; so that when Jesus defined to be baptized John 'forbid him, faying, I have need to be bautized of thee, and comeit thou unto me?' But our bleffed Saviour, who told John that he came to fulfi! all righteousees, would receive that rice which his Father had instituted in order to the manifestation of his Son; and by this baptifia he became known to John, so that now he pointed at his person in his sermon, and discourses, and by calling him the Limb of God, prophehed of his padion, and declared him to be the world's Redeciner, and the Sacrifice for mankind.

As foon as John had performed his ministry, and Jesus baptized, he prayed, and the heavens were opened, and in the air appeared a new and glorious light, the Holy Ghost descending like a dove, and bighting upon him, and a voice from heaven, faying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleafed." This was the inauguration and proclamation of the Messah, when he began to be the great Prophet of the New Covenant: The dove is inoffentive, and freis no disturbance nor violence of passions, when its dearestinterests are destroyed; we also ought to be of an even spirit in the saddest accidents which usually discomposeour peace, and it is certain that wherever the Holy Spirit does dwell, there also peace and fanctity, meekacis and charity, a mortified will, and absolute abandoning our own inclinations and defires to inhabit; furthermore, this dove, like that which Noah sent out of the ark, did aptly fignify, That the world should be renewed, and all be surned to a new creation, and God hath made a covenant with us, that unless we provoke him by our impieties, he will hever destroy the earth any more: When the solemnity of his baptism was over, Christ ascended up eut of the water, and fome of the ancients report, (but with what certainty we know not) that the place is that river where his holy hody had been baptized, was endued with a healing quality, and a power of suring lepers, who bathed themselves therein, in the saith of Jesus. But the ranisostation of this power was not till afterwards, for as vet Jesus did no miracles.

When the Saviour of the world was baptized, had opened the heavens, which never yet had been opened to man, and was declared the Son of God, 'Jesus was by the Spirit driven into the wilderness;' not by an unnatural violence, but by a supernatural inspiration, and inclination, for it was the Holy Spirit that bear him thither; he was led by the good spirit, to be tempted of the evil; whither also he retired to make demonstration, that in an active life, such as he was designed to, these retirements for contemplation and

prayer may be necessary, that we may be thereby enabled to teach others, when we have been converting with God. In the defact, which was reckoned four miles from the place of his baptism, and about twenty from Jerusalem, he abode there 'forty days and forty 'nights;' where he was perpetually disturbed and assaulted with the evil spirits, in the midst of wild beasts, in a continual inst, without enting bread, or drinking water, 'and the angels; ministered unto him;' heing messengers of comfort and sustentiation from his Father for the support and service of his humanity, and employed in resisting and disconvenancing the assaults and

hostilities of the spirits of darkness.

Whether the devils appeared in any horsid and affrighting shape is not certain; but it is more likely that to a perion of Christ's fanctity, they would appear more angelical, he not being to be affrighted with ugly phantaints, which abute the weak and imperfect conceptions of ignorant people; but the way which Satan the prince of devils took was, that at the expiration of forty days, 'Jefus being hungry,' he invited him toeat bread of his own providing, which might refresh his humanity and prove his divinity; hoping that his hunger, and the defire of convincing the devil, might tempt him to eat before the time appointed: 'But Je-. 's fue answered, it is written, Man shall not live by. bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of Goi; meaning that in every word of God, whether the commandment be general or special, a promise is either expressed or implied, of the supply of all provisions necessary for him that is doing the work of God, and that was the present case of Jesus, who was then doing his Father's work, and promoting our interest, and therefore was sure to be provided for, and so we may be likewise, when we are performing our duty.

The devil having failed in this assault, tries him again, requiring still a demonstration of his being the Son of God; he sets him 'upon the pinnacle of the 'temple,' and invites him to throw himself down say-

ing,

ing, " If thou be the Son of God; cast thyself down from hence, for it is written, He shall give his angels \* charge concerning thee, to keep thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, left at any time thou "dash thy loot against a stone." But the our Saviour was secured of God's protection, yet he would not tempt God by securing an extraordinary act of his providence, for his unnecessary preservation. At length Sates unites all his power of Bratagem, and places the Moly Jefus upon an exceeding high mountain, and hy an angelical power, represents, as in a map, all the kingdom, glories, and beauties of this world, and affures Jesus, that all this was put into his power to give, and he would before it on him; if he would " tall down and worthip him." But our bleffed Redeemer being provoked and angry at this vile proposal, and his impadent and hissphemous demands, said, Get thee hence, behind me, Satan, for it is written, theu halt worthin the Lord thy God, and him only thait thou serve. The devil then leaveth kim, and behold eangels came and ministered auto him, bringing him. such things as his necessities required; after he had by a forty days fast and abstinence, left an example to his disciples and tollowers, That faiting is necessary to a contemplative life, and for refifting and overcoming all temptations and allurements of the devil, and all our spiritual encinies. And we may observe, that poverty, predefination and ambition, are the three quivers from which the devil drew his arrow, with which he thought to prevail against Chrut, but our Captain, conquered him both for himself and us, whereby we may see our danger, and how we are provided with a remedy against all temptations of the wicked one.

After the Raptile by a fign from heaven, was confirmed in the spirit and understanding, that Jesus was the Mediah; he immediately published to the Jews what God had manifoled to him; and first to the priests and Levites, who sent a messenger from the Sanhedrim, or great council at jerulalem, to know who he was if John answered immediately, that himself was not the

Clark

Obrit, nor Elias, nor that prophet whom they by a special tradition did expect to be revealed, they knew not when; and concerning himself he said nothing positive, but that he was 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord.' This Lord was then amongst them, but not known, a person of great dignity, 'the latchet of whose shoes he was not worthy to unclose,' or do the meanest office under him; 'who, tho' coming after John, was to be preserved before him, who was to increase, but the Baptist was to decrease, who aid baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire.'

This was the character of his personal prorogatives, but as yet no demonstration was made of his person, till after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him, and then wherever the Baptist saw Jesus, he points him out with his finger, 'Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the fins of the world! This is He. Then ho fliews him to Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, and to another disciple with him, who both followed lesus, and abode with him that night.' Andrew brings his brother Simon with him, and Christ changes his name from Simon to Peter, or Cephas, which lignifies a Then Jesus himself finds out Philip of Bethsaida, and bids him follow him, and Philip ands out Nathaniel, and calls him to fee; thus like people that came out of darkness, when they see the fun, they call to their parents to be jurtakers of this new and strange revelation.

When Nathaniel was come to Jesus, Christ saw his heart, and gave him a testimony of being truely honest, and sull of holy simplicity, 'An Israelite indeed in 'whom is no guile;' and Nathaniel being over-joyed that he had found the Messiah, believing out of love, and loving by reason of his joy, having no suspicion of his person; and took his will and the forwardness of such essection in such good part, that he promised him greater things, and this gave occasion to the sirst prophesy which was made by him: 'for Jesus said unto him,' Because I said I saw thee under the sig tree, believest

thou

thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. And then prophetied, 'That he should see beaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man;' but he being a doctor of the law, Christ

did nor choose him for one of his apostles.

About the same time there was a marriage at Cana of Galilee, in the acighbourhood of Christ's dwelling, where John the erangelist is by some supposed, the without certainty, to be the bridegroom, to which Jufus, with his mother being invited, he went to do civility-to the perious espouled, and to monour the ordinance of marriage; the persons then married, were thought to be but of indifferent fortunes, richer in the love of their acigobours than in wealthy policiflons; they had more company than wine, which the blaffed virgin mother acquainted Jefus with; who answered her, 'Voman, what is that to thee and me? mine hour is not yet come: By this answer, intending no denial to his morbet, but to figurely be was not yet entered into the period and reass of miracles, and when he did, it must not be for respect of kindred or civil relations, but deriving his power from above, it must be to serve that defigs which he had received in charge together with that power.

And so his mother understood him, giving express charge to the attendants: to do whatfoever he comsmanded; Fefas therefore bid them fill the water-pots which flood there for the use of frequent walkings, which the Jews used in all their public meetings, for fear of contracting legal pollutions and impurities, wherein they feemed too inperfitious, washing their very beds and tables employed at their feats. fervants filled them to the brim, and as they were commanded, drew out, and bare to the governour of the feaft, who knew not of it,' till the miracle grew public, and like light shewed is self; for while they wendered at the management of the feat, in keeping the best wine till the last,' it grew apparent, that he who was Lord of his creatures, could produce new qualities in that subject, in which he chooses to glorify his Son.

This

This 'beginning of miracles did Jesus at Cana in Galilee.' For all those miracles all the Popish legends report to be done by Christ in his infancy, and interval of his younger years, are apocryphal and spurious, promoted by the credulity of such persons, in whose hearts easiness, folly, and superstition are bound up; this sirst miracle manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

Immediately after this miracle, Jesus abode a few days in Caperagum; but because of the great feast of the pafforer, he ascended to Jerusalem, where he performed an act of holy zeal in behalf of the honour of the temple, which divers merchants and exchangers of money made their bank and market, and brought beafts thither to be fold for facrifice against the great paschal folemaity; at the fight of which our Saviour being moved with indignation, 'made a whip of fmall cords, and drove the beasts out of the temple, overthrew the accompting tables, and commanded them that fold the 'drves, to take them from thence.' For his anger was holy, and ther: fore would not have the doves let fly to the detriment of the owners, laying, 'Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise; for it shall be called, 'a house of prayer to all nations:' And being required to give a fign of his vocation, he only foretold the referrection of his body after three days, but expressing it in the metaphor of the temple; Destroy this temple, and I will build it up in three days; he 's spake of the temple of his body;' and they underflood it of the temple at Jerusalem, and it was never rightly confirmed till it was accomplished.

At this public convention or affembly of the Jewish nation, Jesus did many miracles, published himself to be the Messiah, and gained many disciples, among whom was Nicodemus, a doctor of the law, and a ruler of the nation; he came by night to Jesus, and assimed himself to be convinced by the miracles which he had seen, for no man can do these miracles which thou dost, except God be with him. Jesus then began to instruct him in the mystery of regeneration, saying,

Verily,

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born 'again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' This was strange philosophy to Nicodemus, but Jesus bid him not to wonder, for this is not a work of humanity, but a fruit of God's spirit, 'sfor the spirit bloweth where it lifteth,' like the wind which is apparent in its effects, but secret in the causes and production thereof. Christ then says, There are higher things, and more mysterious for him to apprehend and believe; tells his own descent from heaven, soretells his death and ascension, and the blessing of redemption which he come to work for mankind; preaches of the love of the Father, the mission of the Son, the rewards of faith, and the glories of eternity: He upbraids the unbelieving and impenitent, and declares the differences of an holy and corrupt conscience, the shame and fear of the one, the confidence and fecurity of the other; and this was the sum of his sermon to Nicodemus, which was the fullest of mystery of any that he ever made, except that immediately before his passion; all his other fermons being more practical.

From Jerusalem Jesus goeth into the country of Judea, attended by divers disciples, whose understandings were brought into subjection and obedience to him, upon confidence of the divinity of his miracles. There the disciples received all that came, and baptized them, as John at the same time did, and by that ceremony admitted them into the christian discipline and infitution, according to the custom of the doctors, and great prophets among the Jews, whose baptizing their scholars was the ceremony of their admission. And now the time was come that Christ must increase, and the Baptist suffer diminution, for Christ came from above, and was above all, and the sum of his doctrine was, That which he had feen and heard from the Father, whom God fent to that purpose; to whom God had set his seal, that it was true; who spake the words of God, whom the Father loved; to whom he gave the spirit without measure, and into whose hands God had delivered all • things; this was he whose testimony the world received

not;' and that they might not only know what person they slighted, but how great salvation they also neglected, John sums up all his sermous, and sinishes his ministry with the saving, 'He that believeth on the Son 'shall have everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the weath of God.' 'abideth on him.'

And now the Baptist had fullled the office of bearing witness unto Jesus, God was pleased to give him his writ of ease, and beitow on him his reward upon this occasion: John who had learned to despise the world and all the flatteries and importinences thereof did his duty juftly, and without respect of persons, and as he reproved the people for their crimes and immoralities. fo he spared not Herod the 2d, then king of Judah. but told him plainly in his fermon, 'That it was not ' lawful for him to marry Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for this fermon he feit the venomous fury of an enraged woman, and was cast into prison, and about a year after was facrificed to the scora and pride of a lascivious mother, and her immodest daughter, being at the end of the second year of Christ's preaching, beheaded at Herod's command, who would not retract his oath because of his honour, and a rash vow he made in the midit of his jollity, and complacencies of his rior. ous dancings; 'His head was brought up in a dish,' and made a festival present to the young girl, who gave it to her mother, by whose advice she demanded the murdering of him, a barbarism before unknown in that country.

But the judgments of God, which sleep not long, soon overtook Herod; for having turned away his wite, who was the daughter of Areius, a king of Arabia Petræa, to obtain Herodias, he provoked her sather to commence war with Herod, who accordingly deseated his whole army, and forced him to an inglorious slight: which the Jews generally believed to be a judgment on him for his unworthy and villainous execution of Joha the Baptist; God in his wisdom and severity making

one fin to be the punishment of another, and neither of them both to pass without the figurature of a curse; and Nicephorus reports, that the dancing daughter of Herodias passing over a frozen lake, the ice broke, and she sell up to her neck ir water, and her head was parted from her budy by the violence of the fragments, and so perished; divine Providence causing the judgment to be a representation of her sin; Herodias herself, with her adulterous paramous Herod, were banished to Lyons in France, by decree of the Roman Senate, where they lived ingloriously, and died miserably; it is recorded, that when her daughter Salome brought the kernish's head to too, the thrush the tongue through with a needle; in revenge for what it had uttered against her; but she herself paid the charges of her

triumph.

When Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, and that the pharifees were envious against kimfelf for the great multitude of people that referred to his haptifm, which he ministred, not in his own person, but by the deputation of his disciples, they finishing the ministration which himself began, who, (as one of the ancients report) haptized the bleffed virgin his mother, and Peter only; and Peter baptized Andrew, James, and John, and they others, he left Judah and came into Galilee, passing by Sycher, a city of Samaria, where in the heat of the day, and weariness of his journey, he fat down at the fide of Jacob's well; whither, when his 'disciples were gone to buy meat, a Samaritan woman cometh to draw water, of whom Jefus alked some to gool and refresh himself. Little knew the woman the excellency of the person that asked so small a charity, neither had she learned that 'a cup of cold water given to a disciple should be rewarded, and much rather such a present to the Lord himself, but profecuted the spirit of her nation, and instead of washing Jesus' seet and giving him a drink, demanded of him, Why he, being a Jew, should ask water of a Samaritan? for the Jews have no dealings with the 'Samaritàns.' The

The ground of the quarrel was this: In the fixth year of Hezekiah, Salmanazar, king of Affyria, plundered Samaria, transported the Israelites to Assyria, and planted an Affyrian colony in the town and country, who by divine vengeance were dekroyed by lions, which no power of man could reftrain or lessea. The king of Affyria thought the cause was, their not serving God according to their rites of Moles' law, and therefore sent a Jewish captive priest to instruct the remaining inhabitants in the Jewish religion; who so learned and practifed it, that they still retained the superstitious heathenish rites; till Manasses, the brother of Jaddi the high priest of Jerusalem, married the daughter of Sanballat, who was the governour under king Darius: Manasses being reproved for marrying a franger the daughter of an ancircumcifed gentile, and admonished to dismiss her, thes to Samaria, persuades his tather in law to build a temple on mount Gerizim, introduces the rites of daily sacrifice, and makes himself high priest, and began to pretend to be the true successor of Azron, and commences a schism in the time of Alexander the great. From whence the question of religion grew to high, that it begat disaffection, anger, animolities, quarrels, bloodshed and murder, not only in Palastine, but wherever a Jew and a Samaritan had the ill fostune to meet; such being the nature of men, that they think it the greatest injury in the world when other men are not of their opinion; and that they please God most, when they are most furiously zealous; and no zeal better to be expressed, than by hating all those whom they are pleased to think God hates.

This schism was prosecuted with the greatest spite that ever any was, because both parties were much given to superstition, and this was promoted by the constitution of their religion, consisting much in externals, and ceremonies, without their improving them to any moral or spiritual sense, or to charity; and therefore the Jews called the Samaritans accursed; again, the Samaritans at the paschal solemnity, would, at midnight, when the Jews' temple was open, scatter dead

men's

men's bones to profane and defile the place, and both would fight, and enternally dispute the question; sometimes referring it to an arbitrator, and then the conquered fide would decline the arbitration after the fenpence; which they did at Alexandria before Ptolemeus Philometer, when Andronicus, by a moving oration, procured fentence against Theodosius and Sabbaus, the Samaritan advocates; the fentence was given for Jerufalen, and the schilm increased and continued till the time of our Saviour's conference with this woman.

And it was so implanted and fixed into their under-

shapilings, that this woman perceived Jesus to be a prophet, the undertook the question with him, Our ' fathers worthipped in this mountain, and ye say Jeru-' salem is the place where men ought to worship.' Our Saviour knew the schism was great enough already, and was not willing to make the breach wider, and though he gave testimony of the truth, that falvation is of the ' Jews, and we know what we worthip, ye do not;' vet, because the occasion of this question was shortly. to be removed, Jesus takes this opportunity to preach the gospel, and to reconcile before hand, the disagreeing interests, and settle a revelation to be verified for ever, that neither here nor there by way of confinement, ner in one country more than another, but "where every man shall call upon God in spirit and truth, there he shall be heard."

'The Holy Jesus then tells her of living water, of eternal satisfactions, of never thirsting again, of her ewn personal condition, as to her marriages, and declares himself to be the Messiah: And then was interrupted by the coming of his disciples, who wondered to fee him talking with a woman; but she being full of joy and wonder, 'left the water pot and ran into the · city,' to publish the Messiah; and immediately 'all the city came out to see; and many believed on him, upon the testimony of the woman, and more when they heard his own discourses; they invited him to the town, and received him with kindness and hospitality for two days, after which he departed to his own town

Galilee,

Galilee; where he was entertained with respect, because of the miracles which the Galileans saw done by him at the seast; and being at Cana, where he wrought the sink miracle, a noble person (a little king or ruler) came to Jesus with much reverence and importunity, desiring that he would immediately come 'down to his 'house to heal his son who was at the point of death.' Jesus who did not werk miracles by natural means, cured the child at a distance, and dismissed the prince, telling him 'his son lived;' and by the account of the servants he sound that the child revived at the same time when these healing words were spoke by Jesus, upon which accident he and all his house became Christ's

disciples.

Our Saviour then left Nazareth, and came to Capernaum, a maritime town of great refort, chooling that, for his scene of preaching and his place of dwelling. For now the time was fulfilled, the office of the Baptill was expired, and 'the king lom of God was at hand;' he therefore preached the fum of the gospel, faith and repentance, 'repeat and believe the gospel,' and what that gospel was, the sum and substance of all his fermons afterwards declared. Jesus now saw it convenient to choose disciples to his ministry and service, to the work of preaching, and to be witnesses of all that he should say, do, or teach,' for ends which he afterwards made public, Jesus therefore as he walked by the fea of Galilee, called Simon and Andrew, who knew him before by the preaching of John, and now 'lest their ship and their nets, and followed him.' When he was gone a little farther, ' he calls the two sions of Zebedce, James and John, and they went after him.' And with this family he goes up and down the whole Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, healing all manner of diseases, curing demoniacks, cleaning the lepers, and giving strength to those that had the pally, and lame persons.

But when the people pressed on him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Genesaret,' and presently

presently entering into Simon's ship, commanded him to launch into the deep, and from thence taught the ' people,' and there wrought a miracle, for being Lord of the creatures, he commanded the filhes of the fea, and they obeyed; for when Simon, who had 'fished all-'night in vain, let down his net at the command of Iesus, he inclosed so great a number of sishes, that the enet brake, and the fishermen were amazed and surprised' at so great a draught; by which miracle it was intended that a representation should be made of the church of Christ, and the multitudes of believers who should be taken by Simon and other disciples, who were hereby configned to be 'Fishers of men,' and by their hely doctrines should gain souls to Ged, and that when the nets should be drawn to shore, and separation made at the day of judgment, by the angels, they and their disciples should 'enter into the joy of the Lord,' and the wicked receive the portion of reprobates. And now the 'fame of Jesus went into all Syria, and there came to him multitudes from Galilee, Decapolis, · Jerufalem, and Judea; and all that had any fick, with divers difeafes, brought them' to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them; and when he cured the lunatics and perfons possessed with evil spirits, the devils cried out and consessed him to be Christ, the 'Son of God,' but he 'suffered them not;' choosing rather to work faith in his disciples by moral arguments and demonstrations of the spirit, than by the forced testimony of accursed and unwilling spirits.

When Jesus saw his assembly sull, and his audience numerous, he went up into a mountain, and when his disciples came to him, he made that admirable sermon called 'the Sermon upon the Mount;' which is a divine compendium of such excellent truths, and contains a breviary of those moral precepts given by Moses, and onlarging their obligation by a stricter sense, and more severe exposition: 'that their righteousness ought to exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees;' preaches perfection, and the doctrines of meckness and

poverty

poverty of spirit, christian mourning, desire of holy things, mercy and purity, peace and suffering injuries, assixing a special promise of blessing to be the inheritance of those who are endued with these spiritual graces and excellencies, he explains some part of the ten commandments, and adds precepts of his own. He teaches his disciples to pray, how to fast, how to give alms; contempt of the world, not to judge others; forgiving of injuries; against covetousness and worldly laws; of brotherly reproof; of the strait gate, and narrow way; of saile prophets; against hypocrisy; concluding with an exhortation to true piety; and that men should seek the kingdom of heaven and the righteousness thereos.

When Jesus came down from the mountain, having ended his fermon, a poor leprous man came and worshipped him, and begged to be cleansed, which Jesus foon granted, engaging him not to publish it when he should go abroad, but sending him to the priest, to offer the gift according to the law of Moses: He then came to Capernaum, and taught in their 's synagogues upon the fabbath day, where, in his fermon he expressed the dignity of a prophet, and the authority of a person sent from God; there he cures one possessed with an evil spirit, and afterwards the mother of Simon, of a fever; and multitudes beletting Simon's house, he cured them all, and retired very early in the morning to a defert place, that he might have an opportunity to pray, without being disturbed with the noise of the people; yet neither could he be so hid, for the multitude found him out by their diligent attendance of him, but Jesus told them plainly, that 'He must preach the 'gospel to other cities also,' and therefore resolved to pass to the other side of the lake of Genesaret; whither while he was going, a scribe offered himself to be his disciple, and that he would go with him wheresoever he went; but Christ told him his condition was worse than the 'foxes or the birds of the air,' who had habitations provided, but he had none; ono, not a place to lay his head and find rest; but what become of this forward professor afterwards we know not. Others. Others, Jesus bound to a speedy profession, not suffering one to go home to bid his friends farewell, and

another not so much as to bury his dead."

By the time that Jesus was got into the ship it was late, and he so heavy to sleep, that the violent storm which happened could not awake him, 'till the ship being 6 almost covered with the waves, and in danger of be-'ing funk, the disciples then awakened him saying, 'Master, careft thou not that we perish, and immediately there was a great calm, and they prefently arrived in ' the land of the Gadarens,' near the city of Gadara, where there were many sepulchres in the hollowness of the rocks, in which the dead were buried, where many superstitious persons used to invocate evil spirits; insomuch, that at the instant of our Saviour's arrival in the country, there met him two possessed with devils from those tombs, exceeding serce, and had been so a long time, infomuch that no man durk pass that way: Jesus commanded the devils out of the possessed persons; but sthere were certain men seeding 'swine,' which tho' extremely abominated by the Jewish religion, yet for the use of the Roman armies, and quartering of foldiers, they were permitted, and divers privileges were granted to the masters of such herds: the devils having befought him to enter into the swine, he gave them leave, and the swine ran violently down 'a steep place into the hot baths,' which were at the foot of the hill on which Gadara was built, and 'perished in the waters.' This accident so troubled the 'mhabitants, that they came and intreated Jesus to ' depart out of their coasts;' so leaving Galilee of the gentiles, he came to the lesser Galilee, and while he was fitting in an house which was furrounded with multitudes of people, a man fick of the palfy was brought thither to be cured; and they were fein to untile the house, and let 'him down in the bed with cords in the · midit before Jesus, who was conferring with the doc-'tors:' When Christ saw their saith, he said, Man "thy fins are forgiven thee.' At which faying the pharifees being troubled, thinking it to be blasphemy,

and that none but God could forgive sins: Jesus, to verify his vardon, gave them a palpable demonstration of it; for the Jews did believe that all assistions were punishments for sin, and therefore they said in another case, "Who suned, this man or his father, that he was born blind?" And that removing of the punishment was forgiving of the sin; and therefore Jesus, to prove that his sins were forgiven him, removed that which they supposed to be the effect of his sin; and by curing the passy, prevented their surther murmur against his pardon, saying, 'that ye may know the Son of man hath power on earth to fergive sin: He saith to the sick of the passy, Arise, take up thy bed and walk; and the man arose, and he was healed, and glorished God.'

Awhile after, Jesus went again towards the sea, and on his way feeing Matthew the publican fitting at the receipt of custom, he bids him follow him; Matthew first seasted Jesus and then he became his difciple; but the pharisees that were with him began to be concerned, that he eat with publicans, and finners; for the office of the publicans, though amongst the Romans it was honest and of great account, and the flower of the Roman knights, 'the omament of the city, the ' fecurity of the commonwealth, was accounted to confift in the fociety of publicans; yet among both the Jews and Greeks, the name was odious, and the perfons were accursed, not only because the chief of them were strangers, but because the Jews especially stood upon the charter of their nation, and the privileges of their religion, that none of them should pay tribute; and also, because they were very unjust and great oppressors, having a power unlimited, and covetousness as greedy as the grave. But Jesus gave such an account of the reasons of his conversing with them, because they were finners, that it was as if a physician should be removed for having so much to do with lick persons; for therefore he fent, 'not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,' to advance the reputation of mercy above the rites of the ceremonial law, When

When Jesus was discoursing the pharisees, Jarius, a ruler of the synagogue, came to him desiring him he would help his daughter who lay dying. As he was going to the house, a woman met him, who had been discased with an issue of blood twelve years,' without hope of a remedy from art or nature: Upon the confident perfusions of an holy faith, she runs to him, thinking that if 'she did but touch the hem of his 'garment, she should be made whole;' and accordingly upon the touch, the fountain of her blood was dried 'up, and the felt in her body that the was healed of ' that plague.' St. Ambrose says that this woman was Martha, yet it was not likely that she was a Jewess but a gentile, because of that return which she made in memory of her cure and the honour of Jesus, according to the gentile rites. For Eusebius reports, That himself saw at Cæsarea Phillippi, a statue of brass, representing a woman kneeling at the feet of a goodly personage, who held his hand out to her in a posture of granting her request, and doing favour to her; and the inhabitants said it was erected by the care and cost of this woman; and that at the pedestal of this statue, a plant did grow, which was medicinal in the disease she was cured of, and many others. This story seems not well grounded, fince two evangelists affirm, That she had spent all her substance upon physicians, and was therefore incapable of being at so much charge, neither would the heathen princes have suffered it to stand so many years, strictly searching all places, to discover and demolish all monuments of christianity; and therefore probably these sigures which Eusebius saw, were erected mpon some heathen story or ceremony, and by the in after ages, confidently applied to the present history of this woman.

When Jesus was come to the ruler's house, he found the minstrels making their funeral noises for the death of Jarius's daughter, of which his servants had acquainted him, yet Jesus turned out the minstrels, 'and entered with the parents of the child into her chamber, and 'taking her by the hand,' called her, and awakened

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her from the sleep of death, and 'commanded them to give her meat to eat,' and enjoined them not to publish the miracle, but the more Jesus endeavoured not to be popular, and to suppress the noise and reports of his asts, the more they were discoursed of, and published about the country. As he came from Jarius's house, he cured two blind men, upon their petition, and confession, that they did believe in him. And east out a dumb devil, so much to the wonder and amazement of the people, that the pharisees could hold no longer, being ready to burst with envy, and said, 'He casteth out devils by the help of devils.' Their malice being contradictory and unreasonable, as if the devil should contrive the destruction of his own kingdom.

This was the first irruption of their rage, for all the last year, which was the first of Jesus' preaching, all was quiet, neither the Jews, nor the Samaritans, nor the Galileans did malign his doctrine or person, but he preached with much peace on all hands; for this was the year which the prophet Isaiah called in his prediction,

"The accepted year of the Lord."

The first year of Jesus, which was a year of peace and undisturbed preaching, being expired, there was a 'Feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem;' this feast was the second passover, to be kept after he began to preach; not the feast of pentecost or tabernacles, both which were passed before Jesus came last from Judah; whither when he was now come, he finds an impotent person lying at the pool of Bethsaida, waiting till the angel should move the waters, after 'which, who foever stepped in was cured of his infirmity.' The poor man had waited thirty eight years and still was prevented by some other that needed a physician; but Jesus seeing him, had pity on him, cured him, and bid him ' take up his bed and walk;' this cure happened to be wrought upon the Sabbath, at which the Jews were so moved with indignation, that they thought to flay him, and their anger was the more outrageous by his calling himself 'the Son of God,' making himself ual with God; upon which occasion Jesus discourses

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on his mission and authority from the Father, and the union which was between them; and preaches life and salvation to them that believe in him; propheties of the refurrection of the dead, by the efficacy of the voice of the Son of God; speaks of the day of judgment, and the differing conditions of the righteous and the wicked; consiems his words and mission by the testimony of John

the Baptist, Moses, and other scriptures.

But still the scandal rises higher against him, for the disciples going through the corn-fields, pull ripe ears on the Sabbath day, and rubbing them in their hands, eat them to satisfy their hunger; for which he endeavoured to convince the Jews, who were highly offended, that works of necessity and mercy are to be done at all times, notwithilanding any politive command to the contrary, and the best serving of God upon any day whatsoever, or any pair of the day that is vacant from other offices, and proper for a religious festival. But when neither reason nor religion would satisfy them, but that they went about to kill him, he withdrew from Jerusalem, and returned from Galilee, whither the scribes and pharifees followed him, flrictly observing whether he would again perform any act of mercy upon the Sabbath day, which yet he still resolved to do; for entering into one of the synagogues, he saw a labouring man with a withered hand, who defired help of him that he might be again restored to the use of his hands, lest he should be compelled with misery and shame to beg his Jesus restored his hand as whole as the other; in the midst of all those spies and enemies; upon which act, being confirmed in their malice, the pharifees went out and joined with the Headians (a feet of people who said Herod was the Messiah, because when the sceptre departed from Judah, he was declared king) and both together took counsel how they might kill him. Jesus therefore again departed to the sea coast, and as his fame, so his company increased; for he was now followed by new 'inultitudes from Galilee, from Judah, from Jerusaiem, from Idumea, from beyond 'Jordan, and from about Tyre and Siden;' who hearing hearing the report of his miraculous power, to cure all diseases by the word of his mouth, or the touch of his hand, or the handling of his garment, came with a whole hospital of fick, possessed, and all other diseases, and were all immediately cured; the devils confessing publicly that he was the Son of God, 'till they were all upon such occasions restrained and compelled to silence.

Jefus having now commanded a ship to be in readiness against the pressures of the multitude, went up into a · mountain to pray, and continued in prayer all night; and the next day chose out of the number of his disciples, twelve, to be apostles, namely, Simon Peter, and Andrew, James and John, the four of chunder, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the fon of Alphæus, and Simon the zellet, Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot. With these descending from the mountain to the plain, he instructe his apostles in 'the doctrines of the kingdom;' for now because he faw I fract feattered like theep having no shepherd, he proposed to send those abroad to preach repentance, and that his kingdom was at hand, and gave them also particular instructions for their journey; for Jesus fent them out two by two, giving them power over all unclean spirits, and to heal all manner of sickness and difeases; telling them they were the light and the eyes, and the 'falt of the world;' so intimating their duty to be diligent, holy, and uncorrupt; giving them in charge to preach the gospel; to dispense their power and miracles freely as they received it; to anoint fick persons with oil, not to enter into any Samaritan town, but to 'go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; to provide nothing for their journey, but to depend upon the piety and charity of the new converts; he arms them against persecution; gives them leave to fly from one city to another; promises them the affiltances of his spirit; encourages them by his own example of long-suffering; by instances of divine Providence, expressed even to creatures of the smallest value. and by promise of great rewards to the valiant consession

of his name; and promifes great retributions, not only to them who lose any thing of value for the sake of lesus, but to those that did bestow but a cup of cold water upon a thirty disciple. And with these instructions they departed to preach to the cities, Jesus then returned to Capernaum, received the address of a fair hour centurion of a legion, (called the Iron legion, which usually quartered in Judea) in behalf of his servant whom he loved, who was grievoully afflicted with the paify, and healed him as a reward and honour to his maker's faith. And from thence going into the city Nain, he raised to life the only fon of a widow, whom the mourners followed in the street, bearing the corpse, with lamentations, to his grave; upon the fame of these, and divers other miracles, John the Baptift, who was still in prison, sfor he was not put to death till the latter end of this year) sent two of his disciples to him, enquiring if Jesus was he that should come, or should we look for another. To whom Jesus returned no positive answer, but a demonstration from the nature of the thing, and the glory of the miracles, saying, return to John and tell him what you see; ' for the leaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk, the dead are raised. and the lepers are cleanfed, and to the poor the gospel is 'preached;' which were the distinguishing character of the Messiah, according to the predictions of the holy prophets.

When John's disciples were gone with this answer, Jesus began to discourse of the authority and holiness of John's person, the greatness of his office, and the divinity of his commission, saying, 'That he was greater than a prophet, a burning and shining light, the Elias that was to come;' and the consummation or ending of the old prophets; adding withal, that the perverseness of that age was most unaccountable in the entertainment of himself and the Baptist; since 'John who came neither cating nor drinking,' that by his austerity and mortised deportment, he might engage the judgment and affections of the people; nor Jesus who came both 'eating and drinking,' that by an

affable life, framed to the compliance and common use of men, he might sweetly infinuate into the minds of the multitude, yet neither of them could obtain belief amongst them; they objected against every thing, and nothing could please them; but wisdom and righteous-

' ness is justified of all her children.'

less then proceeds to a severe reprehension of Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida, for their pertinacious obstinacy in their sins and insidelity, in desiance of all the 'mighty works which he had wrought among them.' However, Jesus glorised God for the magnifying of his mercy, that those things which 'were hid from the 'wise, mighty, and noble,' who were not sit subjects for the simplicity of the gospel, were revealed to babes; and concludes this sermon with an invitation to all weary and disconsolate persons, 'loaded with a sense of their sin and misery, to come to him,' promising 'ease to their burden, and refreshment to their weariness,' and to exchange their heavy pressures into an 'easy

'yoke,' and a 'light burden.'

When Jesus had ended his sermon, one of the pharifees, named Simon, invited him to eat with him; into whose house when he was entered 'a certain woman ' that was a finner,' abiding there in the city, heard of it; her name was Mary, the had been married (fay the primitive writers) to a noble personage, a native of the town and castle of Magdal, from whence she had her name Magdalen, though she herself was born in Bethany; a widow she was, and prompted by her wealth, liberty and youth, to lead an intemperate life, and too free in She came to Jesus in the pharisee's her entertainments. house, not as the staring multitude, to glut her eyes with the fight of a miraculous and glorious person, not as the centurion, or the Syrophænician, or the ruler of the synagogue, for the cure of his fickness, or in behalf of her friend or child, or servant; but she, who is the only example of so coming, approached him with remorfe and regret for her fins; she came to Jesus to hay her burthen at his feet, and to present him with a broken heart and weeping eye, with great affection, and

and a box of precious ointment (called Nard Piftic) falutary and excellent, the came trembling, and feli down before him, weeping for her fins, pouring out a hood, great enough to wash the feet of the blessed felus, and wiping them with the hair of her head; after which she broke the box, and anointed his feet with the ointment; which expressed so great an extacy of love, forrow, and adoration, that it was thought by Judas an unnecessary profusion, and was a present for a prince: an alabaster box of Nard Fistic, being sent as

a rarity from Cambyses to the king of Acthiopia.

Simon observing this finner to express such religion and veneration to lefus, thought with himfelf, this is no prophet, ' that did not know her to be a finner,' or no just person that would suffer her to touch him; for though the Jews' religion did permit harlots of their ewn nation to live and enjoy the Jewish privileges, saw that their offerings were refused; yea the pharisees who pretended to a greater degree of sanctity than others, would not admit them to civil usages, or the benefits of ordinary fociety; and thought religion itself and the honour of a prophet, was concerned in this fort of precisencis; and therefore Simon made an objection within himfelf. But le as knowing his thoughts as well as words, made an apology for her in the parable of the two debtors, a greater and a lesser, concluding that they would love their merciful creditor in proportion to his mercy and forgiveness, and this was the case of Mary Mag salen, to whom because much was forgiven, she leved much,' and expressed it in such large characters, shat the pharifice might observe the vast difference between his own common entertairment, compared with her magnificence, penitence and charity.

When Jesus had dined, he was presented with the sad sight of a poor man possessed with a dumb and blind wivil, whom his friends defired our Saviour to cast out, which was done immediately, to the amazement of the people, who ran after him in such great numbers, that the pharises much doubted, that this prophet would much lessen their reputation, and leave their schools

empty; and therefore give out that he was beside blesself: Upon which rumour, his mother, with his friends and kindred came to fee him, and found the house furrounded with the people who were full of wonder and admiration, and there the virgin mother heard part of her own prophely verified, that ' the generations of the earth should call her bleffed: For a woman worshipping Jesus, cried out, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the pape that gave thee fuck.' this Jesus replied, yet not denying her to be highly blessed, who had received the honour of being the mother of the Messiah, but advancing the dignity of spiritual excellencies far above the greatest temporal honour in the world; 'Yea, maker are they that hear the word of God, and do it.' And therefore when it was told him in the house, That his 'Mother and his brethren staid for him without; he answered, that thoic dear names of mother and brethren are far more facred when there is a conjunction of perfors in spiritsal bands, in the fame faith, the same hope, and in union with the fame mystical head; and pointing to his disciples, said, Behold my mother, and my bretheren, for whospever doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven, he is my brother and fifter, and 'mother.'

And now the pharifees upon the occasion of these miracles renewed the old quarrel, saying, 'He easieth out devils by Belzebub, the prince of devils;' which senseless and illiterate objection Christ having consuted, charged them highly with the guilt of an unpardonable sin, telling them, That their attirming those actions of his, performed by virtue of the Spirit, were done by the help of the devil, was a sin against the Holy Ghost, and how bold soever they were with the Son of man, in abasing his words, or injuring his person, they might upon sepentance sind a pardon; yet to sin against the Holy Ghost would find no forgiveness, neither here nor hereafter, but taking occasion upon this discourse, he, by an ingenious and mysterious parable, gives the world

great caution of backsliding after repentance; for if the devil returns into a house once swept and garnished, he bringeth seven spirits more impure than himself, and the last end of that man is worse than the first.

Jesus then goeth from the house of the pharisees to the sea of Tyberias, and sitting in a ship, taught the people on shore by parables, under which were mysterious tenfes, tending to shew their unbelief, though not to disperse that thick Egyptian darkness which their fins and aberrations had contracted; by the parable of the fower scattering his seed by the way-side, and some on ftony, some on thorny, and some on good ground. He intimated the several capacities or indispositions of mens hearts, the carelessness of some, the frowardness and levity of others, the easiness and softmess of a third, and how they were choaked with worldly cares, with the several ways whereby men miscarry, and that but one fort of persons receive the word, and bring forth the fruits of an holy life; by the parable of the 'Tares permitted to grow among the wheat, he intimated the toleration of diffenting opinions, not destructive to piety, or civil fociety; by the three parables of the feed growing infensible; of the grain of mustard seed swelling up to a tree; of a little leaven qualifying the whole lump; he fignified the increase of the gospel, and the blefling upon the fermons of himfelf and his apostles.

To those parables which he rendered to his disciples in their proper senses, he added two more concerning the dignity of the gospel, comparing it to 'Treasure' hid in the sield, and a jewel of great price,' for the purchase of which every good merchant must part with all he hath rather than not obtain it. He adds, That the public professors of christianity, should be like a mixt multitude, like a net inclosing sishes good and bad. After those discourses, he retired from the sea side to his own city Nazereth, where he preached so excellently upon certain words in the prophet Isaiah, that all the people wondered at his wisdom, in explaining the same. But the men of Nazereth did not sufficiently honour their prophet,

the disadvantages of his youth and kindred, and trade and poverty, and the humility of his sirst years, though now a glorious prophet; But Jesus, in his formon, reproved them for their insidelity, at which he wondered, and therefore did sew miracles, in respect of what he had done at Capernaum, and commended that city before Nazereth, whereupon the inhabitants 'thrust him out' of the city, and led him to the brow of an hill, on which it was built,' deligning 'to throw him down headlong,' but his work was not yet sinished; therefore, passing through the 'midst of them, he went his 'way.'

He then travelled up and down to all the towns and castles of Galilee, attended by his disciples, and certain women out of whom he had cast unclean spirits; 'namely Mary Magdalen, Johanna, wife to Chuza,' Herod's steward, 'who ministred unto him out of their own substance,' and became part of his holy family, which at this time began to be full; because now the apostles were returned from their preaching, full of joy, that the devils were made subject to the words of 'their mouth,' and the efficacy of their prayers, and their calling upon the name of Jesus; but their master intimating to them, That these privileges were not folid foundations for an holy joy, but only as they advanced the glory of God, and their own falvation, whose names are written in heaven, which joy was then reasonable, holy, true, and perpetual.

When Hered heard such wondersul things of Jesus, his guilt made him imagine, that 'John the Baptist' was now risen from the dead,' and these mighty works were demonstrations of his powers, which was increased by his immortality; for a little before this (as is already mentioned) Herod had sent to the castle of Macherus, where John was prisoner, and caused him to be beheaded. His head Herodias buried in her own palace, thinking to secure it from any re-union with the body less the again should disturb her unlawful lusts, and disquiet Herod's conscience; but the body the disciples

of John obtained, and carried it with honour and forrow, and buried it in Sebaste, in the confines of Samaria, making his grave between the bodies of Elizeus

and Abdias the prophets.

Jesus knowing of the death of the Baptist, Herod's jealousy, and the envy of the pharifees, retired into a defett place, together with his apostles, for the 'pec-\* ple so pressed upon them, that they had not leisure to · cat; ' yet neither could he be there hid, for the multitude flocked thither also, to com he preached many things, and afterwards, because there were no villages in the neighbourhood, lest they should faint in returning to their houses, he caused them ' to sit down upon the egrafs, and with five loaves of barley, and two fmail fifthes, he fatisfied five thousand men, besides women. and children, and caused his disciples to gather up the fragments, which being brought together, filled twelve baskets; which miracles were so accommodated to the understanding and affections of the people, that they were convinced this was the Messiah, who was to · come into the world,' and had a purpose to 'have taken him by force, and made him King.'

But he that left his Father's kingdom to take upon him the miseries and hardships of the world, fled from. the offers of a kingdom, and their tumuktuous election,. as from an enemy, and sending his disciples in the ship before towards Bethsaida, he withdrew into the mounrains to conceal himself till the multitude were returned to their habitations, and took that advantage of praying to his heavenly Father. But when the apoitles were far out on the deep, a violent tempest arose, which brought them into the extremity of danger, fo During that all hope of escaping was almost gone. their incessant labour to save themselves, 'in the fourth watch of the night, jesus came walking on the sea; which turned their fears into affrightment, for they · supposed it had been a spirit,' which he soon dispersed by telling them who he was; which yet they defired to have proved to them by a fign; for 'Simon Peter faid unto him, Master, if it be thou, command me to

come unto thee on the waters.' The Lord did so, and Peter, upon considence of the power and providence of his master, threw himself into the sea, but beginning to sink, he cried, saying, 'Lord, save me;' Jesus took him by the hand, reproving his want of saith, and went with him into the ship; where, when they had worshipped him, and admired the divinity of his power and person, the ship arrived at the port of Genetareth immediately, 'and all that were sick, or possessed with unclean spirits, were brought to him, and as many as 'touched the border of his garment were made whole.'

By this time they whom Jesus had lest on the other fide of the lake, came as far as Capernaum to feek him, wondering that he was there before them; upon this occasion of their diligent inquisition, Jesus observes to them, that it was not the divinity of the miracle which provoked their zeal, but the fatisfaction they had in the loaves, and thence intimates to them the excellency of celestial bread, the divine nutriment of their fouls; affirming himself to be the Bread of life that came down from heaven; that he would give his disciples his flesh to eat, and his blood to drink, and all this 'should be for the life of the world;' to nourish to life eternal, without which an happy eternity could not be obtained; upon this discourse, 'divers of his disciples' (of whom it is said St. Mark was one, but afterwards recalled by Simon Peter) 'forfook him,' being scandalised by their literal and carnal understanding of these words of Jesus, which he intended in a spiritual sense; for the words which he spake were not profitable in the sense of the slesh and blood; but 'they are spirit, and they are life; himself being the expounder, who best knew his own meaning.

When Jesus observed this great desection of his disciples from him, he turned to he twelve apostles, and asked, if they also would go away; Simon Peter answered, Lord, whither snall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we are sure thou art that Christ the Son of the living God, Though this public consession was made by Peter in the name and considence

confidence of the other apostles, Jesus told them prophetically, that even among twelve there was 'one 'devil,' meaning Judas Iscariot, who afterwards betrayed him; that they might perceive the sad accidents which afterwards happened to him, did not surprise him, as being ignorant of them, or unprovided to undergo them. After this the scribes and pharisees, who came from Jerusalem and Galilee, (for Jesus would not go back to Judea, because the Jews laid wait to kill him) quarrelled with him about some impertinent unnecessary ceremonies, not instituted by God, but by ordinances of men; as washing their hands when they eat? haptizing caps and platters, and washing tables and beds; which rites the apostles did not observe, but attended diligently to the simplicity and holiness of their maker's doctrine; our Saviour in return to their vain demands, sharply reproves them for being so fond. of these and many other traditions, neglecting the divine precepts, teaching men particularly, That if they gave to the Corban or treasure of the church, they might refuse to supply the necessity of their parents, and diffegarded the duties of picty and charity; and thunders out woes against their impieties, for their pride, their hypocrify, their imposing burdens upon others, which themselves help not to support: For their taking away the key of knowledge from the people, 22d obstructing the passages to heaven, and for approving the wickedness of their fathers in persecuting the prophets; adding concerning washings, that no outward impurity did stain the soul in the sight of God, but all pollution is from the corruption of the heart, and filthy thoughts, unchaste desires, and unholy purposes, and that love and charity are the best purifiers in the world.

Iefus then departed into the coast of Tyre and 'Sidon,' and entered 'into a house, that he might not be known; the diligence of a mother's love and forrow, and necessity, found him out in this retirement; for a 'woman came and befought him, that he would 'cast the devil out of her daughter:' Our Saviour feemed

scemed to reject her suit, for the sake of her nation, being a Syrophænician, yet this did not make her importunity more undeniable; she begged but some crumbs which sell from the children's table, and but one instance of savour from him to her daughter, which he poured forth without measure upon the sons and daughters of Israel, Jesus was pleased with her zeal and discretion, and pitied her daughter's inselicity, and dismissed her with saying, The devil is gone out of thy

daughter.

Our Saviour returning to 'the sea of Galilee, through 'the midst of Decapolis, they brought to him a man 'deas and dumb,' whom Jesus cured by touching his tongue, and putting his singers into his ears,' to the admiration of the people, who thereupon 'brought to 'him multitudes of diseased persons, and he healed 'them all;' but the people having sollowed him three days without eating any thing, Jesus, in pity to their need, resolved to feast them once more at the charge of a miracle; therefore, taking seven 'loaves and a few 'small sishes, he biessed them,' and satisfied sour thousand men, besides women and children; and there remained 'seven baskets sull of broken bread and sish.'

From hence Jesus departed by ship to the coast of Dalmanutha, whither the pharifees came asking him a fign, who rejecting their captious demand, knowing their dissaction, reproved them, that they discerned fair or foul weather in the sky, but not the figns of the 'Son of man.' However, fince they neglected fo great demonstrations, such gracious discouries, holy laws and propheses, they must expect no other sign, but the sign of the prophet Jonas; meaning the refurrection of the body, after three days burial: And passing again over the lake, as his disciples were solicitous, because they had forgot to take cread, he cautioned them to beware of the leaven of the pharifees and fadducees, and the 'leaven of Herod;' meaning the hypocrify and vanities of the one, and the herely of the other, for Herod's leaven was, the pretence that he himfelf was the Messiah. which the fect of the Herodians did carnelly and spite-

fully

fully promote. Coming to Bethfaida, he cured a blind man with his spittle; departing thence to the coasts of Cefaria Phillippi, out of Herod's jurisdiction, as belonging to his brother Philip, after he had sprayed with his disciples,' he asked them what opinion the world had of him, and whom they reported him to be.' They answered, 'Some say that thou art John the Baptift, some that thou art Elias or Jeremias, or one of the prophets.' The pharifees of Galilee were of opinion, that the fouls of dead men, or departed prophets, passed into another body. But Jesus asking the apostles their opinion, Peter, in the name of all the rest, made an open and consident confession, 'Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.' This contession Jesus confirmed to be revealed by God; and after the bleffing of Peter's person, upon allusion to Peter's name, Jesus said, 'That upon this rock (the article of Peter's consession) he would build his church, which the gates of hell,' perfecution, death, nor the grave, should never prevail against; adding withal a promise to Peter, in behalf of all the rest, as he had made a confession for them all, 'That he would give unto him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that whatfoever he thould bind on earth,' should be bound in heaven, and whatioever he should loose on earth, should be loosed 'in heaven,' a power which he never communicated before to any.

And now, from henceforward, we often find our Lord uttering fad predictions of the barbarous usage he should thereby meet with, 'That he should be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and suffer many things at Jerusalem, and be killed, and raised up the third day;' but Peter, hearing that sad melanchely discourse, contrary to his hopes of some temporal advantage, he having learned the doctrine of Christ's coming, but not of his cross, in mistaken civility, took Jesus aside, and began to rebuke him, saying, 'Ee it far from thee, Lord, this should not be unto thee;' But our Lord, sull of scal against so soft and human an admonition, that savoured nothing of God,

chid Peter severely, saying, Get thee behind me, fatau, thou art an offence to me. And calling his disciples to him, assured them, That not only himself, but they also must suffer, and that whosever will be disciples of Jesus, must take up his cross and deny himself and his own fonder appetites, and trace his maker's tootheps, marked out with blood that he thed for our redemption and restitution, and that there can be no escaping from the participation of Christ's suffering, fince ' he that will fave his life, shall lose it, and he that will tole it, will fave it to eternity; and as those are fools that will lose their souls to gain the world, so they are certainly wisek that will give their lives for him; because when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and his Father's, and of the angels, he shall reward every man according to his works." discourse Jesus concluded with a prophely, 'That some standing in that presence, should not die 'till they saw ' the Son of man coming in his dory.'

Of the greater glories in time to be revealed, Jelus, after eight days, gave a bright and excellent probation; for taking with him Peter, James, and John, he went oup into the mount Tabor to pray; and while he prayed he was transfigured before them, and his face did shine like the sum, and his garments were white and 'gliftening; and there appeared, talking with him, Moses and Elias, gloriously speaking of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem; which glory these apostles, when they were awaked from sleep, into which they had fallen, did behold. After the departure of these heavenly visitants, the apostles being full of fear and wonder, Peter talked he knew not what, faying, 'Master, it is good to be here, let us build three tabernacles.' And it is recorded, that in after ages some devout persons, in memory of this mystery, did erect three churches in the same place. after a cloud surrounded Jesus and his disciples, and a voice came from the excellent glory, saying, 'This is 'my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.

'him.' The cloud which made them fore affaid quickly disappeared, and freed them from their prefent conflornation, and they descended with Jasus from the stomation, who commenced them to keep filence, which

they observed sill his resurrection.

The next day came to Jefus a men in behalf of his fon, who was lumnic, and fore troubled with the devil, who fought often to' delitey him with fire and water, beseeching our Saviour to deliver him, his disciples having tried in vain, but could perform nothing tur want of faith, which, if it be too, as of power to sensore mountains; to plack up trees by the roots, and plant them in the fea; our Saviour then sobuked the devil, who, that very hour, departed from him. Coming to Capernaum, the exactors of taxes came to Simon Peter, asking him if his master paid tribute, which was a ficie or dischin, the fourth part of an ounce of filver, about afteen pence in value, which was the tribute that the Lord imposed upon all the sons of Israel, from twenty years old and above to pay for redemption and propitization, and for the use of the tabernacle. When Peter came into the house, Jesus, knowing his message, prevented him by aking him, Of whom do the kings of the earth take tribute? Of their own children or of firangers? Peter answered of firangers; then faid Jesus, the children are free, meaning, that since the gentile or heathen kings do not exact a tribute of their fons, neither will God of his fone or children; and therefore this pention to be paid for the use of the tabernacle, for the service of God, and for the redemption of their fouls, was not to be paid by him, who was the Son of God, but by krangers; yet, to avoid chence, he sent Peter a-fishing, and provided a sish with two drachms of filver, which he commanded Peter to pay for them too.

When the disciples were together in the house with Jesus, he asked them what they had discoursed on hy the way; for they had engaged in an ambitious and mistaken quarrel, which of them should be greatest in their master's kingdom; they still dreaming that it should

should be an external and earthly dominion, but their master, to check their sowardness, told them, 'That 'he that would be greater among them, should be their 'minister; and taketh a little child and setteth him in 'the midst,' as a pattern of humility and simplicity, such innocent lowliness of spirit, being absolutely necessary, it we will enter into the courts of heaven; from whence Jesus discourses of the care God takes of little children, whether naturally or spiritually such, the danger of giving them offence, the law and power of their angels guardian, and of the necessity in the event, that scandals and offences should arise, and the great wo and misery of those persons who were the occasion of them.

But if, in the traverses of life, injuries should be done us, he bids us first reprove the person that has done us wrong privately, and upon his sepentance to sorgive him soever; with a mercy as unwearied and multiplied as his penitence. For the forwant to whom the Lord had forgive ten thousand talents, because he resused to forgive his sellow servant an hundred pence, was delivered to the tormentors till he should pay that debt

which his Lord once forgave.

John now came, and gave him information of a stranger that cast out devile in the name of Jesus; but, because he was not of the family, he had forbidden him: "Our Saviour replies, He should in no wife have forbidden ' him,' for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me, for he that is not against us is for us. Then Jesus proceeded in his excellent fermon, adding holy precepts, concerning offences, which a man might do to himself; in which case he is to be severe, though most gentle to others; for in his own case he must shew no mercy, it being better to cut off the offending hand or foot, or part with an eye, rather than with the support of a troubleforme foot, or a wandering eye, fall into a fad eternity, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched; and so ended his excellent discourses at this time.

About this time was the Jews' feast of tabernacles, whither Jesus went up as it were in secret, and passing through

through Samaria, he found the inhabitants of a little village so inhospitable as to refuse to give him entertainment, which so provoked the intemperate zeal of James and John, Stat they would fain have called fire from heaven to confume them, as Elias did. Lord rebaked their anger, teaching them to distinguish the spirit of christianity from the decretory zeal of Elias; for, fince the Son of man came to seek and to fave that which was loft, it was indifferetion and rashness, apon flightest displeasure, to destroy a man, whese redemption cost the essusion of the dearest blood from the heart of Jesus; on the contrary, our blessed Saviour does a miracle upon the ten leprous perions, who came to him, crying out with fad exclamations, for help; but Jesus sent them to the priest to offer for their cleanling, and but one only returned to give thanks, and he a stranger, who with a load \* voice glorified God,' and with humble adoration worthipped and gave thanks to feius.

Our Lor | he ing finished his journey, was now come to Jerulalem, Areas were various opinions concerning him, fome faring he was a good man; others, that he deceived the prople; and the pharifees fought for him to do him a mischief; but when they despaired finding him in the midst of the seast and the people, he preached spenly in the midst of the temple, and though they were convinced by the variety and divinity of his miracles and discourses, yet to make it apparent how far prejudice may prevail against conviction and demon-Aration, we find a proverb, a circumstance outweighed multitudes of miracles and arguments; and Christ being of Galilee, when they knew whence he was, because of the proverb, That out of Galilee comes no prophet; therefore the rulers did not believe in him, but questioned his power and his divinity; yet very many believed on him, and no man durst to lay hands upon him to take him, for as yet his time was not come; therefore, when the pharisees sent officers to seize him, they also became his disciples, being themselves surprised with the excellency of his doctrine. After

### JESUS CHRIST.

After this Jesus went to the mount of Olives, on the feast of Jerusalem, and the next day returned again iato the temple, where the scribes and pharifees brought a women taken in the act of adultery, tempting him to give sentence, that they might accuse him of severity, or intermeddling if he condemned her, and of remissness and popularity if he did acquit her. But our Saviour found out an expedient for their difficulty, and changed the feete, by hidding 'him that was innocest among them threw the ark from at the adultres, and then theoping down, to them a fair occasion to withdraw, he wrose upon the ground with his finger, and eleft Jesus alone, and the woman in the midit, whom Jefus dismissed, charging her to sin ac more.' Awhile. after, Jesus begins again to discourse to them of his mission from the Father; of his crucifixion and exaltation from the earth; of the reward of believers; of the excellency of truth; of spiritual liberty and relations; who are the fens of Abraham, and who the children of the devil; of his own eternal generation; and of the And confuring their defire of Abraham to see his day. malicious and vain calumnies, till they, to confute him, took up stones to cast at him, but he went out of the semple, going through the midst of them, and so paffed by.

In his passage he met with a man born blind, and declared that his blindness was not a punishment for his own or his pareats' sin, which was the opinion of the pharises, but sent as an occasion to make public the glory of God;' he, to manifest himself to be the light of the world' in all senses proved it by a miracle; for anointing his eyes with clay and spittle, he bids him go wash in Siloam which was a poel of clear water, sent by God, (saith Rpiphanius) at the prayer of Islaich the prophet, a little before his death, to satisfy the necessities of his people, oppressed with thirst and a close siege, standing at the soot of mount Sion, and gave its water at certain times and periods, always to the Jews, but not to their enemies; and by the overslowing thereof

a pool was made; the blind man went and washed, and returned seeing, and was incessantly vexed with the pharisees, to tell them the manner and circumstances of the cure, and when the man had averted the truth, and named his physician, giving him a pious and charitable testimony, the pharisees, because they could not force him to disavow his good opinion of Jesus, cast him out, or excommunicated him. But Jesus meeting him, received him into the church, and told him that he was Christ, and the man became again enlightened, and he believed and worshipped. But the pharisees blasphemed, and in the midst of light shut their eyes, and doated upon darkness, and therefore did their fins remain.

Jefus then continued his fermon among the pharifees, and discoursing of the properties of a good shepherd, proved them to be 'thieves and robbers,' because they resulted to 'enter in by Jesus, who is the door of the 'sheep;' and unlike all other shepherds, 'would lay down his life for his sheep:' The Jews to requite him for his divine precepts, used their old argument, 'taking 'up stones again to throw at him,' but he escaped out of their hands, and went away beyond Jordan, where John at first baptized; which made the people remember, 'That John did no miracle; but this man whom John gave testimony to of his holiness, did many

' miracles, and many believed on him there.'

After this, Jesus knowing that the harvest was great, and the labourers but very sew, sent out seventy two of his disciples with the like commission, as formerly to the twelve apostles, that 'they might go before to the places whither himself meant to come: who upon their return from their journey, rejoiced greatly in spirit, giving glory to God that had revealed his 'gospel to babes, and hid them from the wise and learned.' At this time a doctor of the law came to Jesus, saying, 'Master, what shall I do to inherit etermal life?' Our Saviour reserred him to the scriptures, and declared the way to heaven to be this only, to love the Lord with all our power and faculties: But when the lawyer was captious, asking who was his neighbour,

neighbour, Christ tells him a parable of a traveller fallon into the hands of thieves, and neglected by a priest and a Levite, but relieved by a Samaritan, since no distance of country or religion destroys the relation of neighbourhood, but every person with whom we converse in peace and charity, is that neighbour whom we are to love as ourselves.

Jesus departing from Jerusalem, came to a village called Bethany, where Martha making great and busy preparation for his entertainment, to express her joy and affection to his person, defired him to dismiss Mary from his feet, who fat there teafting herself with his excellent discourses, to assist her; but though Jesus did sot discommend Martha's civility, yet he preferred Mary's choice, religion and fanctity. Our Saviour now teaches his disciples that form of prayer, called 'The Lord's prayer, the second time, and that they should be indefatigable and importunate in prayer, like the widow who forced an unjust judge to do her justice, by her camefiness and continual soliciting him: Many other things he added in his fermon, and forme being present that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate mingled with their facrifices; Jesas replied, That these fad calamities were no arguments that these Galileans were greater finners than others, though this judgment fell upon them. These Galileans were a fort of people that taught it to be unlawful to pay tribute to firangers, or to pay for the Roman emperors, and because the lows did both, they refused to communicate with them in their facred rites and ceremonies, but would facrifice apart; at which folemnity, when Pilate the Roman deputy apprehended many of them; he caused them all to be flain, and to die upon the same alters.

And now a certain ruler of the synagogue, repining at Jesus for having cured a woman that was crooked, loosing her from her infirmity, wherewith she had been afflicted eighteen years; our Saviour made the man ashamed, by asking him, whether he himself would not loose an ox from the stall, and lead him to watering on the Sabbath day.' And by the same argument

filenced

filenced the feribes and pharifees, who were angry with him for curing a perfea of the dropfy on that day. "For Jefon, to take off the voke of the ceremonial law, by abolishing the the Molaic rites, chose to do many of his miracles on the Sabbath, and free christianity from that burthen, that he might abrogate the one, and institute the Lord's day at the same time; not much unlike the Subbatical river, which Rabbies mention, that was dry fix days, but gushed out in a full stream on the Sabbath. Icfus then went up and down the cities of Galilee, caforcing the doctrine he had taught them, and adding .. new procepts, advertising them of the multitudes of those that perish, and how sew shall be saved, and that they should strive to enter in at the strait gate; the wayto defirection being fair and plaufible, but the way to heaven very difficult, and few there be that find it." He discourses of the many excuses that persons used, who were invited to the feast of the kingdom, and the refreshments of the gospel, and tacitly infinuates the rejection of the Jews, who were first invited, and the call of the gentiles from the high ways and bedges. He reprehends Herod for his subtilty and design to kill him: propheties he should die at Jerusalem, and intimates the fad defolation that should happen, for neglecting this their day of visitation, and for killing the prophets and messengers sent from God.

The Jews' feaft of dedication being at hand, Jesus went up to Jerusalem and preached in Solomon's porch; and the end of the sermon was, That the Jews had like to have stoned him again. But retiring from thence, he went beyond Jorsian, and by a most elegant and persuasive parable, declared to the people the mercy of God in accepting penitents, by the example of the sather who received the prodigal son upon his seturn from his sollies and elevations; he discourses of the Messiah coming into the world, to recover living persons from their sin and danger, in the parables of the lost sheep and goat, and under the representment of the unjust but prudent sleward; he teaches us to employ our present opportunities and estates, by laying them out in acts of

mercy and religion, that when our fouls shall be difmissed from the stewardship and custody of our body, we may be entertained in everlasting habitations. then attens a perable of Dives, a volupruous and uncharitable man, and Lazarus a pious, afflicted, fick beggar; the first died and went to hell, the second to Abraham's boson; God in ordered the dispensation of good things, that we cannot easily enjoy two heavens; nor shall the mideries of this life, if we be truly religious, end otherwise than in a beautiful eternity; and for Divos' request, that his brethren might have warning of his woful condition; our Sevious shows, That the ordinary ways of falvation are the express revelation of scripture, and the ministries of God's appointment; and who foever neglects these, shall not be supplied by extransdinary means, or if he were they would be totally inesfectual. He then laid his bands upon some young children, and gave them his bleffing, charging his apostics to admit of infants to him, because of them in person, and to such as they in figuiseation, the kingdom of heaven does appertain. He instructs young men in the way to happiness, by keeping God's cammands, and heroical acts of charity, which discourse falling upon a person not enough refigned, nor weaned from worldly enjoyments, 'for he was very rich;' our Lord then discourses how hard 'it is for a rich man to be saved,' but expounds himself to mean, that they truk in riches; however, though it is a matter of great difficulty, and almost impossible, not to be overcome with the love of this world, 'yet nothing is impossible to God.' when the apostles heard their master bid the young man fell all, and give to the poor, and follow him, and for his reward ' promised him an heavenly treasure;' Peter, in the name of the rest, began to think that this was their case, and the promise also might concern them, and asked the question, 'What shall we have, that have forfaken all, and follow thee,?' Jesus answered, 'They hould fit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel; adding, That every difciple who should 'forsake either house, or wife, or children.

children, so any other thing for his fake and the gospel's, should receive an bundred fold in this life,' by way of comfort and equivalency, 'and in the world to come," thousands of glories and possessions to all eternity; for 'they mat are last shall be first, and the first shall be last,' and the despited people of this world shall reign like kings, and poverty shall swall in cremal satisfaction, for an our Suviour taught his disciples in the parable of the labourers in the vine-yard, the same reward shall be given to all, though the since of their working were different, and crowns of glory shall be bestowed upon all the faithful followers of jetus, who shall reign with him to eternal ages.

While Jesus was in Galilee, messegen-came to him from Marcha and Mary her after, that he would haden into Judes, to Bothany, to relieve their brother Lazarus, who was dangerously sich; but he dasered his going till Lazarus was dead, but he would raise him out of that sleep of death. By that time Jesus was arrived at Bethany, he found that Lazarus had been dead four days, and now near to putrusaction, but when Marcha and Mary met him, weeping with pious tears for their dead brother, he himself suffered the passions and pity of humanity; Jesus wept, distilling that precious liquor into the grave of Lazarus, watering the dead plant that it

might spring into a new life.

When our Saviour by his works of comfort and inflitution, had firengthened the faith of the two mounting
fisters, and commanded the stone to be removed from
the grave, he made an address of adoration to his Father, consessing his readiness always to hear him, and
then cried out, 'Lazarus, come forth, and he that was
'dead came forth' of his bed of darkness, with his
burying clothes on him, whom, when the apostles had
unloosed at the command of Jusus, he went to Bethany,
and many that were present believed on him, but others
wondering and malicious, went and told the pharisees
the story of the miracle, who, upon this advice, called
the great council, who took solemn cognizance of the
principal causes of prophets of kings, and of the holy
law,

law, at which great affembly, Caiaphas the high priost prophetical. That it was expedient one should die for the people, and thenceforth they determined the death of our blessed Savious, who being acquainted with what they had decreed, retired to the city of Ephraim, in the

tribe of Judah, near the delars.

Here he continued till the feath of Kaster, and then going towards Jerusalem with his disciples, he told them what the event of his journey would be, 'that the · Jews should deliver him to the gentiles, and that they hould sowage him, and muck him, and crucify him. and the third day he should sife again. After this discourse the mother of Zebedee's children begged of Jesus for her two sons, that one might fit at his right hand and the other at the left in his kingdom.' For no discourse of his pattion could make his disciples sensible of the myserioniness of his kingdom, which was not of this world, but if they would parcake of the favours of it, such as they were, they must drink of the cup, and be partaisers of his fufferings, and thereby put themselves in a disposition of becoming vessels of elec-Coming ic his journey to Jericho, he cared a blind man litting by the way fide, and espying Zacheus, a man of low flature, the chief of the puolicans, upon a tree, that he might see Jesus patting by; Jesus invited himself to his house, who received him with gladness, and repentance of his crimes, offering satisfaction to ail whom he had wronged, and gave bulf the remainder of his estate to the poor.

Six days before Easter, Jesus came to Bethany, where he was feasted by Martha and Mary, accompanied with Lazarus, who sat at the table with him; and now many came to see Jesus, and Lazarus, who was raised from the dead, and upon that occasion believed on Jesus. The next day Jesus came to the stoot of the mount of olives, and sent his disciples to Bethphage, commanding them to unloose an ass and a cost, and bring them, telling the owners it was for his master's use; and riding to Jesusalem, the people, upon notice of his approach, took breaches of palm-trees and strewed them in the

way, and crying out. Holanna, to the son of David, which was a form of exclamation used to the honour of God, and in great solemnity, fignifying, 'Lord, save 'us; Lord, prosper us;' and the phanisees knowing this to be an appropriate manner of address to God alone, said one to another, by way of wonder, 'Hear

what these men say."

When Jesus from the mount beheld Jerusalem, he went over it, and forcesid the miseries and infelicities which would happen to it, of which every circumfunce came to pair. For in the mount of Olives, where Jefus fied tears over perishing Jerusalem, the Romans first pitched their teats when it came to its small descriction. The people's acclamations followed till the pharifees were ready to bark with envy; and there he cured certain persons that were blind and lame. Jesus then came to Bethany, and turning into the house of Simon the leper, Mary Magdalen having been reproved by Judas, for spending the ointment upon Jesus's fect, of great value; to declare her leve once more the poured the same rich ointment on his sacred head; all the disciples murmuring at this prodigious expense, Jesus to express his thankfulness, and her miraculous affection, added this prophely, That wherever the gospel should be preached, a record of this act should be kept as a perpetual monument of her piety.

Two days before the passover, the scribes and pharifees called a council, to contrive crasty ways for destroying of Jesus, the not daring to do it by open violence. Of which meeting Judas Iscariot having notice, ran from Pethany, and offered to betray his master unto them if they would give him a considerable reward; 'they agreed for thirty pieces of silver,' which according to the Jewish account, is thought to be thirty shekels weight of silver;—a goodly price for the Saviour of the world to be prized at by his undiscerning and unworthy countrymen. The next day, which was the first day of unleavened bread, on which it was necessary that they should kill the passover, Jesus sent Peter and John to the city, to a certain man whom they should

ma

stad carrying a pitcher of water to his house, him they should follow, and there prepare the passover; they went and sound the man in the same circumstances, and prepared for Jesus and his family, who, at the even, came to celebrate the passover: It was the house of John, simamed Mark, which had always been open to this blessed family, where our Saviour was pleased to

finish his last supper.

When the evening was come, Jesus stood with his disciples and eat the paschal lamb, after which the girt himself with a towel, and taking a befor walked the feet of his disciples,' instructing them in the dostrine of humility, by his own example: But Peter was unwilling to be washed by his Lord, until he was told he must renounce his part in him, unless he were walhed; who thereupon cried out, " Not my icet only, but my hands and my head.' Jesus said, the washing of the feet was fufficient for the purification of the whole man, relating to the cultoms of thole countries, who used to go to supper immediately from the baths, and were fafficiently clean, save only their feet, by reason of the dust contracted in their passage from the baths to the dining-room; and by it, Jesus meant that the body of fin was washed away in the baths of baptism.

After the esting of the paschal lamb, it was the custom of the Jews to fit down to a second supper, in which they eat herbs and unleavened bread, the master of the samily first dipping his morfel, and then the rest of the houshold; after which the father break bread into pieces, and distributed a part to every one of the guests, and first drinking himself, gave to the rest the cup filled with wine, according to the age and dignity of the person, adding to each distribution a form of benediction proper to the mystery, which was commemorative of their deliverance out of Egypt. This supper Jesus being to celebrate, turned the ceremony unto a mystery, and gave his body and blood sacramentally; hereby instituting the blessed sacrament, which from the time of its institution, is called 'The Lord's supper,' which rite

Jesus commanded the apostles to commemorate until his

second coming.

But Jesus being troubled in spirit, told his disciples, That one of them should betray him; to consum them in the belief of wisdom and spirit in prophesy; the disciples were disturbed, and looking on one another, doubting of whom he spake, beckoned to the beloved disciple, leaning on Jesus's breast, that he might ask; for they who knew their own innocency, were desirous to satisfy their curiosity, and he rid of their sear. Jesus being asked, gave them a sign, and a sop to Judas, commanding him to do what he list speedily; Jesus being extremely streightened till he had drank the bitter cup prepared for him. After Judas received the sop, the devil entered into him, and he went forth

immediately, it being now night.

After his departure, Jesus began his sarewel sermon, discoursing of the glorisication of God in his Son, and of those glories his Father had prepared for him; of his sudden departure to prepare a place for them; commanding them to love one another; foretelling Peter, who made confident protests, 'That he would die with his master, yet before the cock crew twice, he should 'deny him thrice;' arming them against persecution, and giving them his bleffing, and praying for them, and then having sung a hymn, which was part of the great hallelujah, beginning at the cxiv psalm, (when lirael came out of Egypt, &c.) and ending at the exviii. inclusive, went forth with his disciples over the brook Kedron, to the mount of Olives, to a village called Gethsemane, where there was a garden, into which 'he entered to pray together with his disciples. ' taking Peter, James and John with him, about a stone's ' cast from the rest, he began to be exceeding forrowful ' and fad even unto death; faying, Tarry ye here, and watch with me, and he was withdrawn from them, and kneeled down, and fell on his face to the ground, faving, O my Father! if it be possible, let this cup s pass from me, nevertheless, not my will, but thy will be done,' this he repeated thrice in the same words; but

but knowing the drinking of this cap was the great end of his coming into the world, he diverted himself of the affections of slesh and blood, and because his Father

commanded, was defirous to fuffer all our pains.

Meanwhile Judas the traitor came with a multitude of armed men, with swords and staves, from the priests and the elders, to apprehend him, taking the opportunity of the night, because they durk not seize him by dey, for fear of the people, and judas fignified the perfon of his master to the foldiers by a kifs, and an address of feeming civility; but when they came toward in. Jesus said, Whom seek ye? They said, Jesus v. 'Nazareth.' He faid, 'I am he;' yet there was a divinity upon him, that the foldiers coming at first with a rude arrempt, were twice repelled by the glory of his person, till they felling at his feet, were at last admitted to the seizure of his body, but Peter, a stout Galilean, attempted a bold rescue, cut off the car of one of the high priest's servants; but Jesus rebuted his passion, and commanded him to put up his fword, faying, 'All that frike with the fword shall perish with the iword, and touched Malchen's ear and cured him."

When Jesus had yielded himself to their power, his disciples sted, and John the evangelist, who for griet had forgot to lay afide his upper garment, which they uled in festivals to put on, began to make his escape, but being seized by the linen upon his bare body, was forced to leave that behind him, that himself might avoid his master's danger: But Peter followed asar off, and the greatness of John's love made him return to the high priest's hall, after his surprise and fright was over. Jesus was first led to Annas, who was the prince of the Sanhedrim, and had cognizance of the prophets and public doctrines, who alking Jesus of his disciples and of his doctrines, answered, that he spake openly to the world, and therefore referred him to the testimony of all the people; for which true answer, a servant standing by struck him in the face, and Jesus meekly asked him, What evil he had done. But Annas without the leventy

feventy judges could do nothing, and therefore fem-

him to Caiaphas, who was high priest that year.

Peter coming thither, denied three times that he was a Galilean, and of Jesus's family, till our Savious looking back, reminded him of his prediction, and the fulnels of the crime, an! the cock crew; Peter went out and wept bitterly,' that he might cleanfe his foul from the foul stains he had contracted by his shameful perjury, and denying his Lord; and it is reported, that ever after, when he heard the cock crow, he wept at the remembrance of his own unworthineis.

In the morning the council assembled, and sought false witness against Jesus, but found none to the purpose: they railed boldly, but could find nothing; they accused vehemently, but the greatest article that their malice could pretend to, was, That he would destroy the temple, and build it up again in three days; but the witnesses differening made void each others testimony, and there is Jesus answered neither to this, nor any other of their allegations, till at length Caianhan adjures him by the living God, to say whether he was Christ, or no: Jesus knew his design was to take away his life by this inquiry, and not of piety or curiofity, vet because his hour was now come, openly affirmed that he was 'Christ, the Son of God;' which when Caiaphas heard, he cried out, biasphemy, rent his garmente, and called preferrly for fentence to be pronounced against him, and as it was agreed, they all condemned him as guilty of death, and as far as they had power, inflicted it; for they beat him with their fifts, and · imote him with the palms of their hands, spit upon \* him and abused him.

When Judas heard they had passed final sentence upon him, it repeated him of his wickedness, and he brought back the reward of his treason; and threw it among them, faying, I have betrayed innocent blood; and the prices, upon confultation, bought with the money a field to bury strangers in; and Judas went and hanged himself; it is reported by the ancients, that Judas sell from the sig-tree on which he was hanged, before he

was quite dead, and at length fo swelled, that he built, and his bowels gushed out. The high priests having affigned over Jesus to the secular power, carried him to Pilate to be put to death, by his sentence, or military authority; Pilate, willing to decline the bufiness, bid them 'judge him according to their own law;' they replied, It was not lawful for them to put any man to 'death,' meaning during the seven days of unleavened bread, which then happened; as appears by the instance of Herod who detained Peter in prison, intending fafter Easter to bring him out to the people,' others think, that all the right of inflicting capital punishments, was taken from the Jews by the Romans; and Josephus writes, That when Ananias the high priest had, by a council of that nation, condemned St. lames, the brother of our Lord, and put him to death, without the consent of the Roman preddent, he was deprived of his priest-hood: But their malice being reitless, till the fentence they had passed against our Saviour was put in execution, and they knowing that Pilate was a zealous promoter of the Roman greatness, and an hater of the fect of the Galileans, the high priest accused Jesus that he was of that fect, and that he 'denied paying tribute to Cæsur, and called himself a king.' Pilate having questioned him about it, he answered, 'That his kingdom was not of this world.' Pilate thinking that he had nothing to do with the other kingdom, gave testimony that he 'found nothing worthy of death in Jesus.' But hearing that he was a Galilean, and of Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was at serusa-Herod was glad, because he had lem, at the feast. heard much of him, and defired to fee him, hoping to see some miracle done by him,' of whom he heard so many; but the event was, That Jesus did no miracle, and Herod's 'foldiers fet him at nought and mocked 'him; and that day Herod was reconciled to Pilate.' And Jesus was sent back cluthed in a white and splendid garment, which though possibly they intended in derition

hon, yet was a token of innocence, condemned per-

some being usually arrayed in black.

But Pilate offered that according to the custom of the mation, Jesus should be released for the honour of the present sestival; yet the spirit and malice was more prevalent, and the multitude required that Barrabas, a murderer, a thief, a seditious person, should be exchanged for him; Pilate being willing to acquit Jesus from punishment, and himself of guilt, offered to scourge him, and let him go, hoping that a leffer draught of blood might kop their rage; but these miscreants cried out, 'Crecify him,' and told him plainly, 'That if he let this man go he was no friend to Cælar.' Pilate then called for water, and washed his hands, to thew his own unwillingness, and fix this guilt on them, who took it upon them as greedily, as they sucked his blood; they cried out, ! His blood be upon us and our children. As Pilate was going to pass sentence, his wife being troubled in her dream, fent with the earnestness and passion of a woman, That he should have e nothing to do with that just person.' But he was engaged, Cæfar and Jefus, God and the king did feem to have different interests; and though he was satisfied it was only calumny and malice; yet against the divine laws, and the Roman aifo, he condemned an innocent person, and adjudged him to a death which was only due to murderers and public thieves; upon pretence of blasphemy, of which he stood accused, but not convicted, and for which, by the Jews' law, he should have been stoned to death.

And now was the holy Lamb to bleed; first, therefore, Pilate's soldiers array him in royal robes, put a reed in his hand for a sceptre, plaited a crown of thorns on his head; they bow the knee, and mock him, and instead of tribute pay him with blows and spittings upon his holy head, and after the most horrid abuses, they bind him to a pillar and scourge him with whips, a punishment inslicted only on slaves; after which Barrabas being 'set free, Pilate delivered Jesus to be crucified,' the soldiers therefore having made a cross, sad and

heavy, laid it upon Jesus's shoulders, who, like Isac, bore the wood with which himself was sacrificed, and drove him out to crucifixion, who was scarce able to stand under that load, and when he fainted, they compel Simon a Cyrenian to help him. A great and mixt multitude followed Jesus to Golgotha, the charnel house of the city, and the place of execution: But the women wept with bitter acclamations, and their sadness was increased by the sad predictions Jesus then uttered of their suture calamities, 'and that the time should come, 'that men shall say, Blessed are the barren that never

bare, and the paps that never gave fuck.'

When Jesus was come to Golgotha, a place in the mount of Calvary, where, according to tradition, Adam was buried, and where Abraham made an altar for the facrifice of his fon, the foldiers having stripped him, nailed him to the cross with four nails, between two thieves; in the midst of all his torments, Jesus made. only one prayer of forrow, to represent his fad coudition, as if God had forfaken him, but not a syllable of anger against his enemies; instead of that, he sent up a holy, charitable, effective prayer for their forgiveness, by which it is recorded, he obtained of God, that within fifty five days eight thousand of his enemies were converted; three long hours the holy Jesus hung, clothed with pain, agony, and dishonour; his holy virgin mother stood by his cross, upon whom old Simeon's prophesy was fulfilled, for now she felt a 'sword passing through her very foul: But her hope and expectation of the refurrection drew a veil before her forrow, and her love swallowed up her grief; especially considering, that though her Son had no temporal estate to bestow, yet with his dying breath he made provision for her, by configning her over to the care of John, the beloved disciple, by making him to be her adopted fon, and her to be his mother, and from that time forward John took her. home to his own house.

Pilate prepared the following inscription to be put over the head of Jesus, written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS: IEWS; which the pharifees would have altered, and that he said he was king of the Jews; but Pilate out of fear, or to despight their nation, or in honour of Jesus, whom he knew to be a just person, as being overruled by divine Providence, refused to alser it. While Jesus was praying and dying for his enemies, the rulers of the Jews mocked him, upbraiding him with the good works he did, and the inflances of his power, saying, 'He ' faved others, himself he cannot save.' Others said, · Let him come down from the cross, if he be the King of the Jews, and we will believe in him; and of the two malefactors that were crucified with him, one reviled him, faving, 'If thou be Christ, save thyself 'and us.' But the other thief, whom the present pains and circumstances of Jesus's passion had softened and made believing, reproved his fellow for not fearing God, confessing that they suffered deservedly, but Jesus lawlefsly, and then prayed to Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.' Which miraculous conversion Jesus entertained with a speedy promise of a very great selicity, promising that on that very day he should be with him in paradise.

While these things were doing the whole frame of nature seemed to be dissolved and out of order, because the Lord and Creator suffered; for the sun was so darkened, that the stars appeared, and the eclipse was prodigious, the moon not being then in conjunction, but sull, as was noted by Plegon, the freed man of the Roman emperor Adrian, by Lucian, and Dionysius, while he was yet a heathen, all excellent scholars, great historians and philosophers, who also noted the day of the week, and hour of the day, agreeing in all circumstances, for the sun had hid from beholding such a prodigy of wickedness and sadness, and provided a veil for the nakedness of Jesus, that the women might be

present, and himself die with modesty.

The eclipse and the passion began at the sixth hour, and continued to the minth; about which time Jesus, being tormented with the insusferable load of his Father's wrath, due for our fins, and wearied with pains

and heaviness, cried out, 'My God, my God, why haft thou for sken me! And, as it is thought, repeated the whole xxii pfalm; which is an admirable narrativeof the passion, full of prayer and complaints at first, and a description of his pains, and thanksgiving joy, and prophefy at the last; but these first words, it is recorded, he spake in a language of itself, or else by reason of distance, was not understood; for they thought he

called for Elias to take him from the cross."

Then Jesus, being in an agony, said, I thirst, and one ran and filled a spange with vinegar, wrapping it with hysop, and put it on a reed, that he might drink. The vinegar and spunge were in executions of condemand, fet to stop the too violent issues of blood, and prolong the death, but were offered to him in foom, 'mingled with gall,' to make the mixture more horrid and nauseous; but Jesus tasked it only, and resuled the draught. And now knowing that the propheties were fulfilled, and his torments satisfactory, he said, it is ' finished, and crying with a load voice, Father, into thy liands I commend my spirit, he bowed his head, and yielded up his spirit into the hands of God, and ' died, hastening to his Father's glories, to shine in the other world.

Then the veil of the temple, which separated the secret Mosaic ceremonies from the eyes of the people, ' reat in the midst from top to bottom;' and the angels, presidents of the temple, called to each other to depart from their seats; and so great an earthquake happened, that the 'rocks did rend, the mountains trembled, the 'graves opened, and the bodies of dead persons arose, walking from their burying places to the holy city, and appeared unto many, and so great apprehensions and amazement happened to all them that stood by, that they departed fmiting their breafts with forrow and fear, and the centurion that attended at the execution, faid, Certainly, this was the Son of God.

#### TR2 HYMN.

Their our firlan and belplejs fluit,

I home could relieve befide;

Then at the appointed time, sur Lord

For the unguily died.

Pbo e'er redeem'd a just man's life;
By laying down bis own?
Perhaps there may such generous love,
To a good man be shown.

But the transcendent love of God;
All human does excel;
And shines may giorisms in our eyes,
Beyond cli parallel.

For and:n obnations to his wrath,
We wretched finners flood;
Then his own Sen came to atome
Our guilt with his own blood.

Much more than when that precious blood,

Has clear'd our guilty score,

Shall we be from the wrath to come

Resen'd forevermore.

For if the death of Christ so far God's wrath could pacify, As to procure his very focs, A league of axity.

Much more shall we when thro' his death,
God's favour we regain,
Through his exalted glorious life,
Eternal bliss obtain.

Nay more, we in our God rejoice, Through Jesus Christ our Lurd, By subose atonement we are now To his free love restor'd.

But because the next day was the Jews' Sabbath, and a sestival of the paschal lamb besides, the Jews hastened that the body should be taken from the cross, and therefore sent Pilate to hasten their death, by 'breaking' their legs,' that before the sun set, 'they might be taken away,' according to the commandment, and be buried. The soldiers therefore came, and break the 'legs of the two thieves, but espying and wendering 'that Jesus was already dead, they break not his legs; 'for the scripture foretold, That a bone of him should not be broken, but a soldier, with his lance, pierced his side, and immediately there streamed out two rivulets of water and blood.'

Some of the primitive fathers give an account, that the holy virgin mother, whole foul, (during the whole passion, was pierced with a sword, and sharper arrows, though the was supported by the comforts of faith, and those holy predictions of his resurrection, and suture glories, which Mary had laid up in her heart, against this great day of trial) now that the faw her bleffed fon had suffered all that our necessities and their malice could require or inflict, caused some of his followers with whom she joined, to take her dead son from the cross, which she kissed and embraced with all the endearments that could be expressed by a forrowful mother, weeping for her dead son. Yet she was highly satisfied by considering that now that great mystery, determined by divine predestination, before the beginning of all ages was fulfilled in her fon, and the passion that was so absolutely necessary, was now accomplished. therefore first bathes his body with her warm tears, and delivering a winding napkin to Joseph of Arimathea, gave him in charge to enwrap the body, and embalm and do it all funeral lites, to compose it decently to the grave, having first exhorted him to make a public contession of his faith, as to the divinity of our holy Redeemer, which he had only hitherto made profession of in private. Joseph obeyed the counsel of so excellent a person, and ventured upon the displeasure of the lewish

Jewish rulers, and went confidently to Pilate, assi

begged the body of Jefus.

Joseph therefore takes the body, binds his head with the napkin,' washes the body, againts it with ointment, and a composition of myrrh and aloes, and lays it in a tomb which he for himself had hewn out of a rock; all these circumstances being used by the Jews in their funerale; but it was not lawfui to inter a condemned person in their common burying places. When the sun ivas set, the chief priests and pharisees went to Pilate, telling him that Jesus, while he was living, foretold his own referrection on the third day; and left his disciples should come and steal the body, and say he was rifen from the dead, defired that the sepulches might be secured, against the danger of any such impostor; Pilate gave them leave to do their pleasure; they therefore sealed the grave, folled a great stone at the mouth of it, and as ancient tradition lays, bound it about with lebels of iron, and fet a watch of foldiers, as if they intended to make it furer than the decrees of fate or the never-failing laws of nature.

When it was yet early in the morning, upon the is first day of the week. Mary Magdalen and Mary the mother of Jelus and Salome, brought sweet spices to the sepulchre, that they might again embalm the holy body; for the rices of embalming among the Hebrews used to last forty days, their love being not satisfied with what Joseph had done. They therefore hastened to the grave, and after the expense they bad been at, began to consider who should remove the stone; but they still go on, their love carrying them through all difficulties.' But when they came to the sepulchre. they found the guard, from whom they might expect opposition, affrighted and removed, sand the stone 'rolled away,' for just before there had been a great earthquake, and an angel descending from heaven, ' rolled away the stone, and sat upon it,' and the guards about the tomb being aftenished with sear were like dead men, and some of them ran to the high priests, and told them what had happened; but they refolving foldiers to tell an incredible and weak fable, 'that his disciples came by night and stole him away;' though the wit of man could not have invented more strong security than they used, so prevent any such design that themselves had made.

The women entered into the sepulchre, and missing the body of Jesus, Mary Magdalen went to the eleven apostles, complaining that the body of our Lord was not to be found. Then Peter and John ran as fast as they could to see; for the unexpectedness of the relation made them to doubt of the truth, their faith of his refurrection not being yet fixed in them, and the sparks thereof not raised into a flame. They looked into the sepulchre, and not finding the body there, they returned; by this time Mary Magdalen and the women, who fland weeping for their Lord's body, saw two angels fitting in 'white, the one at the head and the other at the feet,' at which unexpected fight, they trembled, and bowed themselves; but the angel bid them not fear; telling them that 'Jelus of Nazareth, 'who was crucified, was also risen, and was not there;' and made them call to mind what Jesus had told them in Galilee concerning his crucificion and refurrection the third day, and Mary turned herfelf back and faw 'Jesus, but supposing him to be the gardner, she said to him, Sir, if you have borne him hence, tell me where thou halt laid him, and I will take him away: but Jesus said unto her, Mary.' Then she knew his voice, and with ecttacies of joy and wonder, was ready to have latten at his feet and embraced them; but he commanded her not to touch him; but go to his brethren, and fay, I ascend to my Father and your Father, my God and your God! Mary departed full of joy and fatisfaction, and told these things to the apostles, but her relation seemed altogether fantastic and imaginary. About the same time also Jesus appeared to Simon Peter; and towards evening to two of his desciples going disconsolate to Emmaus, and discodifing.

coursing of the late occurrences; Jesus put himself in their company, and upbraids their incredulity, and expounds the scriptures, that Christ ought to suffer and rise again the third day, and in breaking of bread disappeared, and so was known to them by vanishing away, whom when present they knew not; and instantly they hastened to Jerusalem, and told the disciples

what had happened.

While they were there, the same day at evening, when the disciples were assembled all but Thomas, e fecretly for fear of the Jews, the doors being shut, 'Jesus came and stood in the midst of them, and they were exceedingly troubled, supposing it had been a 's spirit.' But Jesus consuted them by applying to their fenses, and letting them ' feel his slesh and bones which spirits have not; at which sight they rejoiced with exceeding joy, and began to be restored to their languishing hopes of some future felicity; by the return of their Lord to life; and there he first breathed on them, giving them the Holy Ghost, and performing the promile twice made before his death, faying, · Whosoever sins ye remit they shall be remitted to them, and whosever fins ye retain, they are retained. These things Thomas was acquainted with, and resolved not to believe unless he might put his finger into the holes in his hands, and his hand into his side; which Jesus eight days after, at another appearance to his apostles, made demonstration of to him, but with a mild reproof to his unbelief, promiting a special bleffing to all fucceeding ages of the church, for they are such as faw not, but yet believed.

But Jesus at his early appearing, had sent in order by the women, that the disciples should go into Galilee, and they did so after a sew days; and Simon Peter being there, went a sishing, and six others of the apostles with him, to go to the sea of Tiberias, where they slaboured all night, and caught nothing. Towards morning Jesus appeared to them, and bid them cast the net on the right side of the ship, which they did, and inclosed one hundred and sity great sithes; by

which

which prodigious draught John the beloved disciple, perceived it was the Lord. At which instant Peter threw himself into the sea, and went to Jesus, and when the rest were come ashore, they all dined on broiled sish.

After dinner Jesus taking care of those scattered sheep, which were dispersed over the face of the earth, that he might gather them into one sheepfold, under one shepherd, asked Peter, Simon son of Junas levelt thou me more than these? Peter answered, yea Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love Then Jesus said unto him, seed my sheep. And Jesus asked him the same question, and gave him the same precept the second and third time; and after intrusting the charge to him, Jesus told him, that the reward he should have in this world should be a sharp and honourable martyrdom; he likewise checks Peter's curiofity in enquiring what should become of the beloved disciple, and answered his question with some sharpness of reprehension, and no satisfaction; 'If I will that he tarry till I come what is that to three? Which made them suppose he sho ld not die, but they were mistaken; for though John lived till after the destruction of Jerusalem, notwithstanding the attempts of his perfecutors, and the miraculous escape from prepared torments, yet he died a natural death, when he was about ninety years of age.

After this, Jesus having appointed a solemn meeting for all the brethren that could be collected from the dispersion, and named a certain mountain in Galilee, appeared to sive hundred brethren at once, and this was his most public and solemn manifestation, and while some doubted, Jesus came according to the designation, and spake to the eleven disciples, sending them to preach to all the world, repentance and semission of sins in his name, promising to be with them to the end of the world. Last of all, when the apostles were at dinner, he appeared unto them, upbraiding their unbelief, and then opened their understandings, that they might discern the soule of scripture, and

again commanded them to 'preach the gospel to all the " world, giving them power to do miracles, to cast out devis, to cure diseases, and instituted the sacrament of baptism, which he commanded (together with the \* good tidings of the gospel) should be administred to 'all nations, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoft.' Then he led them unte Judea, and they came to Bethany, and from thence to the mount Olivet, and he commanded them in say in Jerusalem, till the Holy Ghost, 'the promise of the Father, should descend upon them, which Mould be accomplished in a few days, and then they facult know the times and the seasons, all things necessary for their ministration and service, and propagation of the gospel; and while he discourses many things concerning the kingdom, behold a cloud came and parted Jesus from them, and carried him in their fight up to heaven, where he fits at the right hand of God, bleffed forever. Amen.

While the aposites 'frood gazing up to heaven,' two angels appeared to them, and told them, 'That Jesus' should come in like manner as he was taken away,' with glory and majesty in the clouds, and with the ministry of angels. Amer. Come Lord Jesus, come

quickly.

#### THE PRAYER.

OHOLY and cternal Jesus, who hast overcome death, and triumphed over all the powers of hell, darkness, sin and the grave; manifesting the truth of thy promises, the power of thy divinity, the majesty of thy person, the rewards of thy glory, and the mercies and excellent designs of the evangelical kingdom, by thy glorious and powerful resurrection; preserve our souls from eternal death, and make us to rise from the death of sin, and to live the life of grace, loving thy persections, adoring thy mercy, pursuing the interest of thy kingdom, being united to the church, under thee our head, conforming to thy holy laws, established

established in faith, entertained and confirmed with a modest, humble, and certain hope, and fanctified by charity; that engraving thee in our hearts, submitting to thee in our spirits, and imitating thee in thy glorious example, we may be partakers of thy refurrection, which is our hope and our defire, the support of our faith, the object of our joy, and the strength of our considence: In thee, holy Jesus, do we trust; we contels thy faith; we believe all that thou hast taught; we defire to perform all thy injunctions; our fouls are in thy hand, do thou support and guide them, and pity our infirmities, and when thou shalt appear at the great day, shew to us the effects of thy advocateship, intercession and redemption. Theu shalt answer for us, O Lord, for in thee have we trasted, let us never be confounded. Thou art just, they art merciful; thou art gracious and compassionate, thou hast done miracles and prodigies to us, and all the world: Let not those great actions and sufferings be ineffectual, but make us capable and receptive of all thy mercies, and then we are certain to receive them; we are thine, O fave us; thou art ours, Oh holy Jesus! O dwell with us forever, and let us dwell with thee, adoring and praising the eternal glories of God the Father, Son, and Holy Amen. Ghoft.

Our Father, &c.

THE END OF THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST.

# LIVES

OF THE HOLY

## EVANGELISTS

A N D

## APOSTLES;

VITH THEIR MARTYRDOMS, FOR PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF

OUR LORD

JESUS CHRIST.

#### THE

### L I V E S

#### OF THE HOLY

### EVANGELISTS AND APOSTLES.

#### To the READER.

FTER the disciples had been spectators of our bless-Led Redeemer's ascension into heaven, they returned to Jerusalem, and continued there in prayers and supplications in their distressed condition, the whole city being set against these poor innocent people; they have neither lands nor revenues to maintain them, nor friends. at court to support them against their enemies, to whom the name of Jesus was hateful, and his followers reckoned to be adversaries to the government; and though, in this forlorn state, they comforted themselves with the precious promises their dear Master lest them at his departure, yet their present condition seemed very deplorable to human appearance; but after they had continued thus disconsolate about ten days, our blessed Lord performed his promise, by sending the Holy Ghost, the comforter, by whom they received fertitude and courage to go forth into the world, and by having the gift of tongues, and speaking to the understanding of people of all nations and languages, they were capable of instructing them in the highest mysteries of christianity, and to convince and confound their most subtle opposers; by these divine aids they preached with fuch efficacy, that St. Peter converted three thousand souls in one day, by one sermon, and in a few years the christian doctrine was so dispersed over the world, that the Roman emperors were apprehensive of their numbers; most countries under the empire.

empire being filled with multitudes of them; and in process of time, though they suffered the greatest torments from their enemies, yet their faith triumphed over the tortures, whips, and swords of the mighty syrants of the earth, when there was no temptation of prosit, pleasure or advantage; but on the contrary, pain, misery, and the most cruel deaths attended the same.

After the death of Judas the traitor, who first hanged himself, and salling headlong from the gibbet, he burk asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. It is supposed that the apostles went into several countries to publish the glad tidings of salvation; of whose preaching and martyrdom, I shall give a brief account, and begin with St. Matthew.

J. TATLOR.

The LIFE and martyrdom, of St. MATTHEW the Apostle and Evangelist, who was sidin with a balbert in Ethiopia.

His festival is by the Western Church celebrated September 21.

ST. MATTHEW, also called Levi, a city belonging to the tribe of Zebulon, where our Saviour was brought up, was the son of Alpheus and Mary, sister or kinswoman to the blessed virgin. His way of life was that of a publican, or toll gatherer, an office scandalous among the Jews, though a place of credit, power, and reputation among the Romans, and conferred upon knights and persons of quality, but were coverous and great oppressor; of which doubtless Zacheus, who was one of them, was sensible, when after his conversion he offered sour fold in way of restitution, to those from whom he had taken any thing by fraud and evil practices; and upon this account the publicans became infamous among the gentiles also. The Jews settlessed them, because their tribute was not only a grice ance

grievance to their purses, but an invasion of the liberties of their nation, they being declared immediately by God himself, a free born people, and therefore reckoned this as a standing instance of their slavery; so that these officers were abhorred by them to that degree, that it was unlawful to shew them any common kindness.

Of this employment was St. Matthew, who is thought to have gathered the customs of such goods as came by sea from Galilee, and the pay of passengers that went by water; they kept their custom house by the sea side, to be near at hand, and here it was that St. Matthew had his office, or receipt of custom; when our Saviour having cured a man grievously tortured with a palsy, retired out to Capernaum, to the sea side, where he taught the people that followed him in great numbers, and espying Matthew sitting in his office, called him to come and follow him; the man was rich having a gainful trade, yet he left all his interests and relations to become our Lord's disciple.

After he was elected into the apostleship, he continued with the rest, till our Lord's ascension, and then for the sirst eight years, it is recorded, he preached up and down Judea, after which being to betake himself to the conversion of the gentile world, the converted Jews intreated him to commit to writing, the history of our Lord's life and actions, to leave it as a standing record of what he had preached to them; accordingly he composed his gospel. We have little account of the sufferings and troubles he underwent for the advancement of the christian saith. Some write that he went into Phrthia, and having successfully planted the gospel in those parts, he travelled thence into Æthiopia, where by his preaching and miracles, he mightily triumphed over error and idolatry.

As to the manner of his death, it is related by some that he went into the country of the Canibals, or maneaters, where Christ appeared to him in the sorm of a beautiful youth, and gave him a wand, which he pitched in the ground, it immediately grew up into a tree; that he also miraculously converted the prince of the country, and after all, died in peace, and was most fumptuously buried: But others of the ancients, with as much probability affirm, that he suffered martyrdom;

or was flain with a fword at a city in Æthiopia.

He was a great instance how much power religion has to alter the temper of a man, who being a stranger to Christ, and in very advantageous worldly circumstances, yet no sooner did our blessed Redeemer call him, but without the least scruple or dissatisfaction, he not only renounced his gainful incomes, but hazarded the displeasure of his masters, the Romans, in whose service he was employed, to leave his accompts entangled and confused behind him.

This apostle having written his gospel, as we have said, at the intreaty of the Jewish converts; though others say, It was by the command of the apostles, while he was in Palestine, eight years after our Saviour's crucifixion, it was carried by St. Bartholorzew into India and left there; he writ it in Hebrew, as primarily designed for the use of his countrymen. It was, no doubt, soon after translated into Greek, some say, by

St. John, others, by St. James the less.

This Hebrew copy was found at Tiberias, by Josephus, a Jew, and after his conversion, a man of great honour and esteem in the days of Constantine the great; one of the ancients affures us, there was another copy kept in the library of Cæsarea in his time, and another by the Narazens at Berza, from whom he had the liberty to transcribe it, and afterwards translated is into Greek and Latin.

A copy also of this gospel was dug out of the grave of Barnabas, at Cyprus, transcribed with his own hand,

but these copies are long fince perished.

The LIFE of St. MARK the Evangelist, substants dragged through the streets in a city in Egypt, till he expired.

His Festival is observed by the Roman Church, April 25.

Roman name, MARK, or MARCUS, yet doubtless he was born of Jewish parents, originally descended from the tribe of Levi, and of the priestly line; the reason for changing his name from Jewish to Roman, was probably from some great accident of his life, usual among the Jews, when travelling to the European provinces of the Roman empire, he being then going

to Italy and Rome.

By the ancients he is thought to be one of the seventu disciples, who taking exception at our Saviour's discourse of 'eating his flesh and drinking his blood,' went back and walked no more with him at that time, but was feafonably reduced and reclaimed by St. Peter; but others as strenuously affirm, that he was then no heares nor follower of Christ, and therefore could be none of them who upon that occasion forfook him; he was converted by some of the apostles, and probably by Sr. Peter, who calls him his fon Marcus, and who was his constant attendant in his travels, and said to be his Amanuenfis, or writer of what the apostles dictated, and likewise his interpreter, for though the apostles were divinely inspired, and had the gift of languages, yet the interpretation of tongues was a privilege more peculiar to some than others. This might probably he Ct. Mark's talent, in expounding St. Peter's discourses and writings to those who did not understand them.

He accompanied Sr. Peter in his apottolical progress, in preaching the gospel in Italy and Rome, as it is related, where, at the request of the obvidians in those parts he composed his gospel. By on Power he was fent to plant christianity in Egypt, and ichical in and about

Alexandria, for some time, and was so successful in his ministry, that he converted multitudes of all ranks and degrees to the embracing of the christian faith, and an

extraordinary strict profession thereof.

St. Mark did not confine his ministry to Alexandria and the eastern parts of Egypt, but travelled westward to Lybia, Mariania and Pentapolis, where, though the people were barbarous and idolatrous, yet by his preaching and miracles the gospel prevailed, he not leaving them till he had gained and confirmed them in the profession of the faith; returning to Alexandria, he preached freely, and set in order the assairs of the church, and wisely provided for succession, by constituting governours and pastors of it; but the restless enemies of the souls of men, would not suffer him long

to live in quiet.

About the time of Easter happened the great solemnity of the Egyptian deity, Serapis; when the minds of the people being passionately excited to a vindication of the honour of their heathen idol, broke in upon St. Mark, in the time of divine worship, and binding his feet with cords, dragged him through the streets to a precipice near the sea, and thrust him into prison for that night; where he was encouraged by a divine vision to continue constant under the ruins of his shattered body. Early the next morning these blood hounds renewed their barbarities, dragging him about in the same manner, 'rill his flesh being raked off, and his blood streaming all the way, his spirits sailed him, and he expired; but their malice ended not with his life; for it is recorded, that when he was dead, they burnt his body, and the christians carefully gathering his ashes, decently buried them near the place where he was wont to preach, and put them into an urn, which with much folemnity, was afterwards removed from Alexandria to Venice, where we are told it now lies interred, and is religiously honoured by the people; St. Mark being adopted to be the tutelar faint of that republic, and has as magnificent a church erected to his memory, as the world can boast of. He is reported to have suffered martyrdom

April 25. But whether in the reign of Claudins or Nero is uncertain. As to his person, he was of a middle stature, as the ancients record, of a comely presence, his nose long, his eyes full of amiableness, and all the

defirable qualities of a lovely person.

The converts at Rome, not content to have heard St. Peter preach, pressed St. Mark, as we have said, to commit to writing what he preached to them, by way of history, which he performed with much faithfulness and brevity; all which St. Peter, it is said, perused and ratissed with his apostolical authority, commanding it to be owned and preserved with the rest of the canonical scripture; and his great impartiality in his relation doth clearly appears that he is so far from conceasing, or mollisying the shameful sall and denial of his dear Master, and tutor St. Peter, to whom he was so deeply engaged in the bonds of love, that he records it with some particular weighty circumstances, and aggravations, which the other evangelists have thought set to omit.

Some affirm, that his gospel was written originally is the Latin tongue, because he published it at Rome; but it is manisest, by the most ancient authority, The the Jews who heard St. Mark preach, being thrange at Rome, knew but very little Lating the Greek being at that time the most sashionable and communicative language in the world; nor can any good reason be assigned, why it should be more inconvenient for S. Mark to write his gospel in Greek for the use of the Romans, than that St. Paul should in that very language write his epistle to the church there.

The original Greek copy, written with St. Mark's own hand, is faid to be extant at Venice to this day, being written, as some inform us, at Aquilea, and thence, after many hundred years, transmitted to Venice, where it is still preserved as an ancient monument, but the letters, so defaced by time, as not legible; but it being of no consequence as to the authenticness of its

original, it is not worth contending for.

The LIFE of St. LUKE the Evangelist, who was hanged upon an olive tree in Greece.

His Festival is observed October 18.

CT. LUKE was born at Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, eminent for the pleasantness of its foil, the riches of its traffic, the wisdom of its senate, the learning of its professors, and the civility and politeness of the inhabitants; celebrated by the pens of some of the most eloquent of that age; but particularly renowned for the honour, that here it was the disciples were first called Christians. It is recorded, that he studied at most schools both of Greece and Egypt, whereby he became learned in all human sciences, but he more particularly applied himself to the practice of physic, for which the Grecian academies were very famous, befides which he is faid to be skilful in the art of painting, and three or four famous pieces are shewed in Italy, faid to be of his drawing; there is also an ancient inscription in the Via Lectea at Rome, in an old vault mear the church of St. Mary, supposed to have been the place where St. Paul dwelt, wherein mention is made of the picture of the blessed virgin, which the Italians call a Madona, or lady, which, with fix others, were arown by the fame evangelist.

ahounding with men of that nation, who had their synagogres and schools of education, and supposed to be one of the seventy disciples, and likewise one of the two who were going to kinaus, to whom the Lord appeared in their way; these seem only conjectures; for besides other arguments, he himself confesseth plainly, 'That he was from the beginning an eye witness and minister of the word; It is therefore more probable that he was converted by St. Paul during his abode in Antioch, and became ever after his inseparable companion, and sellow labourer in the work of the ministry, especially after his going into Macedonia,

donia, from which time, in recording the history of St. Paul's travels, he upon all occasions speaks of himfels in his own person; he attended him in all his dangers, and at his several arraignments at Jerusalem, and in his hazardous voyage to Rome; and 'tis probable he did not leave St. Paul till he had finished his course, and crowned all his sufferings with martyrdom; though some aver that he lest the apostle at Rome, and returned back into the east, travelling into Egypt, and the parts of Lybia, where, according to his custom, he preached the gospel, wrought miracles, converted multitudes, constituted ministers, and that himself

became bithop of Thabais.

He wrote two books for the use and benefit of the church, his gospel, and the history of the acts of the apostles, both which he dedicated to Theophilus; some of the ancients suppose this to be a seigned name, d. noting no more than 'A lover of God,' a title common to every christian. Others, that it was the proper name of fome particular person, the stile of Most. Excellent being in those times the proper form of address to princes and great men; and that he was of consular dignity and nobleman of Antioch, who, when converted by St. Peter, gave his house to the church for their public and folerun worship; and others think he might be some chief man in authority, whom St. Luke had converted and baptized, to whom he dedicated these books as a testimony of honourable respect, and a means of giving him farther light into the certainty of those things, wherein he had been instructed by him; he expressly telling us, 'That his intelligence in these matters was derived from such as were eye-witnesses 'and ministers of the word from the beginning,' having delivered nothing in his whole history but what he had immediately received from persons present at and particularly concerned in the things he has left upon record.

The occasion of his writing his gospel seems to be partly to prevent those false and scandalous reports, which

which even at that time were raised by the enemies to the christian name; and partly to supply what was wanting in the two evangelists who writ before him; which supplement is particularly noted throughout his whole history, by some of the primitive fathers; the subject matter of the same being an account of what relates to Christ's priestly essice, and therefore the ancients, in accommodating the prophet Ezekiel's vision, or sour symbolical representations to the sour evangelists,

affigned the ox, or calf, to St. Luke.

His history of the apostolic acts was undoubtedly written at Rome, at the end of St. Paul's two years imprisonment there, with which he concludes his story: which contains the actions and sometimes the sufferings of some of the chief apostles, particularly of St. Paul, whose activity in the cause of Christ, and the gospel, made him have a deeper share both in doing and suffering; and St. Luke being his constant attendant, and an eyc-witness of the most considerable transactions of his life, after his conversion, was the more capable of giving an accurate relation of them; among other things he records those wonderful miracles which the apostles wrought for confirmation of the doctrine they daily preached. In both these books his stile is clear, slowing with a natural sweemess and grace, he was faithful in his relations, elegant in his writing as a minister; devout and pious as a christian; careful and diligent for the good of fouls, and, to crown all, laid down his life for the testimony of the gospel, which he had preached and published to the world,

An ancient author labours to prove, that he suffered mariyrdom at Rome, after St. Paul's first imprisonment there, and therefore did no farther prosecute the history of the acts of the apostles, which he would undoubtedly have done, had he lived any considerable time after St. Paul's departure. But Nicephosus gives a particular account, That travelling into Greece, he successfully preached, and baptized many converts into the christian saith, which so entaged the barbarians, that a crew of villains laying hold of him, tertured him in a most

violent

violent manner, and then dragging him to execution, designed to crucify him, but coming to the place where they intended to perpetrate the rest of their villany, they could not find a cross to six him upon, but lighting upon an olive tree, they hanged him thereon, in the eighty fourth year of his age. His body was with great solemnity buried at Constantinople, by the command of Constantine the great, or his son, in the sameus church erected there to the memory of the apostles.

The LIFE of St. JOHN the Evergelist and Apostle, who was put into a chaldron of scalding oil, and escaped unburt.

His Festival is celebrated December 27.

ST. JOHN was a Galilean, the son of Zebedee and Salome, younger brother to St. James, together with whom he was employed in sishing: Before his coming to Christ, he seems for some time to have been a disciple to John the baptist, being probably that other disciple that was with Andrew, when they left the Baptist to sollow our Saviour; so particularly does he relate all circumstances of these transactions, though modestly, as in other parts of his gospel, concealing his own name.

There is not much mention of him in facred writ, More than what is recorded of him in conjunction with his brother James, he was peculiarly dear to his Lord and Master, being 'the disciple whom Jesus loved,' witness his lying in our Saviour's bosom at the paschal supper; as also when Peter was desirous to know which of them our Redeemer meant, when he said, 'Que of them shall betray him,' and durst not himself propound the question, he made use of St. John to ask our Lord, indeed when Christ was first apprehended, he sted with the other apostles, it not being without probability of reason that the ancients conceived him to have been that young man, who followed after our Saviour, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body, whose, when

the officers laid hold upon, he left the cloth, and fled naked from them; but though he escaped at present, to avoid that sudden violence, which was offered him; yet soon recovered himself, and returned to seek his Waster, and waited upon him through the several passages of his trial till his crucifixion. Here it was that our Saviour appointed him guardian of his mother, and made her a part of his charge and care. At the first news of our Lord's resurrection, he accompanied Peter to the sepulche, those two apostles having a more mutual intimacy than any of the rest, and had ran many hazards together, and adhered closely to one another

upon all occasions,

The ancients fay, that after the death of the bleffed virgin, St. John went into Afia, and applied himself wholly to the propagation of christianity, having planted several famous churches there; after some years continuance there, he was accused to Domitian, the bloody persecuting Roman emperor, as a subverter of the religion of the empire, by whose commands the consul of Asia fent him bound to Rome, where, it is related, he was put into a chaldron of burning oil, but the divine Providence delivered this holy man from his feeming inevitable destruction unburt; the cruel emperor not being satisfied with this, orders him to be banished to Patmos, a disconsolate island in Greece, where he remained several years, instructing the inhabitants, in the faith of Christ. Here it was that about the latter end of Domitian's reign, he writ his book of the revelations.

Bloody Domitian being taken out of the way, Cocceus Nerva succeeded in the empire, who being of a milder temper, repealed the barbarous edicts of his predection; recalling those that were banished for the christian name; whereupon St. John lest Patmos and returned into Asia, sixing his residence at Ephesius, where it is said he wrote his gospel; he writ also three epistles, which with the apocalypse, are all reposed in the sacred canon, and universally admired. He lived till the time of the emperor Trajan, about the beginning of whose reign

he departed this life about the ninety ninth year of his age, as is generally thought. But others supposed he died a martyr, because our Saviour told him and his brothers, 'That they should drink of the cup, and be baptized with the haptism wherewith he was baptized;' which was indeed literally suffilled with his brother James; yet though he was not murdered, he may be truly stiled a martyr, his being put into a vessel of scalding oil, as we have noted, his many years banishment, and other sufferings for the cause of Christ, justly challenging that title; it being not want of good will either in him or his enemies, but the divine Providence immediately overruling the powers by nature, that prevented the malice of his adversaries from putting their cruel intentions into execution.

Others deny that he died at all, but is still alive: The occasion of which error is founded upon what passed between our blessed Saviour and St. Peter, concerning this apostle; for Christ having told Peter what should be his own sate, Peter enquires what should become of St. John, to whom our Lord answered, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? which was misunderstood by the apostles, though Sr. John himself, who records that passage, inserts a caution, 'That Jesus did not say he should not die.' From the same original also came the tradition, that he only lay sleeping in his grave at Ephesius, which story was a long time current. He seems to have always led a single life, and so the ancients tell us, that all the apostles were married except St. John and St. Paul. He had no great advantages by human learning, but his want of it was abundantly supplied in his excellent temper of mind, and the furniture of divine graces which he was adorned withal. His humility was admirable, studiously concealing his own worth and honour. He discovered a mighty affection to the fouls of men, unwearied in spending himself for the service of the gospel; travelling from east to west to leaven the world with that holy religion which he was fent to propagate; he was extremely vigilant against heretics. Countermining their

their artifices, antidoting against the poison of their errors, and avoiding all communion and conversation with their persons.

The LIFE of St. PETER the Apostle, who was crucified at Rome, with his head downward.

His Festival is celebrated by the Church, June 20.

ST. PETER was born at Benfaids, a place that had the honour of our Saviour's presence, who residing usually in those parts, did often resort thither. He is generally thought to be but ten years older than his matter, which his married condition, and the respect shewed him by the rest of the apostles, for his gravity of person, with other circumstances, seem to confirm. Being circumcifed according to the law, his name then given him was Simon, to which our bleffed Lord added that of Cephas, fignifying a stone, or rock, which is Peter in English. He was brother to St. Andrew the apostie, who first brought him to the knowledge of the gospel. Their father was Jonah of Bethsaida, probably a fisherman, who had the honour, as well as Zebedee, to have each of them two of their ions among our Saviour's apostles though but twelve in number. Peter was exployed in fishing in the sea of Galilees being one hundred furlongs in length, and forty in breadth, the water clear and sweet, and stored with several sorts of choice fish.

And here let us admire at the wonderful methods of divine Providence, that such low and mean men should be armed with divine power, as to ruin the kingdom of Satan. The vile apostate, Julian, objected against the prophets of the old testament, that they were a company of rude illiterate men; but we find that these unlearned men and innocent apostles, by the assistance of the Almighty, suddenly and powerfully prevailed over the learned world. Our Saviour designing to elect some peculiar persons to propagate his gospel through all mations, made choice of twelve to be his apostles, and Simon

Simon Peter is, by the evangelists, put in the front of them.

It may be enquired when, and by whom the apostles were baptized; Nicephorus relates, That of all the apostles, Christ baptized none but Peter with his own hands, and Reter baptized Andrew, and the two fores of Zebedee, and the rest of the apostles. Among the twelve, our Saviour chose three, who seem to be his near intimate companions, and whom he let into the most fecret passages and transactions of his life, namely, Peter, James and John, they being with him at the riling of Jarius's daughter, as also at his transfiguration on the mount, where Peter desired our Lord, that he might build three tabernacles in memory or that great transaction; one author writes, that in pursuance of this petition, There were atterwards three churches built upon the top of this mountain; and one writer reports, That, in his time, they shewed the ruins of these three tabernacles, which were built according to St. Peter's delire.

After our Lord had entered Jerusalem in triumph, he retired to Bethany, and dispatched Peter and John, to make a preparation for the pallover; accordingly they found the person whom he had described to them, and followed him to his house, which whether it was St. John the evangelist's, situate near Mount Sion, or Simon the leper, or Nicodemus, or Joseph of Arimathea, is uncertain. These two, with St. James, accompanied him to the garden in his agony; and Eusebius writes, That even in his time, christians were wont to come hither folemnly to offer up their prayers to God, and Christ Jesus. Our Lord being ascended into heaven, and having fulfilled his promise of sending the Holy Ghost, the apostles and disciples continued awhile at Jerusalens, being toffed about with gentle ftorms, but upon occasion of the martyrdom of St. Stephen, a violent persecution fell upon them, which dispersed them into several countries, about the end of the reign of Caligula, that harbarous Romanew peror; Peter having visited the churches, returned to Jerulalem, and Herod Agrippa, grandfon ro

Herod the great, having attained the kingdom of Judea, he, to ingratiate himself with the people, put St. James to death, and finding this grateful to the vulgar, apprehended St. Peter, and sent him to prison, placing throng guards to secure him, but the angels of the Lord delivered him in the night before his enemies designed to execute him; but before this he is said to have gone down to Antioch, and to have planted the christian saith, and sound a church there, as Eusebius and others record.

After this he went to Rome, about the second year of the emperor Claudius, and being mindful of the churches which he had gathered in Pontus, Galatia, Capadocia, Bythinia, and Alia the less, writ his first epifile to them, and then took care to propagate the christian saith in the western part of the world, after he had continued some years at Rome, the Jews raising feditious tamults in the city, they were banished from thence; among whom was St. Peter, who from thence returned back to Jerusalem, and was present at the great apostolical synod, where the controversy about Mofaical rites was determined; some report, that he was in Britain, and converted many to christianity: But toward the end of Nero's reign he returned to Rome, where he found the people's minds hardened against embracing the christian religion, by the subtilties and magic arts of Simon Magus; this impostor resided in Samaria, where St. Philip the deacon preached with much success; confirming the same by miracles; however, Simon was in great reputation among the people, and fliled limitelf "The great Power of God,' and and affirming that he was the supreme Deity, worship. ped by all nations; the aposties sent Peter and John from Jerusalem to Philip's assistance, who, when they came thither, laid their hands upon the new converts, whereupon they presently received the Holy Ghost; which when Simon faw, he offered them money, if they would confer that power upon him. But Peter perceiving his vite intentions, scornfully rejected his impious offer. However, by his witchterafts and forceries, he at length

iength became acceptable to the emperor as well as the vulgar; Nero, that monther, had much reneration for him, being patron of the magicians, and all those who have commerce with the infernal powers, and Peter being returned to Kome, resolved to encounter him, and discover the impostors and delusions of this wretched man.

About that time, an eminent young gentleman, kinfman to the emperor, died at Rome, and the fame of Peter's having power to raise the dead, his friends were persuaded to send for him, but others propose Simon Magus, who readily came, being glad of the occasion to magnify himself before the people, and Peter being present, Simon alledged, That he had proveked the great power of God, and should lose his life is in did not raise the dead person, but if Peter prevalled, the himself would submit to the same fate; Peter accepted the terms, and Simon began his charms and charter ments, whereat the dead gentleman seemed to move his hand, upon which the people shouted, and cried he was alive, and talked to Simon; and began to affault Peter; the apostle intreated their patience, and told them it was nothing but fancy and appearance, and that if Simox were removed from the bed-fide this delusion would foom vanish; which done, the body remained without the least sign of motion. Peter standing at a good distance from the bed, filently made his address to heaven, and then before them all, commanded the young man in the name of the Lord Jesus to arise, which he did immediately, and spoke, walked, and eat, and was by Peter restored to his mother. The people hereupon altered their opinions, and fell upon Simon, with intent to have stoned him; but Peter begged his life, and told them, It would be punishment enough for him to see that in despite of his malice the kingdom of Christ should increase and flourish.

The magician was inwardly tormented with this defeat, and vexed to see the triumph of the apostle, and mustered up all his infernal powers, acquainted the pec-

ple, That he was offended at the Galileans, as he called the christians, and therefore set a day when they should see him fly up to heaven, and accordingly he went up to the top of the capital, and throwing himself from thence, began his flight, which the spectators beheld with wonder and veneration, affirming that this must be from the power of God,' and not of man: Peter standing in the crowd, prayed to God, that the people might be undeceived, and that the vanity of the importor might be discovered to the confusion of him, and shame of his admirers; immediately the wings which he had made himself began to sail, so that he sell to the ground, miserably bruised with the fall, and being carried to a neighbouring village, died foon after. The end of this wretched man coming to the emperor's ear, hastened St. Nero, no doubt, had been formerly Peter's death. displeased with him, on account of his christianity, and that he fo strictly preached up temperance and chastity, thereby reclaiming to many women in Rome, from a dissolute and vicious life, which was to disagreeable to his wanton lascivious temper, to which he was a slave; and being by his means robbed of his dear companion, he resolved upon revenge, causing Sr. Peter, (as also St. Paul, who was at that time at Rome) to be cast into the maritime prison, where they employed themselves in preaching to the prisoners, and those who visited And here it is supposed, St. Peter writ his second epiftle to the dispersed Jews, to confirm them in the faith, and fortify them against those pernicious principles and practices, which even then began to break in upon the christian church.

Nero returning from Achaia, and entering Rome with triumph, resolved St. Peter should sall a sacrifice to his cruelty. While the satal stroke was daily expected, the christians at Rome earnestly solicited him to make his escape, and reserve himself for surther service to the church; which at length prevailed with him, and the next night having prayed with, and taken leave of his brethren, it is related. That he got over the prison wall, and being

come

come to the city gate, he is there said to have met with our Lord, who was just entering the city: Peter, it is said, asked him, 'Lord, whither art thou going?' from whem he presently received this answer, 'I am come to Rome, to be crucified the second time;' by which reply, Peter apprehended himself to be reproved, and that our Lord meant it of his death, that he was to be crucified in his servant; and so went back to the prison, and surrendered himself to the keeper, as being ready

to acquiesce in the will of God.

Before his fuffering he was scourged after the Roman manner, who use to whip capital offenders before they suffered. Having saluted his brethren, and taken his last leave of St. Paul, his fellow prisoner, he was led up to the top of the Vatican mount, being sentenced to be crucified, the most painful and shameful of all deaths: He then intreated the officers that he might not be crucified the ordinary way, but suffer with his head downward, and feet up-to heaven, as being unworthy to die in the same posture as his blessed Master, his body being taken down, was faid to have been embalmed by Marcellinus, the presbyter, after the Jewish way, and then buried in the Vatican, where it lay obscurely till the reign of Constantine the great, who had so much reverence for this apollle, that he built a church in the Vatican to his memory, which is now one of the most famous cathedrals in the world. This account of his death, though not mentioned in holy writ, is recorded by the ancient ecclefiaftical historians, but with what certainty it is, we must leave the reader to judge.

The LIFE of St. JAMES the Great, who was beheaded at Jerusalem.

His Festival is celebrated, July 25.

ST. JAMES, sirnamed the great, either because of his age, or for some peculiar honour our Saviour conferred upon him, was a Galilean born, the son of Zebedee, a sisherman; his mother's name was Mary, called

called also Salome, he was employed by his father in the trade of fishing, in the exercise of which our Saviour found him, when he passed by the sea of Galilee; where he called him to be his disciple, which he readily obeyed, leaving his aged father with the servants to manage his assairs; not long after his first calling, from the station of an ordinary disciple, he was appointed to the apostolical office, and honeured with some peculiar acts of savour beyond most of the apostles, being one of the three whom our blessed Saviour made choice of to admit to the more intimate transactions of his life.

Thus with Peter, and his brother John, he was present at the miraculous raising of Jarius's daughter, admitted to Christ's glorious transfiguration in the mount, and taken along with him into the garden, to be a spectator of his bitter and terrible agony; nor was it the least instance of the particular honour our Saviour bestowed upon these apostles, that upon his calling of them, he

gave him a new name and title.

Our holy Redeemer, in his journey towards Jerusalem, in order to his cracifixion, that he might the better prepare the minds of his apostles for his departure from them; discoursed to them about his suffering, and that he should be put to death, and after three days should rise again; but they whose minds were elevated with the expectation of a temporal power and monarchy, understood not the meaning of what he related to them. However, lames and his brother, supposing the refurreclion which he spoke of, would be the time when his dignity and greatness would commence, persuaded their mother to put up a petition for them to our Lord, who accordingly addressed him, humbly desiring, that when he took pellession of his kingdom, her sons might have the two principal places of honour and dignity, by fitting one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Our bleffed Saviour directing his discourse to the two apostles; told them, that they quite mistook the nature of his kingdom, which did not confift in external pump and splendor, but in inward life s nower, that they would do well to consider, whether they were able to undergo what he was to suffer.' They probably not understanding the sorce of his reasoning, answered, they were able to do it; Jesus taking no advantage of their rash and inconsiderate reply, answered, 'that as for suffering they would indeed partake of it as well as he; but for any peculiar honour or dignity, he could not dispose of any of that kind, any otherwise than according to these rules and instructions which he received from his father,' the rest of the apostles were offended at this ambitious request; but our dear Redeemer to quality their passons, discoursed to them at large of the nature of the evangelic state, and the difference between that and the kingdom of the world; with which excellent reasoning their hearts on all sides were allayed and parished.

What became of St. James after our Saviour's afcenfion, we have no account of, either from facred or
ecclefiable history; some affirm, that after the martyrdom of St. Stephen, when the christians were dispersed,
he came to the western parts of the world, even to
Britain and Ireland; and having planted christianity
among them, returned to Jerusalem, but it feems improbable on several accounts; and therefore it is fales
to conside his ministry to judga, and the parts adjacent,
and to seek for him at Jerusalem, where we are fore to

find him.

At this time Herod Agrippa, the son of Aristobules, being in great savour with Claudius the Reman emperor, he confirmed to him the kingdom of Judea, and all the provinces that his grandsather Herod the great enjoyed; who being sensible that the most probable way to gain the affection of the Jews, was to persecute the christians; he resolves accordingly to fall upon them; and sutting St. James vigorous in contending for the truth, company's him to be apprehended, and sentenced to die; the soldier who observed his great constancy and courage at his trial, sell at his seet, begging parden for what he had done against him; the holy man raised him up and kissed him, who thereupon publicly professed himself to

be a christian, and so they were both beheaded at the same time.

His death was not long unrevenged, of which the ancients give the following account, that Herod going to Samaria. he proclaimed folemn fights and sestival entertainments to be had in honour of Cæsar; early in the morning, he came in great state to the theatre erocked for him, to make an oration to the people, gorgeously arrayed in a robe curiously wrought with alver, gold, and jewels, so that the luxre thereof made the people cry out, that he was some deity, and beyond the common standard of humanity; this impious applause he received with much pleasure, but the comic part was from turned into a tragedy; for looking up, he espied an owl fitting over his head, which he inflantly apprehended as a fatal messenger of inevitable ruin, by the just judgment of almighty God; and thereupon an incurable melancholy seized upon his mind, as well as exquisite terments upon his body; upon which turning to those about him, You may here see yourselves evidently convinced of flattery and fallhood; you see me, whom you called a god, am, by the laws of fate, condemned to die, and he whom you counted immortal e ready to give up the ghek. His pains continually increased upon him, and though his favourites prayed carneftly to the Gods for his health, yet his acute tortures at length put a period to his miserable life.

His Festival is celebrated with St. Philip's, May 1.

HIS apostle is probably conjectured to be the son of Joseph, afterward the husband of the blessed virgin, by his first wife, and so reputed our Lord's brother, and the son of Joseph; and though he is likewise called the son of Alpheus, this may probably relate to his being a disciple of some particular sect of the Jews, called Alpheaus. We have little account of his birth,

The LIFE of St. I AMES the left, who was knocked on the and with a fuller's club.

and former life, but find that after the refurrection, he was honoured with the particular appearance of our Lord to him, which, though not mentioned by the evangelists, is recorded by St. Paul; one of the ancients relates, he had folemnly sworn, that from the time he drank the cup at the institution of the last supper, he would cat bread no more till our Lord returned from the grave, who thereupon appeared to him, commanding bread to be set before him, which he took, blessed, and break, and gave to St. James, saying, eat thy bread my brother, for the son of man is truly risen from them

' that fleep.'

His refidence was for the most part at Jerusalem, to him we find St. Paul makes his address after his conversion; to him St. Peter sent the news of his miraculous deliverance out of prison; but he was principally active in the fynod at Jerusalem, in the great controversy about the Mosaic rites. He discharged his office like a diligent and faithful guide to fouls; strengthening the weak, informing the ignorant, reducing the erroneous, reproving the obstinate, and by the servency of his preaching, subdued the stubbornness of the refractory and perverse generation; and many principal persons being brought over to a compliance with the christian faith, it awakened the envy and malice of his enemies to conspire his ruin, vexed they were, that Paul, by appealing to Cæsar, had escaped their hands, and therefore turn their revenge upon St. James, which not being able to effect under Festus's government, they vigorously attempted under the procuratorship of Albinus, his successor, before the new government could arrive; to which end a council is furmoned with all expedition, and the apostles and others arraigned and condemned as violaters of the law, and for the more plaufible managing their designs, they set the scribes and pharises, to ensure St. James, infinuating that they had a great opinion of his fanctity, and that the whole Jewish nation gave him the testimony of being a just man; they therefore defired that he would reduce the people from their fulfe opinion, 'that Jesus was the Meshah,' and would to that

end take the opportunity of the universal confluence of people to the paichal folemnity, and go with them to the top of the temple, where he might be seen and heard of all; being accordingly placed to advantage upon a pinnacle, or wing of the temple, they thus addressed him: Tell us, O Justus, or James, whom we know and believe to be a righteous man, what is the reason that the people are so generally led away, to adore Jesus who was crucified at Jerusalem, and what are the doctrines and precepts which he published to the world, and where is his residence since his pretended resurrecf tion from the dead?' to which the apostle answered, with an audible voice, 'Why do you enquire of Jesus, the fon of man? he fits in heaven on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and will come again in the clouds The people below hearing this, glorified The scribes and pharifees perceiving the bleffed lesus. themselves disappointed, and that instead of reclaiming, they confirmed the multitudes in their supposed error, thought the only remedy was to dispatch him out of the way, that from this fad fate, others might be warned not to persist in the belief of Jesus; whereupon they saddenly cried out, that James himself was seduced, and become an impostor, and threw him down from the place whereon he stood, whereby he was forely bruised, but not killed so that he recovered so much strength as to get upon his knees, and pray to heaven for them; vexed that they had not dispatched him, they fell afresh upon the remainder of his life; and while he was yet praying, one stepping in and intreating him to spare him, a just religious man who was crying to heaven to forgive them; began to assault him with a shower of stones, till one, more mercifully cruel than the rest, Deat out his brains with a fuller's club.

Thus died this good man, in the ninetieth year of his age, and about twenty four years after Christ's ascension, to the great grief and regret of all pious men, Jews as well as others, and was buried in mount Olivet, in a tomb which he had built for himself, and had therein buried Zacharias and old Simeon. He was of exemplary

and extraordinary picty, educated under the strictest rules and institutions of religion, being, as is supposed, of the ancient order of the Rechabites, whose business and delight seemed to be to converse only with heaven, and was wont to retire alone to the temple to pray, which he always performed kneeling, till by his incessant devotions, it is related, that his knees became as hard and brany as a camel's. He writ only one epistle, probably not long before his martyrdom; he directed it to the Jewish converts, dispersed up and down those eastern countries, to comfort them under sufferings, and to consirm them against error.

His Festival, with that of St. James the less, is celebrated May 1.

ST. PHILIP was born at Bethfaids, near the sca of Tyberias. We read nothing of his parents, nor way of life in the holy gospels, though probably he was a fisherman, the common trade of that place; he had the honour to be the first called to be Christ's disciple; for our Lord after his return from the wilderness, having met with Andrew and his brother Peter, after some short discourse parted from them, and the next day passing through Galilee, he found Philip, whom he commanded presently to follow him, which he did accordingly; no sooner had religion taken possession of his mind, but he goes and finds Nathaniel, acquaints him with the tidings of the new found Messiah, and conducts him to him. After his call to the apostleship, there is not much recorded of him in the scripture; it was to him the Lord propounded what they could get in the wilderness, that would feed so vast a multitude; to whom he answered, that it would be very difficult to find enough in that place; it was to him that the gentile profelytes, who came up to the passover, addressed themselves.

The LIFE of St. PHILIP the Apostle, nobo

themselves, when they desired to see our Saviour. It was to him that our bleffed Redeemer discoursed concerning himself, a little before the paschai supper. The Lord Jesus had been fortifying the minds of his disciples, with proper considerations against his departure from them; he told them, that no man could come to the Father but by him. Philip not readily understanding the tone of our Saviour's reasonings begged of him that he might fee the Father. Our Lord gently reproved his ignorance, that after so long attendance upon his instructions, he should not know that he was the image of his Father; the express character of his infinite wildom, power, and goodness, appearing in him; that he said and did nothing but by his Father's appointment, which if they did not believe, his miracles were sufficient evidence; that therefore such demands were unnecessary and impertinent, and that it argued great weaknels, after three years converle with him, and under him, and under his discipline and instruction, that they should have so little understanding matters

In the distribution of the several regions of the world, made by the apostles, some think that upper Asia was the province which was assigned to Philip; where he applied himself with indefatigable diligence and industry, to recover men out of the snare of Satan, to the embracing and acknowledging of the truth, and by the constancy of his preaching, and the esticacy of his miracles, gained nurrerous converts, whom he baptized into the christian saith, at once curing both souls and bodies; their souls of error and idolatry, and their bodies of intimities and distempers; healing diseases, dispossessing demons, settling churches, and appointing them pastors and teachers.

Having for many years successfully managed his aposcolical office in those parts, he came, toward the latter end of his life, to Hierapolis, in Phrygia, a rich and populous, but most idolatrous place; amongst the many vain and trifling deities to whom they paid religious worship, was a serpent or dragon, which they worshipped

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with great and folema veneration; the apostle was grieved to see them so grossly enslaved in error; and therefore continually solicited heaven, till by prayer he had procured the death and destruction of this monstrous deity, and then endeavoured to convince them of the folly and madnels of paying divine adoration to fuch filthy and odious creatures, and to declare to them the excellency of the christian religion; wherein he was fo fuccessful, that the people generally abhorred their former fortish idolatry, and cordially embraced there the christian institution, whereupon the enemy of mankind stirred up the magistrates of the city to pursue the old methods of perfecution and cruelty, who seized upon the bleffed apostle, and having put him in prison, caused him to be severely scourged; after which barbarity, he was led to execution, and being bound, was hanged up by the neck against a pillar, though others write, he The apostle being dead, his body was was crucified. taken down by St. Bartholomew, his fellow sufferer, and his own fifter, who is faid to have been the constant companion of his travels, and decently buried; after which, having confirmed the people in the faith of Christ they departed from thence.

It is generally affirmed that St, Philip was married. and that he had daughters whom he disposed of in marriage; but though this be granted, yet they not carefully distinguishing between Philip the deacon and Philip the apostle, have made some conclude them to be one and the same person, but with how little reason will appear, if we confider that Philip, who could not be one of the apostolical college, the apostles declaring upon that occasion, they had affairs of a higher nature to attend upon; so then upon the persecution that arose upon St. Stephen's death, the church was dispersed, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samuria; and Philip the deacon among the rest who went down to the city of Samaria, except the apostles who tarried behind at Jarusalem, and when Philip had converted and baptized a confiderable number in that place, he was forced to fend for two of

the aposles from Jerusalem, that so by their hands they might receive the Holy Ghost; which had been wholly needless, had he himself been one of the twelve aposles. St. Philip left no sacred writings behind him; the greater part of the apostles having little leisure to write, being employed in the ministry, as more immediately useful and subservient to the happiness of mankind. This is the account which the ecclesiastical writers give of this, as well as they do of other apostles, though not recorded in holy writ.

The LIFE of St. BARTHOLOMEW the Apostle, subo was sead alive by the command of a barbarous king.

His Festival is celebrated, August 24.

HERE is no question but St. Bartholomew was an apostle, though the holy scriptures takes notice only of his name, which occasioned several ancient and modern authors to suppose that he lies concealed under some other name; and that he can be no other than Nathaniel, one of the first disciples that came to Christ; accordingly we may observe, that as some of the evangelists never mention Bartholomew in the number of the apostles, so others take no notice of Nathaniel; but that which renders the thing most specious and probable is, that we find Nathaniel particularly reckoned up with the other apostles, to whom our Lord appeared at the sea of Tyberias.

The difficulty being cleared, we proceed to a more particular account of him, who is thought by some to have been a Syrian of a royal extraction, and to have derived his pedigree from the Ptolomy's, kings of Egypt. But it is manifelt that he, as well as the rest of the sposses, was a Galilean, and of Nathaniel, we know it particularly said, that he was of Cana, in Galilee: The scripture takes no notice of his trade, or way of life, though some circumstances seem to intimate that he was a sisterman. At his sirst coming to Christ, he was con-

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ducted by Philip, who told him they had found the long looked for Messiah; and when he had objected that the Messiah could not be born at Nazareth; Philip bids him comerand fatisfy himfelf; at his first appearance, our bleffed Saviour entertains him with the character of a man of true simplicity and integrity: Surprised he was, at our Lord's falutation, wondering how he could know him so well at first sight, whose face he had mover seen before; but he was answered, that he had seen him under the fig tree, before Philip called him, convinced by this instance of our Lord's divinity, he presently made his confession, that he was sure that glus was the promised Meiliah, the son of God, whom he had appointed to be the king and governour of his church; our Saviour told him, that if upon these inducements he could believe him to be the Messiah, he should have far greater arguments to confirm his saith; that ere long he should see the heavens opened to receive him thither, and the angels visibly appearing to attend upon him.

Concerning our apostles' travels up and down the world, to propagate the christian saith; the ancients give an account, that he went as far as that part of India which borders upon Æthiopia, and that he there lest a copy of St. Matthew's gospel; and they relate farther, that Paulinus, a man samous for his skill in philosophy, and particularly in the institution of the stoics; having embraced christianity, he in a devout and zealous imitation of the apostles, was inslamed with zeal to propagate the faith of Christ in those eastern countries, and came as far as India, meeting here with some that yet retained the knowledge of Christ, and sound St. Matthew's gospelwritten in Hebrew, lest there as the tradition was by St. Bartholomew, one of the twelve apostles, when he

preached the true faith of those nations.

After the labours of St. Bartholomew in these parts of the world, he returned to the more western and northern countries of Asia; at Hierapolis, in Phrygia, we find him in company with Philip, instructing the

them of the folly of their heathenish worship; which so enraged the idelaters, that he was designed for martyrdom at the same time with Philip; but upon a sudden conviction that the divine justice would revenge their

deaths, he was taken down and dismissed.

Hence it is probable, that after this, St. Bartholomew went to Lyconia. His last remove was to Albanaple, in Armenia the great, a place miletably overgrown with idolates, from which he fought to reclaim the deluded people. This to entaged the governour of the courtry, that he fearenced him to be crucified; which fome fay, he cheerfully suffered, comforting and confirming the convert gentiles so the last minute of his life; some say he was crucified with his head down-ward; others assum, that he was stead alive before his cracifixion, a barbarity used both by the Persans and Egyptians, and from whom they might borrow this horrible and inhuman cruelty.

The LIFE of St. ANDREW the Apollo, subs was bound to a cross, from whence be preached to the people.

His Festival is observed, November 30.

ST. ANDREW was born at Bethiaids, a city of Salike, the son of John or Jonas, a listerman of that town, and brother of Simon Peter; he was brought up to his father's trade, and was employed therein, till our blessed Saviour called him to another kind of

fishing.

John the baptist having lately risen up in the Jewish church, great multitudes followed him to hear his doctrines and exhortations; he had also a number of idect disciples, who more particularly accompanied him; in the number of which was our apockle St. Andrew, who was with him about Jordan. Our Lord coming that way, upon his approach the baptist told them, that this was the Messia ; whereupon Andrew

and another disciple followed our Saviour to the place of his abode: After some discourse with him, Andrew goes and acquaints his brother Simon, and both together came to Christ; yet staid not long with him, but returned home and exercised their calling for more than a year, till our holy Redeemer passing through Galilee, fully satisfied them of his divinity, and commanded them to follow him, which they did immediately: shortly after, Andrew, together with the rest, was chosen to be one of those that were to be Christ's immediate vicegerents for planting and propagating the christian faith. Little elle is recorded of him in the s facred story, his actions being comprehended in the general account of the rest of the apostles. Our Lord being afcended into heaven, and the apostles dispersed through all nations, to publish the everlasting gospel. some of the ancients relate, that Andrew travelled into Seythia, where he continued for some considerable time, going from one place to another, preaching the gospel, and fettling the churches, meeting in many places with great troubles and opposition; hence in process of time he came to Byzantium (now called Constantinople; where he instructed the inhabitants in the knowledge of the christian religion, and founded a church.

After this he travelled through Thrace, Macedonia, and Achaia, where for many years he cultivated the true faith and at length came to Patrzea, a city of Achaia, where he gave his last and great testimony of the verity of it, by laying down his life in its defence; of the manner of whole martyrdom fome authors give

the following account.

Agas, proconful of Afia, coming to Patræa, and observing that numbers of the people had embraced the christian doctrine he endeavoured to reclaim them; whereupon the apostle went to him, and expostulated with him about the matter, but the proconful derided him as the propagator of a religion, the author and publisher whereof the Jews had infamously put to death upon the cross.

The apostle from hence took occasion to demonstrate

the excellency and certainty of that religion, but the governour would hear nothing against his own superstitious and idolatrous worthip; and threatened him, that if he did not offer facritice to his Pagan idols, he should fuffer death upon the cross, in conformity to the first broacher of that new faith which he professed; after which he was commanded back to prison. The next day he was brought before the proconful, who perfuaded him not to lose his life, and the pleasures of this world, for an uncertain reward in another. The apostle on the contrary infified upon the folly and vanity of all wordly enjoyment, and the certainty of a day of Judgment, while every man make give an execount of all. he hath me in the body, whether it be good or whether it be evil; that if he did not believe in Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, he must certainly endure eternal torments in heli.

This so enraged the proconsul, that he told him he must either instantly renounce his fond opinions, or else should suffer the greatest torments that could be inflicted on him.

The apostle replied, that he seared not his tortures, and did not doubt but Christ would strengthen him to endure all manner of barbarity, rather than deny his somer profession of the true faith. The proconsul then commanded him to be scourged by seven officers, called lictors, who successively whipt his naked body; but soing his great patience and undauntedness under this said usage, he comman'el him to be crucified, but not to be saitened with nails, but tied with cords, that he might be the longer in dying.

Being come within fight of the cross, he heartily recoiced, saying, that he long desired and expected that
supply hour, wherein he might bear testimony to his
glorious and renowned Master: After having prayed
and exhorted the people to continue constant in the
saith, which he in his lifetime delivered to them, he
was sastened to the cross, whereon it is said he hung
two days, teaching and instructing the multitude all the
while, and exhorting them to suffer cheerfully what-

foever

if they should be called to bear witness to the trush. In the mean time great importunity was used to the proconful to take him down from the cross; but the blessed apostle earnestly begged of our Lord, that he might at this time seal the truth with his blood, and God heard his prayer, and he immediately expired, Nov. 30, though in what year it is as uncertain as that this account, given by Ecclesiastical historians, is to be depended on.

The LIFE of St. THOMAS the Apostle, who was run through with a lause at Cormandel in the East Indies.

His Festival is observed, December 21.

HE Jews, as we have observed, used commonly when travelling into other countries, or familiarly converfing with the Greeks and Romans, to assume to themselves a Greek or Latin name of affinity, and fometimes of the very same signification, with that of their own country. Thus St. Thomas, according to the Syriac import of his name, was called Dydimus, which has the same signification. The history of the gospel takes no particular notice either of his country or kindred: His employment was a fisherman; he afterwards, together with the rest, was called to the apolileship; where not long after he gave an emineut instance of his hearty willingness to undergo the saddest fate that might attend them; for when the rest of the apostles dissuaded our Saviour from going to Judea, lest the Jews should stone him as they a little before had attempted; St. Thomas defires them not to hind r Christ's journey thither, though it might cost them their lives; probably concluding that inflead of railing Lazarus from the dead, they themselves should be fent with him to their own graves, so that he made up in pious affections, what he feemed to want in the guick.

sels of his understanding, not readily understanding some of our Lord's discourses, nor over forward to believe, till he had occular demonstration of his resurrection. When our Saviour a little before his total sufferings, told his disciples, that he was going to prepare a place for them, which they might follow, as knowing where it was, our apostle roundly replied, that he knew it not. To which Christ gives this satisfactory

answer, 'that he was the living way.'

Our Lord being dead, his disciples were exceedingly diffracted, between hope and despair about his resurrection, which engaged him the fooner to make his appearance; wherefore the very day whereon he arose, he came into the house where they were met together, though the doors were fast shut for fear of the lews. At this meeting St. Thomas was absent, having probably never come into their company fince their dispersion in the garden, where every one's feats prompted them to confult their own fasety. At his return the disciples told him, that the Lord had appeared to them, but he obstinately retailed to believe that it was he, except he might see the very print of his nails, and seel the wounds in his nice and hands; his compassionate Master would not take advantage of the man's refractory unbelief, but upon that day se'nnight, as they were folemaly met at their holy worship, he appeared to akem again, and calling Thomas, bid him look upon his hands, and put his finger in the prints of the nails, and thrust his hand into the hole of his side, and thereby Arengthened his faith. The apostle was quickly convinced of his error, confessing that he acknowledged him to be his Lord and master.

Our blessed Redeemer being ascended into heaven, and having eminently given gifts and miraculous powers to the apostles, St. Thomas, moved thereby to divine inspiration, is said to have sent Thaddeus, one of the seventy disciples, to Agharus, king of Edessa, whom he cured of an inveterate distemper, who converted him and his subjects to the christian saith. It is recorded, that the province alloted to St. Thomas was

Parthia

Parthia from whence he proceeded to preach the gospel in Media, Persia, Carmania, Hyrcania, Bactria, and the neighbouring nations. One of the ancients fays, that in Persia he met with the three wise men who came that long journey out of the east to bring presents to our new born Saviour, whom he baptized, and took along with him as his companions and affiltants in preaching the gospel. Hence he travelled into Æthiopia, and afterward came to India, where we are told he was afraid to have ventured himself, till he was encouraged by a vision, that assured him of the divine He travelled very far in the presence and protestion. eastern countries, till he arrived at the nation of the Brachmans, preaching in all places where he arrived, and by the gentle methods, and the efficacy of the christian doctrine, he reclaimed the people from their blind superstition and idolatry. The Portugals who inhabit in those parts, relate, that St. Thomas came first. to Socatora, an island in the Arabian sea, where having converted many, he travelled farther into the East, and having successfully planted the true saith, returned back to Cormondel, whereby he began to erect a place for divine worship, till prohibited by the prince and priest of the kingdom; but the apostle having wrought several miracles, the work went on, and the sultan, or king himself, embraced christianity. The Brachmans plainly perceiving that this progress of the gospel would endanger their interest, and in time excirpate their false religion, thought it high time to prevent its spreading, and that it was absolutely necessary that the apostle should be taken out of the way; there was a tomb not far off the city, where St. Thomas used to retire to his folitudes and private devetions; thither the Brachmans and their followers pursued him, and while he was fervent in prayer, first assaulted him with darts and stones, till one of them coming nearer, ran him through' His body was taken up by his disciples. with a lance. and buried in the church which he had lately erefled. While one of the vicerovs of Portugal resided in those parts there were brought him certain brass tables, whose inscription

a Jew they were found to contain only a donation made by St. Thomas of a piece of ground for building a church. They tell also of a famous cross found in St. Thomas's chapel, whereon was engraven as unintelligible character, which learned Dramon rendered to this effect; that Thomas, a divine person, was sent to those countries by the Son of God, in the days of king, Sagamo, to instruct the inhabitants in the knowledge of the true God; that he built a ohurch, and personned admirable miracles, but at last while he was upon his knees offering his addresses to heaven, he was thrust through with a sword, and that this cross was stained with his blood, and lest as a memorial of these transactions.

The LIFE of St. JUDE the apostle, who was first to death with arrows.

His feast is celebrated with St. Simon, October 28.

HIS apostle is mentioned by several names in the history of the gospel, namely, Jude, Thaddeus, and Vebbeus, it being usual in hely writ for the same person to have more proper names than one; the first was common among the Jews, as being the name of one of the twelve patriaschs of their nation, which, it is thought, he changed as sounding so like that of Judas Iscariot, that arch-traitor, which was very odious and detestable among the christians; and called himself. Thaddeus, a word of the very same signification, and is sometimes stiled Judas, the brother of James; for his name Lebbeus, it is derived from the Hebrew word which signifies a lion, aliading to Jacob's prophesy, That Judas should be a lion, Ge.

As to his parentage, he was one of our Lord's kindred, the son of Joseph, and the brother of James the less. We do not find when he was called to the apostle-ship; only that he was enumerated among them; nor is any thing particularly recorded of him afterwards,

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more than one question which he propounded to our Saviour, who having told them what great things he and his Father would do, and what particular manifestations he would make of himself to his disciples and followers after his refurrection; St. Jude, whose thoughts, as well as of the rest, were taken up with the expectation of a temporal kingdom of the Melliah, not. knowing how that could confin with the public felemaity of the glorious state they looked for, asked him,. What was the reason that he would manifest himself to them, and not to the world?" Our Lord replied, 'That the world was not capable of those divine maniefestations, as being strangers and chemies to what should fit them for heaven: That they were only good men, persons of a divine temper of mind, and religious observers of his laws and will, whom God would honour with these familiar converses."

Eusebius relates expressly, that foon after our Lord's ascention, St. Thomas dispatched Thaddens the apostle to Agbarus, king of Edeffs, where he healed diseases, wrought miracles, expounded the doctrine of christianity, and converted the king and the people to the true faith; and when Agbarus offered him rich gifts and presents for his labour of love in the Lord, he in a noble fcom replied, 'That he had little reason to receive from others what he had already relinquished; here he is faid to have died peaceably, and to have been most honourably buried; but by the general consent of the Latin church, he is faid to have travelled to Persia, where after great funcess in his spotsaical ministry for many years, he was at last, for his free and open reproving superstitious rites and usages of the Magi, cruelly murdered, by being tied to a flake, and shot to death with arrows.

That he was one of the married disciples manifestly appears, because Enselsius gives the following account of his grandsons. Domitian, the bloody Roman tyrant, whose wickedness had awakened in him the quickest jealousies, and made him suspect every one that had but the least presence to be his corrival in the empire, being

informed

informed that some of the line of David, and Christ's. kindred did yet remain, two grand-children of St. Jude, the brother of our Lord, were brought before him, who having confessed they were of the family and race of David, he enquired what estate and possessions they had, who told him, 'They had only a few acres of land, out of the improvement whereof they paid him tribute, and maintained themselves with their own hard labour, as by the hardness of their hands did appear, which then they shewed him.' He then enquired of them concerning Christ, and what kind of a kingdom it was his followers talked of, and when it would appear? They replied, 'That Christ's kingdom was not of this world, on or did- it consist in the grandeur and dominions thereof; but that his was an heavenly and angelical kingdom, and would finally take place at the end of the world; when, coming in great glory, our Lord would judge the quick and the dead, and reward every one according to their work.' The emperor judging by their simplicity and meanness, that no danger could accrue to him, dismissed them without any severity; however, they were accounted christian martyrs and preferred to great employments in the reign of the emperor Trajan.

Sa Jude left only one epittle of catholic and universal concern, inscribed at large to all christians; it was sometime before it met with a general reception in the church, but was afterwards added to the scripture canon; the author indeed stiles not himself an apostle, no more doth St. James nor St. John, nor sometimes St. Paul himself; why should he fare the worse for calling himself. The servant of Jesus Christ? When he might have added, not only an apossle but the brother of our Lord. The design of his epistle is to preserve the phristians from being infected with the loose and debauched principles vented by Simon Magus and his followers, whose wretched doctrines and practices he briefly and elegantly represents, who ought to be avoided as pernicious seducers, lest they should perish with them in that terrible vengeance which was ready to overtake .pcmThe LIFE of ST. SIMON the Apostle, called the Zealot, who was crucified in Persia.

His festival is observed with that of St. Jude, Oct. 28.

CT. SIMON the apostle was, as some think, one of I the four brothers of our Lord, fons of Joseph, by a former marriage; in the catalogue of the apostles he is talled Simon the Canaanite, as also Simon Zelotes, or the Zealot; probably from his active warm temper, and zealous forwardness in some particular way or profession of religion, before his coming to our Saviour; for the better understanding this, we must know, that there was a distinct fect among the Jews, called the fect of the Zealots; they were earnest assegters of the honour of the law, and the strictness and purity of religion; infomuch that they took upon themselves to question notorious offenders, without staying for the ordinary formalities of the law, yea when the case required, executing capital vengeance upon them; till at length their zeal degenerating into all manner of licentiousness and extravagance, they not only became the pests of government at home, but opened a door for the Romans to break in upon them, to their final and irrecoverable ruin.

They were continually prompting the people to throw off the Roman yoke, and recover their native liberty, and thereby bringing all things into disorder and confusion, made advantage to themselves of those commotions; Josephus the Jewish historian, complains grievously of them, and gives a large account of their sedicious practices, and every where bewails their villanies, as being the greatest plague to their nation. Nay, when Jerusalem was closely besieved by the Romans, ceased not to create tumults and factions within the city, and were indeed the main cause of the Jews ill specess in that fatal war. It is probable that all who went under the sation of this sect, were of this ungodly and wretched temper, but that some of them

were of a more sober and peaceable disposition; and as it is not to be doubted, but that our Simon was one of the fest in general, so there is reason to believe he was of the better fort, however, this makes no more a reflection upon his being called to the apostleship, than it did upon St. Matthew, who was before a publican, or St. Paul's being a pharifee, and fo zealoully perfecuting the church of God.

Being invested in the apostolical office, no farther mention is made in the history of the gospel, concerning what the apellies did, till their dispersion up and down the world, and he then doubtless applied himself to the performance of his office and charge. faid to have directed his travels toward Egypt; thence to Cyrene and Africa, and throughout Mauritania, and all Lybia, preaching the gospel in these remote and barbarous countries; nor could the coldness of the climate benumb his zeal, or hinder himself from thipping himself over to those northern parts of the world, yea, even to Britain itself, where he is said to have preached the gospel, and wrought many miracles; and afterwards in defiance of ali the troubles and difficulties which he underwent, suffered martyrdom for the faith of Christ, being crucined by the insidels in the eastern country, and buried with them.

Others indeed affirm, that after he had preached the gospel in Egypt, he weat into Mesopotamia, where he met with St. Jude the apostle, and accompanied him in his journey to Persia, where having gained a considerable harvest to the christian faith, they were both crowned with martyrdom; but it is the opinion of learned men, that this account hath no clear foundation in

antiquity to build upon.

## The LIFE of St. MATTHIAS, cube evafaid to have been first stance, and then becended.

His Memory is celebrated, February 24.

DARTICULAR remarks concerning St. Matthias are not to be expected from the history of the gospel, he not being an apostle of the suff election. He was one of our Lord's disciples, and probably one of the seventy that had attended him in the whole course of his public ministry, and after his decease was elected isto the apostleskip, upon this occasion: Judas licariot, who had been one of the twelve immediately called by Christ, to be one of the intimate disciples, equally empowered, and committioned with the rest to present and work miracles, and yet all this while was a man of vile and corrupt deligns, branded with no meaner character than thief and murderer, profittuting religion. and the honour of his office to covetoulnels, and cril acts, which base temper betrayed him, as in the issue, to the most fatal end, so to the most desperate attempt; yea, to the most prodigious impiety that ever the fun stone upon, namely, the betraying of his innocent Lord and Maker, into the hands of his cruel enemies; but afterward awakened with the horror of the fact, his conscience assaulted him so severely, that not able to bear under the furious revenges of his own mind, he never rested till he had dispatched himself by a violen: death.

A vacancy being thus made, the first thing they did after their return from Mount Olivet, where our Lord took his leave of them to go to St. John's ficuse in Sion, was to fill up the number with a proper person, two were propounded in order to the choice, Joseph called Barsabas, and Matthias: The way of election was by lot, according to the usual custom of the Jews in doubtful cases; the lots being put in, Matthias's name was drawn out, and he thereby dignify'd with the apostolical

sposiolical office. Not long after the promised powers of the Holy Ghost were conferred upon the apostles to qualify them for that great and difficult employment, rpon which they were sent; and among the rest St. Matthias bestowed the first fruits of his ministry in the province of Judea, where having reaped a considerable harvest, he betook himself to other countries; one writes, that he preached the gospel in blacedonia, where the gentiles, to make an experiment of his faith and integrity, gave him a poissonus and intoxicating posson, which he cheerfully drank off in the name of Christ, without the least prejudice to himself; and the same poisson having deprived an hundred and sity of their sight, by his laying his hand upon them, recovered them again.

The Greeks with more probability, report him to have travelled enflward, some say to Ethiopia, the inhabitants where he came, were very wild and barbarous, and his assessments them was accordingly; for here meeting with a people of sierce and untractable humour, he was treated by them with great inhumanity; from whom after all his labours and sufferings, a numerous conversion of persons to christianity, he obtained at last the crown of martyrdom, in the fixty first year from

our Lord's rativity.

There is little certainty of the manner of his death; some writers of reputation report, that he died at a place called Sebastople, and that he was buried near the temple of the fun. Another relates, That he was seized by the Jews, and as a blasphemer, to have been first stoned, and then beheaded. But the Greeks and other antiquaries writes, Thanhe was crucified, and that his body was preserved a long time at Jerusalem, suppoied to have been translated by the devotion of Helena, mother to Conflantine the Great, to Rome; where some parts of it are pretended to be shewn with great veneration; though others with as much nerceness contend, that his relicks are brought to, and are still preferved in Trires in Germany. His memory is celebrated in the western churches, Ich. 24. Among many other apocrypha!

apocryphal writings attributed to the apostles, there was a gespel published under the name of St. Matthias, mentioned by Esebius, and condemned with the rest, by Golusius bishop of Rome, as it had been rejected by others before him. Under his name also, there was extant, traditions cited by Clemens of Alexandria, from whence doubtless the Nicolaitans published many vile and scandalous doctrines, and the Marcionites and Valentinians under the pretended patronage of his name, defended some of the most absurd and impious epinions.

The LIFE of Sr. BARNABAS, the Apople of the Gentiles, who was stanced by the Jews at Salamais.

His Festival is observed, June 11.

Barnabas, which fignifies, The fen of coalable tion,' given him by the apostles, because he had fingular gift and art in comforting the weak, the centre represented in the holy writ, as a person of a conpallionate, mild and eaty temper, very ready to forgive injuries, yet of a majeitic and awful carriage, commanding respect and reverence; he was a lew of the tribe of Levi, and is reckoned to be the principal of the seventy disciples. After our Lord's ascention, perceiv ing that the necessities of the churches required relief, the fold an enate which he had by the ide of Cypros, and brought the whole price to be distributed by the apostles, to those that were most indigent, and in mant; this practice was followed by several other christians at that time, none of them thinking it just or reasonable for themselves to live in pierry while their brethren were reduced to firsits for want of the conveniences ca this life, and therefore had all things in common wherein the charity of Barnabas was very remarkable. his cleate being much larger than any of the rest, who gave the first example of charity and be mey to the church...

After the sale of his estate, he made his residence in Jerusalem, whither Paul coming three years after his conversion, the aposties denied them admittance into their society, who had been such a surious persecutor of the christians, and made his name terrible among them. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them, how he had seen the Lord on the way, and how he had spoken to him, and that he had preached boldly at Damaseus, in the name of Jesus; whereupon he was received into their sollowship, and he was with them, coming in and going out at Jerusalem, asserting to the Jews, that Jesus was the true-Vessiah, by which he so enraged the Jews called Helemist, that they conspired to take away his life.

Some years after, some christian Jews sled from the persecution that was raised at Jerusalem, about St. Stephen: Now when they were in the church of Antioch, as they ministred to the Lord, the Holy Ghoft fald, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereto I have called them;' fo when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they fent them away. Barnabas coming to Antioch, to fet things in order, upon his arrival, beheld with great joy, the great progress of the gospel among them, and exhorting them to continue stedfast in the truth and doctrines of christianity, confirmed many therein; he afterward sent for Paul to Antioch, to affist him in the ropagation of the gospel; and he with Paul carried the contributions of the christians of Antioch to scrusalem: At length upon some difference about circumcifion, they were separated, Barnabas sailing to Cyprus, and Paul to Syria and Cilicia, but they were afterward fully reconciled, retaining their christian charity and love one to another, and to the fouls of their brethren, and then parted by diffant regions from each other.

Some of the ancients write, That he continued till his death in Cyprus, but preached the gespel in other places, and was sent by him to Corinth, along with Titus. He was a prophet and a teacher, of whom the coancil of the apostles gave this charafter, that he was

a man who had hazarded his life for the Lord Jesus, and had entirely given up himself to the labour of preaching the gospel. There is an epittle that goes under his name; which, if he was the author of, he must have lived till after the destruction of Jerusalem, which was seventy years after the birth of our Saviour; and is recorded to have suffered martyrdom, being stoned to death by the Jews at Salamis, and to have been buried within a surious of that city; there is likewise a gospel attributed to him, as well as to St. Matthias; and another of the acts of Barnabas, pretended to be written by John Mark, his cousin, who went with him into Cyprus, both of them seem to be the inventions of some persons in latter ages, being filled with sables and impertinences.

The LIFE of St. PAUL, who was beheaded at Rome, by Nero, the Roman tyrant.

His Feaft is celebrated, January 25.

ST. PAUL was born at Tarfus, the Metropelis of Cilicia, a city very rich, with an academy and schools for polite learning and Philosophy; his parents were Jews, of the tribe of Benjamin, the youngest son of the old patriarch, Jacob, who thus prophesied of him, Benjamin shall raven as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prev, and at night he shall divide the spoil; this prophetical character Tertulian and others after him will have to be accomplished in our apostle; as the ravenous wolf in the morning, devouring the part of his life, destroying the slock of God; and in the evening dividing the spoil; that is, in his declined and reduced age, a doctor of the nation, seeding and distributing to Christ's sheep.

In his youth he was educated at Tarfus being fully instructed in the schools, in all liberal art and science whereby he became acquainted with all fore. a learning;

and the Jews having a maxim, 'That he who learns not his fon a trade, teacheth him to be a thief, he was bred a tent-maker, and therefore in the writings of the Rabbies, they were generally nominated by their callings, as Rabbi Joses the tanner, Rabbi Jocha-an the " shoe-maker, Rabbi Juda the baker;' they daily working at their trades, to maintain themselves with their own hands: Having laid foundations of human learning at Tarsus, he was sent by his parents to Jerusaiem, to be perfected in the study of the law, under the tutclage of Rabbi Gamaliel, the fon of that Simeon, who it is thought came into the temple and took Christ into his arms. Gamaliel was prefident of the court of the Sanhedrim, and doctor of the civil law, who made that wife and excellent speech, in behalf of the apostles and their doctrine; nay, he is said to be a christian, and his fitting in that great council is connived at by the apostles, that he might the better favour their affairs. the various fects of the Jewish church, he was especially educated in the principles and institutions of the pharifees, who were excessively proud and insolent, censuring whofoever was not of their way, as reprobates; counting none pious but themselves, and that all others were sons of the earth: Probably Paul might be of a better principle than some others, however, he could not endure contradiction nor novelty in religion, and therefore when the Jews put St. Stephen to death, he stood by, and kept the clothes of his executioners, and thereby loudly proclaimed his consent to his martyrdom.

The storm thus began, a violent persecution of the christians began at Jerusalem, wherein our apostle was a prime agent, being employed by the high priest, to hunt and find out these new heretics, who preached against the law of Moses; getting a warrant from the Sanhedrim, to go and disturb the synagogues at Damaseus, whither many of the poor distressed christians were sed. But God designing him for work of another nature, stopt him in his journey, as we read at large in the asset of the apostles, as likewise of his travels in

Paleftine

Palestine and adjacent countries, and his dangerous

voyage to Rome.

When he came to Rome, he acquainted the Jewish consistory, That though he had been guilty of no crime, yet he was desired into the hands of the Roman governours, only for his constantly afferting the refurrection of the dead, which was the hope of every true Israelite. They replied, 'That they had received no advice concerning his religion which was every where decryed both by the Jews and gentiles.' At a day appointed he discoursed to them from morning to night, concerning the dostrine of the holy Jesus, yet some perfishing in their insidelity, he told them plainly, 'That henceforth he would turn his preaching to the gentiles, who would be glad to accept what they had scornfully 'rejected.'

He was called by two names, one Hebrew, the other Latin, probably referring both to his Jewish and Reman capacity and relation; Saul was a name common in the tribe of Benjamin ever since the first king of Israel, who was chosen out of that tribe, in memory whereof they so named their children at their circumcision. His other was Paul, assumed by him, as some think at his conversion, to denote his humility; and others, that it was in memory of his converting Sergius Paulus, he Roman governour to the christian faith.

After this he was brought to his first hearing before the Roman emperor, where those friends which he expected should stand by him plainly deserting him, but God stood by him and encouraged him. Two years he preached at Rome, in his own hired house, converting some of all ranks and qualities, yea, several belonging to the court itself; here he met with Peter, and they were both together thrown into prison, upon the persecution raised against the christians, under pretence they had fired the city, though it was done by Nero's special command. Some of the ancients make him engaged with Peter in procuring the fall of that miserable wretch Simon Magus, which stirred up the emperor's implacable rage and sury against him. Another writes, that having converted

converted one of Nero's concubines, of whom he was extremely fond, and reduced her to a life of much drichness and chaftity, so that she absolutely refused to comply with the emperor's wanton and impute embraces; he thereupon treated the apostle outrageously, calling him impostor, and a perverte: of his subjects; giving orders that he should be sent to prison; but understanding that he still continued to persuade the lady; who vibted him, to continue in her christian and pious resolution, he commanded him to be put to death. 2 Roman citizen, he was exempted from sourging, as malefactors used to be before their execution; to which when he was led, he is faid to have converted three of the foldiers who guarded him, and within a few days after, by the emperor's command, became martyrs for the Being come to the place, about three miles from Rome, he cheerfully gave his neck to the fatal stroke; erucifying being too infamous a death for any but the worst of slaves; beheading being counted a more noble kind of death amongst most nations.

Tradition reported, (which many of the fathers verify) that when he was beheaded, a liquor more like milk than blood issued from his veins, and spouted upon the clothes of the executioner, which St. Chrysostom saith became the means of his conversion, with many others to the faith: He adds that the apostle suffered martyrdom in the fixty eighth year of his age, and Constantine built a stately church to his memory, where his remains were

buried about two hundred years after.