

AN

E X P O S I T I O N,

WITH

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS,

OF THE FIRST BOOK OF

C H R O N I C L E S.

I. In common things, repetition is thought needless and nauseous; but in sacred things, *precept must be upon precept, and line upon line.* To me, says the apostle, *to write the same things is not grievous, but for you it is safe,* Phil. 3. 1. These books of Chronicles are, in a great measure, repetition; so are much of the second and third of the four evangelists: and yet no tautologies, either here or there, no *vain repetitions.* We may be ready to think that of all the books of holy scripture, we could best spare these two books of Chronicles. Perhaps we might, and yet we could very ill spare them; for there are many most excellent useful things in them, which we find not elsewhere. And as for what we find here which we have already met with, 1. It might be of great use to those who lived when these books were first published, before the canon of the Old Testament was completed, and the particles of it put together; for it would remind them of what was more fully related in the other books. Abstracts, abridgments, and references, are of use in divinity as well as law. That, perhaps, may not be said in vain, which yet has been said before. 2. It is still of use, that *out of the mouth of two witnesses, every word may be established,* and that, being inculcated, it may be remembered. The penman of these books is supposed to be Ezra, that *ready scribe in the law of the Lord,* Ezra 7. 6. It is a groundless story of that apocryphal writer, 2 Esdr. 14. 21, &c. that, all the law being burnt, Ezra was divinely inspired to write it all over again, which yet might take rise from the books of Chronicles, where we find, though not all the same story repeated, yet the names of all those who were the subjects of that story. These books are called in the Hebrew *words of days;* journals, or annals, because, by divine direction, collected out of some public and authentic records. The collection was made after the captivity, and yet the language of the originals, written before, is sometimes retained, as 2 Chron. 5. 9. *There it is unto this day,* which must have been written before the destruction of the temple. The Septuagint calls it a book *Παραλειπομένων,* of *things left,* or overlooked, by the preceding historians; and several such things there are in it. It is the rearward, the gathering host, of this sacred camp, which gathers up what remained, that nothing might be lost. In this first book, we have,

I. A collection of sacred genealogies, from Adam to David: and they are none of those which the apostle calls *endless genealogies,* but we have their use and end in Christ, *ch.* 1. 9. Divers little passages of history are here inserted, which we have not before.

II. A repetition of the history of the translation of the kingdom from Saul to David, and of the triumph of David's reign, with large additions, *ch.* 10. 21.

III. An original account of the settlement David made of the ecclesiastical affairs, and the preparation he made for the building of the temple, *ch.* 22. 29. These are *words of days,* of the oldest days, of the best days, of the Old Testament-church. The reigns of kings, and dates of kingdoms, as well as the lives of common persons, are reckoned by *days;* for a little time often gives a great turn, and yet all time is nothing to eternity.

CHAP. I.

This chapter, and many that follow it, repeat the genealogies we have hitherto met with in the sacred history, and put them all together, with considerable additions. We may be tempted, it may be, to think it had been well if they had not been written, because, when they come to be compared with other parallel places, there are differences to be found, which we can scarcely accommodate to our satisfaction; yet we must not therefore stumble at the word, but bless God that the things necessary to salvation are plain enough. And since the wise God has thought fit to write these things to us, we should not pass them over unread. All scripture is profitable, though not all *alike* profitable; and we may take occasion for good thoughts and meditations even from those parts of scripture that do not abound as much as other parts do, with profitable remarks. These genealogies, 1. Were then of great use, when they were here preserved, and put into the hands of the Jews after their return from Babylon; for the captivity, like the deluge, had put all into confusion, and they, in that dispersion and despair would be in danger of losing the distinctions of their tribes and families. This therefore revives the ancient land-marks even of some of the tribes that were carried captive into Assyria. Perhaps it might invite the Jews to study the sacred writings which had been neglected, to find the names of their ancestors, and the rise of their families in them. 2. They are still of some use for the illustrating of the scripture-story, and especially for the clearing of the pedigrees of the Messiah, that it might appear that our blessed Saviour was, according to the prophecies which went before of him, the son of David, the son of Judah, the son of Abraham, the son of Adam. And now that *he* is come for whose sake these registers were preserved, the Jews since have so lost all their genealogies, that even that of the priests, the most sacred of all, is forgotten, and they know not of any one man in the world, that can prove himself of the house of Aaron. When the building is reared, the scaffolds are removed. When the promised Seed is come, the line that was to lead to him, is broken off.

In this chapter, we have an abstract of all the genealogies in the book of Genesis, till we come to Jacob. I. The descents from Adam to Noah and his sons, out of Gen. 5. v. 1..4. II. The posterity of Noah's sons, by which the earth was repopled, out of Gen. 10. v. 5..23. III. The descents from Shem to Abraham, out of Gen. 11. v. 24..28. IV. The posterity of Ishmael and of Abraham's sons by Keturah, out of Gen. 25. v. 29..35. V. The posterity of Esau, out of Gen. 36. v. 36..54. These, it is likely, were passed over lightly in Genesis; and therefore, according to the law of the school, we are made to go that lesson over again, which we did not learn well.

1. **A**DAM, Sheth, Enosh, 2. Kenan, 3. Mahalaleel, Jered, 3. Henoch, Methuselah, Lamech, 4. Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, 5. The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras. 6. And the sons of Gomer; Ashchenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah. 7. And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. 8. The sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. 9. And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Raamah, and Sabtechah. And the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan. 10. And Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be mighty upon the earth. 11. And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, 12. And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (of whom came the Philistines,) and Caphthorim. 13. And Canaan begat Zidon his first-born, and Heth, 14. The Jebusite also, and the

Amorite, and the Girgashite, 15. And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, 16. And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. 17. The sons of Shem, Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram, and Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Meshech. 18. And Arphaxad begat Shelah, and Shelah begat Eber. 19. And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of the one *was* Peleg, (because in his days the earth was divided,) and his brother's name *was* Joktan. 20. And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah, 21. Hodoram also, and Uzal, and Diklah, 22. And Ebal, and Abimael, and Sheba, 23. And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab. All these *were* the sons of Joktan. 24. Shem, Arphaxad, Shelah, 25. Eber, Peleg, Reu, 26. Serug, Nahor, Terah, 27. Abram, the same is Abraham

This paragraph has *Adam* for its first word, and *Abraham* for its last. Between the creation of the former, and the birth of the latter, were 2,000 years; almost the one half of which time Adam himself lived. Adam was the common father of our flesh, Abraham the common father of the faithful. By the breach which the former made of the covenant of innocence, we were made miserable; by the covenant of grace made with the latter, we are all, or may be, made happy. We are all, by nature, the seed of Adam, branches of that wild olive. Let us see to it, that, by faith, we become the seed of Abraham, (Rom. 4. 11, 12.) that we be planted into the good olive, and partake of its root and fatness.

I. The four first verses of this paragraph, and the four last, which are linked together by Shem, v. 4. 24. contain the sacred line of Christ from Adam to Abraham, and are inserted in his pedigree; the order, Luke 3. 34..38. *ascends*, here it *descends*. This genealogy proves the falsehood of that reproach, *As for this man, we know not whence he is*. Bishop Patrick well observes here, that a genealogy being to be drawn of the families of the Jews, this appears as the peculiar glory of the Jewish nation, that they alone were able to derive their pedigree from the first man that God created, which no other nation pretended to, but abused themselves and their posterity with fabulous accounts of their originals; the Arcadians fancying that they were before the moon: the people of Thessaly that they sprang from stones; the Athenians that they grew out of the earth; much like the vain imaginations which some of the philosophers had of the origin of the universe. The account which the holy scripture gives both of the creation of the world and the rise of nations, carries with it as clear evidences of its own truth, as those idle traditions do of their own vanity and falsehoods.

II. All the verses between, repeat the account of the replenishing of the earth by the sons of Noah after the flood. 1. He begins with those who were strangers to the church, the sons of Japheth, who were planted in the isles of the Gentiles, those western parts of the world, the countries of Europe. Of these he gives a short account, v. 5..7. because with these the Jews had hitherto had little or no dealings. 2. He proceeds to those, many of whom had been enemies to the church, the sons of Ham, who moved southwards towards Africa, and

those parts of Asia which lay that way. Nimrod son of Cush began to be an oppressor, probably, to the people of God in his time. But Mizraim, from whom came the Egyptians, and Canaan, from whom came the Canaanites, are both of them names of great note in the Jewish story; for with their descendants, the Israel of God had severe struggles to get out of the land of Egypt, and into the land of Canaan, and therefore the branches of Mizraim are particularly recorded, *v.* 11, 12. and of Canaan, *v.* 13-16. See at what a rate God valued Israel, when he gave *Egypt for their ransom*, Isa. 43. 3. and cast out all these nations before them, Ps. 80. 8. 3. He then gives an account of those that were the ancestors and allies of the church, the posterity of Shem, *v.* 17-23. These peopled Asia, and spread themselves eastward; the Assyrians, Syrians, Chaldeans, Persians, and Arabians, descended from these. At first, the originals of the respective nations, were known; but, at this day, we have reason to think the nations are all so mingled with one another, by the enlargement of commerce and dominion, the transplanting of colonies, the carrying away of captives, and many such occasions, that no one nation, no nor the greatest part of any is descended entire from any of these fountains. Only this we are sure of, that God has *created of one blood all nations of men*; they are all descended from one Adam, one Noah, *Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us?* Mal. 2. 10. Our register hastens to the line of Abraham, breaking off abruptly from all the other families of the sons of Noah, but that of Arphaxad, from whom Christ was to come. The great promise of the Messiah (says Bishop Patrick) was translated from Adam to Seth, from him to Shem, from him to Eber, and so to the Hebrew nation, who were intrusted, above all nations, with that sacred treasure, till the promise was performed, and the Messiah was come, and then that nation was made *not a people*.

28. The sons of Abraham; Isaac, and Ishmael. 29. These are their generations: The first-born of Ishmael, Nebaioth; then Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, 30. Mishma, and Dumah, Massa, Hadad, and Tema, 31. Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael. 32. Now the sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bare Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And the sons of Jokshan; Sheba, and Dedan. 33. And the sons of Midian: Ephah, and Ephraim, and Henoah, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these are the sons of Keturah. 34. And Abraham begat Isaac. The sons of Isaac; Esau, and Israel. 35. The sons of Esau; Eliphaz, Reuel, and Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah. 36. The sons of Eliphaz; Teman, and Omar, Zephi, and Gatam, Kenaz, and Timna, and Amalek. 37. The sons of Reuel; Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. 38. And the sons of Seir; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, and Dishon, and Ezar, and Dishan. 39. And the sons of Lotan; Hori, and Homam: and Timna was Lotan's sister. 40. The sons of Shobal; Alian, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shephi, and Onam. And the

sons of Zibeon; Aiah, and Anah. 41. The sons of Anah; Dishon. And the sons of Dishon; Amram, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran. 42. The sons of Ezer; Bilhan, and Zavan, and Jakan. The sons of Dishan; Uz, and Aran. 43. Now these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before any king reigned over the children of Israel; Bela the son of Beor: and the name of his city was Dinhabah. 44. And when Bela was dead, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead. 45. And when Jobab was dead, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead. 46. And when Husham was dead, Hadad the son of Bedad, (which smote Midian in the field of Moab,) reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith. 47. And when Hadad was dead, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead. 48. And when Samlah was dead, Shaul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead. 49. And when Shaul was dead, Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead. 50. And when Baal-hanan was dead, Hadad reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Pai; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab. 51. Hadad died also. And the dukes of Edom were; duke Timnah, duke Aliah, duke Jetheth, 52. Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon, 53. Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar, 54. Duke Magdiel, duke Iram. These are the dukes of Edom.

All nations, but the seed of Abraham, are already shaken off from this genealogy, they have no part or lot in this matter. *The Lord's portion is his people*, them he keeps account of, and knows by name; but those who are strangers to him, he beholds afar off. Not that we are to conclude that therefore no particular persons of any other nation, but the seed of Abraham, found favour with God. It was a truth before Peter perceived it, *that in every nation he that feared God, and wrought righteousness, was accepted of him*. Multitudes will be brought to heaven out of all nations, (Rev. 7. 9.) and we are willing to hope there were many, very many, good people in the world, that lay out of the pale of God's covenant of peculiarity with Abraham, whose names were in the book of life, though not descended from any of the following families written in this book. *The Lord knows them that are his*. But Israel was a chosen nation, elect in type; and no other nation, in its national capacity, was so dignified and privileged as the Jewish nation was. That is the holy nation, which is the subject of the sacred story; and therefore we are next to shake off all the seed of Abraham, but the posterity of Jacob only, which were all incorporated into one nation, and joined to the Lord, while the other descendants from Abraham, for aught that appears, were estranged both from God, and from one another.

I. We shall have little to say to the *Ishmaelites*, they were the sons of the bond-woman, that were to

be cast out, and not to be heirs with the child of the promise; and their case was to represent that of the unbelieving Jews, who were rejected, (Gal. 4. 22, &c.) and therefore there is little notice taken of that nation. Ishmael's 12 sons are just named here, (v. 29. 31.) to show the performance of the promise God made to Abraham, in answer to his prayer for him, that, for Abraham's sake, he should become a great nation, and particularly that he should beget 12 princes, Gen. 17. 20.

II. We shall have little to say to the *Midianites*, who descended from Abraham's children by Keturah; they were *children of the east*, (probably Job was one of them,) and were dismissed from Isaac, the heir of the promise, Gen. 25. 6. and therefore they are only named here, v. 32. The sons of Jokshan, the son of Keturah, are named also, and the sons of Midian, v. 32, 33. who became most eminent, and perhaps gave denomination to all these families, as Judah to the Jews.

III. We shall not have much to say to the *Edomites*; they had an inveterate enmity to God's Israel; yet, because they descended from Esau the son of Isaac, we have here an account of their families, and the names of some of their famous men, v. 35. to the end. Some slight differences there are between some of the names here, and as we had them, Gen. 36. whence this whole account is taken. Three or four names that were written with a *Vau* there, are written with a *Jod* here; probably, the pronunciation being altered, as is usual in other languages. We now write many words very differently from what they were written but 200 years ago.

Let us take occasion, from the reading of these genealogies, to think, 1. Of the multitudes that have gone through this world, have acted their part in it, and then quitted it. Job, even in his early day, saw not only *every man drawing after him*, but *innumerable before him*, Job 21. 33. All these, and all their's, had their day, many of them made a mighty noise and figure in the world; but their day came to fall, and their place knew them no more. The paths of death are trodden paths, but *Vestigia nulla retrorsum*—None can retrace their steps. 2. Of the providence of God, which keeps up the generations of men, and so preserves that degenerate race, though guilty, and obnoxious, in being upon earth. How easily could he cut it off without either a deluge or a conflagration! Write but all the children of men childless, as some are, and, in a few years, the earth will be eased of its burthen under which it groans; but the divine patience lets the trees that cumber the ground, not only grow, but *prophagate*. As one generation, even of sinful men, passes away, another comes, (Eccl. 1. 4. Numb. 32. 14.) and will do so while the earth remains. *Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it.*

CHAP. II.

We are now come to what was principally intended, the register of the children of Israel, that distinguished people, that were to dwell alone, and not be reckoned among the nations. Here is, I. The names of the twelve sons of Israel, v. 1, 2. And then, II. An account of the tribe of Judah, which has the precedence, not so much for the sake of David, as for the sake of the Son of David, our Lord, who sprang out of Judah, Heb. 7. 14. 1. The first descendants from Judah, down to Jesse, v. 3. 12. 2. The children of Jesse, v. 13. 17. 3. The posterity of Hezron, not only through Ram, from whom David came, but through Caleb, v. 18. 20. Segub, v. 21. 24. Jerahmeel, v. 25. 33. and so to v. 41. and more by Caleb, v. 42. 49. with the family of Caleb the son of Hur, v. 50. 55. The best exposition we can give of this and the following chapters, and which will give the clearest view of them, is, those genealogical tables which were published with some of the first impressions of the last English Bible about a hundred years ago, and continued for some time; and it is pity but they were revived in some of

our later editions; for they are of great use to those who diligently search the scriptures. They are said to be drawn up by that great master in scripture learning, Mr. Hugh Broughton. We meet with them sometimes in old Bibles.

1. **THESE** are the sons of Israel; Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, 2. Dan, Joseph, and Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. 3. The sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah; which three were born unto him of the daughter of Shua the Canaanitess. And Er, the first-born of Judah, was evil in the sight of the LORD; and he slew him. 4. And Tamar his daughter-in-law bare him Pharez and Zerah. All the sons of Judah were five. 5. The sons of Pharez; Hezron, and Hamul. 6. And the sons of Zerah; Zimri, and Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Dara: five of them in all. 7. And the sons of Carmi; Achar the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the thing accursed. 8. And the sons of Ethan; Azariah. 9. The sons also of Hezron, that were born unto him; Jerahmeel, and Ram, and Chelubai. 10. And Ram begat Amminadab; and Amminadab begat Nahshon, prince of the children of Judah; 11. And Nahshon begat Salma, and Salma begat Boaz, 12. And Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse. 13. And Jesse begat his first-born Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and Shimma the third, 14. Nethaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, 15. Ozem the sixth, David the seventh: 16. Whose sisters were Zeruiah, and Abigail. And the sons of Zeruiah; Abishai, and Joab, and Asahel, three. 17. And Abigail bare Amasa: and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ish-meelite.

Here is,

I. The family of Jacob. His twelve sons are here named, that illustrious number so often celebrated almost throughout the whole Bible, from the first to the last book of it. At every turn, we meet with the twelve tribes that descended from these twelve patriarchs. The personal character of several of them was none of the best, (the four first were much blemished) and yet the covenant was entailed on their seed: for it was of grace, free grace, that it was said, *Jacob have I loved: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

2. The family of Judah. That tribe was most praised, most increased, and most dignified, of any of the tribes, and therefore the genealogy of it is the first and largest of them all. In the account here given of the first branches of that illustrious tree, which Christ was to be the top-branch of, we meet, (1.) With some that were very bad. Here is Er, Judah's eldest son, that was evil in the sight of the Lord, and was cut off in the beginning of his days, by a stroke of divine vengeance; the Lord slew him, v. 3. His next brother, Onan, was no better; and fared no better. Here is Tamar, with whom Judah, her father-in-law, committed incest, v. 4. And here is Achan, called Achar, a troubler, that troubled Israel by taking of the accursed thing,

v. * Note, The best and most honourable families may have those belonging to them, that have their *hierarchies*. (2.) With some that were very *wise and good*, as Heman and Ethan, Calcol, and Darda, who were not, perhaps, the immediate sons of Zerah, but descendants from him, and are named because they were the glory of their father's house; for when the Holy Ghost would magnify the wisdom of Solomon, he declares him wiser than these four men, who, though the sons of Mahol, are called *Ezrahites*, from *Zerah*, 1 Kings 4. 31. That four brothers should be eminent for wisdom and grace, was a rare thing. (3.) With some that were very *great*, as Nahshon, who was prince of the tribe of Judah, when the camp of Israel was formed in the wilderness, and so led the van in that glorious march; and Salma, or Salmon, who was in that post of honour when they entered Canaan, v. 10. 11.

3. The family of *Jesse*, of which a particular account is kept for the sake of David, and the Son of David, who is a *Rod out of the stem of Jesse*, Isa. 11. 1. Hence it appears that David was a seventh son, and that his three great commanders, Joab, Abishai, and Asahel, were the sons of one of his sisters, and Amasa of another. Three of the four went down slain to the pit, though they were the terror of the mighty.

18. And Caleb the son of Hezron begat *children* of Azubah *his* wife, and of Jerioth: her sons *are* these; Jeshur, and Shobab, and Ardon. 19. And when Azubah was dead, Caleb took unto him Ephrath, which bare him Hur. 20. And Hur begat Uri, and Uri begat Bezaleel. 21. And afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead, whom he married when he *was* threescore years old; and she bare him Segub. 22. And Segub begat Jair, who had three and twenty cities in the land of Gilead. 23. And he took Geshur, and Aram, with the towns of Jair, from them, with Kenath and the towns thereof, *even* threescore cities: all these *belonged to* the sons of Machir the father of Gilead. 24. And after that Hezron was dead in Caleb-eph-ratah, then Abiah, Hezron's wife, bare him Ashur the father of Tekoa. 25. And the sons of Jerahmeel, the first-born of Hezron, were Ram the first-born, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, *and* Ahijah. 26. Jerahmeel had also another wife, whose name *was* Atarah; she *was* the mother of Onam. 27. And the sons of Ram, the first-born of Jerahmeel, were Maaz, and Jamin, and Eker. 28. And the sons of Onam were, Shammai, and Jada. And the sons of Shammai; Nadab, and Abishur. 29. And the name of the wife of Abishur *was* Abihail, and she bare him Ahban, and Molid. 30. And the sons of Nadab; Seled, and Appaim: but Seled died without children. 31. And the sons of Appaim; Ishi. And the sons of Ishi; Sheshan. And the children of Sheshan; Ahlai. 32. And the sons of Jada, the brother of Shammai; Jether

and Jonathan: and Jether died without children. 33. And the sons of Jonathan; Peleth, and Zaza. These were the sons of Jerahmeel. 34. Now Sheshan had no sons, but daughters: and Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name *was* Jarha. 35. And Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant to wife, and she bare him Attai. 36. And Attai begat Nathan, and Nathan begat Zabad. 37. And Zabad begat Eph-lal, and Ephlal begat Obed. 38. And Obed begat Jehu, and Jehu begat Azariah. 39. And Azariah begat Helez, and Helez begat Eleasah. 40. And Eleasah begat Sisamai, and Sisamai begat Shallum. 41. And Shallum begat Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begat Elishama. 42. Now the sons of Caleb, the brother of Jerahmeel, *were* Mesha his first-born, which *was* the father of Ziph; and the sons of Mareshah, the father of Hebron. 43. And the sons of Hebron; Korah, and Tappuah, and Rekem, and Shema. 44. And Shema begat Raham the father of Jorkoam; and Rekem begat Shammai. 45. And the son of Shammai *was* Maon; and Maon *was* the father of Beth-zur. 46. And Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bare Haran, and Moza, and Gazez: and Haran begat Gazez. 47. And the sons of Jahdai; Regem, and Jotham, and Geshan, and Pelet, and Ephah, and Shaaph. 48. Maachah, Caleb's concubine, bare Sheber, and Tirhanah. 49. She bare also Shaaph the father of Madmannah, Sheva the father of Machbenah, and the father of Gibeaz: and the daughter of Caleb *was* Achsa. 50. These were the sons of Caleb, the son of Hur, the first-born of Ephratah; Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim. 51. Salma the father of Beth-lehem, Hareph the father of Beth-gader. 52. And Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim had sons; Haroeh, *and* half of the Manahethites. 53. And the families of Kirjath-jearim; the Ithrites, and the Puhites, and the Shumathites, and the Mishraites: of them came the Zareathites, and the Esh-aulites. 54. The sons of Salma; Beth-lehem, and the Netophathites, Ataroth, the house of Joab, and half of the Manahethites, the Zorites. 55. And the families of the scribes which dwelt at Jabez; the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, *and* Suchathites. These *are* the Kenites that came of Hemath, the father of the house of Rechab.

The persons mentioned in the first seventeen verses, are most of them such as we read of, and most of them such as we read much of, in other scriptures. But there are very few of those here, that are mentioned any where else. It should seem, the tribe of Judah were more full and exact in their genealogies than any other of the tribes; in

which we must acknowledge a special providence, for the clearing of the genealogies of Christ.

1. Here we find Bezaleel, who was head-workman in building of the tabernacle, Exod. 31. 2.

2. Hezron, who was the son of Pharez, v. 5. is the father of all this progeny; his sons, Caleb and Jeraheel, being very fruitful, and he himself likewise, even in his old age, for he left his wife pregnant, when he died, v. 23. This Hezron was one of the seventy that went down with Jacob into Egypt, Gen. 46. 12. there his family thus increased, as the other oppressed families there did. We cannot but suppose that he died during the Israelites' bondage in Egypt; and yet it is here said, he died in Caleb-ephraiah, that is, Beth-lehem in the land of Canaan, v. 24. Perhaps, though the body of the people continued in Egypt, yet some that were more active than the rest, at least, before their bondage came to be extreme, visited Canaan sometimes, and got footing there, though afterwards they lost it. The achievements of Jair, here mentioned, v. 22, 23. we had an account of, Numb. 32. 41. and, it is supposed, were long after the conquest of Canaan. The Jews say, Hezron married his third wife when he was sixty years old, v. 21. and another after, v. 24. because he had a great desire of posterity in the family of Pharez, from whom the Messiah was to descend. Here is mention of one that *died without children*, v. 30. and another, v. 32. and of one that *had no sons, but daughters*, v. 34. Let not those that are either of these ways afflicted, not think their case new or singular. Providence orders these affairs of families by an incontestable sovereignty, as pleaseth him, giving children, or withholding them, or giving all of one sex. He is not bound to please us, but we are bound to acquiesce in his good pleasure. To those that love him, he will himself be better than ten sons, and give them in his house a place and a name better than of sons and daughters. Let not them therefore that are written childless, envy the families that are built up and replenished. Shall our eye be evil, because God's is good? Here is mention of one who had an only daughter, and married her to his servant an Egyptian, v. 34, 35. If it be mentioned to his praise, we must suppose that this Egyptian was proselyted to the Jewish religion, and that he was very eminent for wisdom and virtue; else he had not become a true-born Israelite to match a daughter to him, especially an only daughter. If Egyptians become converts, and servants do worthily, neither their parentage, nor their servitude, should be a bar to their preferment. Such a one this Egyptian servant might be, that she who married him, might live as happy with him, as if she had married one of the rulers of her tribe. The pedigree of several of these terminate, not in a person, but in a place or country; as one is said to be the father of *Kirjath-jearim*, v. 50. another of *Beth-lehem*, v. 51. which was afterwards David's city; because these places fell to their lot in the division of the land.

Lastly, Here are some that are said to be *families of scribes*, v. 55. such as kept up learning in their family, especially scripture-learning, and taught the people the good knowledge of God. Among all these great families, we are glad to find some that were *families of scribes*. *Would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets!* All the families of Israel families of scribes, well instructed to the kingdom of heaven, and able to bring out of their treasury things new and old!

CHAP. III.

Of all the families of Israel, none was so illustrious as the family of David. That is the family which was mentioned in the chapter before, v. 15. Here we have a full

account of it. I. David's sons, v. 1.-9. II. His successors in the throne as long as the kingdom continued, v. 10.-16. III. The remains of his family in, and after, the captivity, v. 17.-24. From this family, *as concerning the flesh, Christ came*.

1. **N**OW these were the sons of David, which were born unto him in Hebron; the first-born, Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; the second, Daniel, of Abigail the Carmelitess: 2. The third, Absalom, the son of Maachah, the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; the fourth, Adonijah, the son of Haggith; 3. The fifth, Shephatiah, of Abital; the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah his wife. 4. *These* six were born unto him in Hebron; and there he reigned seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years. 5. And these were born unto him in Jerusalem; Shimea, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon, four, of Bath-shua the daughter of Ammiel: 6. Ibhar also, and Elishama, and Eliphelet, 7. And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia, 8. And Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphelet, nine. 9. *These were* all the sons of David, besides the sons of the concubines, and Tamar their sister.

We had an account of David's sons, 2 Sam. 3. 2, &c. and 5. 14, &c. 1. He had many sons; and, *no doubt*, wrote as he thought, Ps. 127. 5, *Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of these arrows*. 2. Some of them were a grief to him, as Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah. And we do not read of any of them, that imitated his piety and devotion, except Solomon, and he came far short of it. 3. One of them, which Bath-sheba bare to him, he called *Nathan*, probably, in honour of Nathan the prophet, who reproved him for his sin in that matter, and was instrumental to bring him to repentance. It seems, he loved him the better for it as long as he lived. It is wisdom to esteem those our best friends, that deal faithfully with us. From this son of David our Lord Jesus descended, as appears, Luke 3. 31. 4. Here are two Elishamas, and two Eliphelets, v. 6, 8. Probably, the two former were dead, and therefore David called two more by their names; which he would not have done, if there had been any ill omen in it, as some fancy. 5. David had many concubines; but their children are not named, as not worthy of the honour, v. 2. the rather, because the concubines had dealt treacherously with David in the affair of Absalom. 6. Of all David's sons, Solomon was chosen to succeed him; perhaps not for any personal merits, (his wisdom was God's gift,) but so, *Father, because it seemed good unto thee*.

10. And Solomon's son was Rehoboam; Abia his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son, 11. Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son, 12. Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son, 13. Ahaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son, 14. Ammon his son, Josiah his son. 15. And the sons of Josiah were, the first-born Jehonathan, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum. 16.

And the sons of Jehoiakim; Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son. 17. And the sons of Jeconiah; Assir, Salathiel his son, 18. Malchiram also, and Pedaijah, and Shenazar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah. 19. And the sons of Pedaijah were Zerubbabel, and Shimei: and the sons of Zerubbabel; Meshullam, and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister: 20. And Hashubah, and Ohel, and Berechiah, and Hasadiah, Jushab-besed, five. 21. And the sons of Hananiah; Pelatiah, and Jesaijah: the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Aman, the sons of Obadiah, the sons of Shechaniah. 22. And the sons of Shechaniah; Shemaiah: and the sons of Shemaiah; Hattush, and Igeal, and Bariah, and Neariah, and Shaphat, six. 23. And the sons of Neariah; Elioenai, and Hezekiah, and Azrikam, three. 24. And the sons of Elioenai were Hodaiah, and Eliashih, and Pelaiah, and Akkub, and Johanan, and Dalaiah, and Anani, seven.

David having 19 sons, we may suppose them to have raised many noble families in Israel, whom we never hear of in the history. But the scripture gives us an account only of the descendants of Solomon here, and of Nathan, Luke 3. The rest had the honour to be the sons of David; but these only had the honour to be related to the Messiah. The sons of Nathan were his fathers, as man; the sons of Solomon his predecessors, as king. We have here,

1. The great and celebrated names by which the line of David is drawn down to the captivity; the kings of Judah in a lineal succession; the history of whom we have had at large in the two books of Kings, and shall meet with again in the second book of Chronicles. Seldom has a crown gone in a direct line from father to son for 17 descents together, as here. This was the recompense of David's piety. About the captivity, the lineal descent was interrupted, and the crown went from one brother to another, and from a nephew to an uncle; which was a presage of the eclipsing of the glory of that house.

2. The less famous, and most of them very obscure, names, in which the house of David subsisted after the captivity. The only famous man of that house, that we meet with at their return from captivity, was, Zerubbabel, elsewhere called the son of Salathiel, but appearing here to be his grandson, v. 17-19, which is usual in scripture. Belshazzar is called *Nebuchadnezzar's son*, but was his grandson. Salathiel is said to be the son of Jeconiah, because adopted by him, and because, as some think, he succeeded him in the dignity to which he was restored by Evil-merodach; otherwise Jeconiah was written childless: he was the *signet God plucked from his right hand*, Jer. 22. 24. and in his room Zerubbabel was placed: and therefore God saith to him, Hag. 2. 23, *I will make thee as a signet*. The posterity of Zerubbabel here bear not the same names that they do in the genealogies, Matt. 1. or Luke 3. but those, no doubt, were taken from the then herald's office, the public registers which the priests kept of all the families of Judah, especially that of David.

The last person named in this chapter, is, Anani;

of whom Bishop Patrick says that the Targum adds these words, *he is the king Messiah, who is to be revealed*; and some of the Jewish writers give this reason, because it is said, Dan 7. 13, The son of man came *gnim gnanani—with the clouds of heaven*. The reason indeed is very foreign and far-fetched; but that learned man thinks it may be made use of as an evidence that their minds were always full of the thoughts of the Messiah, and that they expected it would not be very long after the days of Zerubbabel, before the set time of his approach would come.

CHAP. IV.

In this chapter, we have, I. A further account of the genealogies of the tribe of Judah, the most numerous, and most famous, of all the tribes. The posterity of Shobal the son of Hur, v. 1-4. Of Ashur the posthumous son of Hezron, who was mentioned, ch. 2. 24. with something particular concerning Jabez, v. 5-10. Of Chelub, and others, v. 11-20. Of Shelah, v. 21-23. II. An account of the posterity and cities of Simeon, their conquest of Gedor, and of the Amalekites in mount Seir, v. 24-43.

1. **T**HE sons of Judah; Pharez, Hezron, and Carmi, and Hur, and Shobal. 2. And Reaiah the son of Shobal begat Jahath; and Jahath begat Ahumai and Lahad. These are the families of the Zorathites. 3. And these were of the father of Etam; Jezreel, and Ishma, and Idbash: and the name of their sister was Hazeleponi: 4. And Penuel the father of Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These are the sons of Hur, the first-born of Ephrathah, the father of Beth-lehem. 5. And Ashur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah. 6. And Naarah bare him Ahuzam, and Hephher, and Temeni, and Haahashtari. These were the sons of Naarah. 7. And the sons of Helah were, Zereth, and Jezoar, and Ethnan. 8. And Coz begat Anub, and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum. 9. And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. 10. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.

One reason, no doubt, why Ezra is here the most particular in the register of the tribe of Judah, is, because that tribe was it which, with its appendages, Simeon, Benjamin, and Levi, made up the kingdom of Judah; which not only long survived the other tribes in Canaan, but, in process of time, now, when this was written, returned out of captivity, when the generality of the other tribes were lost in the kingdom of Assyria.

The most remarkable person in this paragraph, is, Jabez. It is not said whose son he was; nor does it appear in what age he lived; but, it should seem, he was the founder of one of the families of Aharhel, mentioned v. 8.

Here is,

I. The reason of his name: his mother gave him the name with this reason, *Because I bare him with sorrow*, v. 9. All children are born with sorrow; for the sentence upon the woman is, *In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children*: but some with much more sorrow than others. Usually, the sorrow in bearing, is afterwards forgotten, *for joy that the child is born*; but here, it seems, it was so extraordinary, that it was remembered when the child came to be circumcised, and care taken to perpetuate the remembrance of it while he lived. Perhaps, the mother called him *Jabez*, as Rachel called her son *Benoni*, when she was dying of the sorrow. Or, if she recovered it, yet thus she recorded it, 1. That it might be a continual memorandum to herself, to be thankful to God as long as she lived, for supporting her under, and bringing her through, that sorrow. It may be of use to be often reminded of our sorrows, that we may always have such thoughts of things as we had in the day of our affliction, and may learn to rejoice with trembling. 2. That it might likewise be a memorandum to him, what this world is, into which she bare him, a vale of tears, in which he must expect *few days and full of trouble*. The sorrow he carried in his name, might help to put a seriousness upon his spirit. It might also remind him to love and honour his mother, and labour, in every thing, to be a comfort to her who brought him into the world with so much sorrow. It is pious in children thus to requite their parents. 1 Tim. 5. 4.

II. The eminency of his character: *he was more honourable than his brethren*, qualified above them by the divine grace, and dignified above them by the divine providence: they did virtuously, but he excelled them all. Now the sorrow with which his mother bare him, was abundantly recompensed. That son which of all the rest cost her most dear, she was happy in, and was made glad in proportion to the affliction, Ps. 90. 15. We are not told upon what account he was *more honourable than his brethren*; whether because he raised a greater estate, or was preferred to the magistracy, or signalized himself in war; we have most reason to think it was upon the account of his learning and piety; not only because these, above any thing, put honour upon a man, but because we have reason to think that in these Jabez was eminent; 1. In learning; because we find that the *families of the scribes dwelt at Jabez*, ch. 2. 55. a city which, it is likely, took its name from this name. The Jews say that he was a famous doctor of the law, and left many disciples behind him. And it should seem by the mentioning of him so abruptly here, that his name was well known, when Ezra wrote this. 2. In piety; because we find here that he was a praying man. His inclination to devotion made him truly honourable; and by prayer he obtained those blessings from God, which added much to his honour. The way to be truly great, is to be truly good, and to pray much.

III. The prayer he made, probably, like Solomon's prayer for wisdom, just when he was setting out in the world: he set himself to acknowledge God in all his ways, put himself under the divine blessing and protection, and prospered accordingly. Perhaps, these were the heads on which he enlarged in his daily prayers; for this purpose, it was his constant practice to pray alone, and with his family, as Daniel. Some think that it was upon some particular occasion, when he was straitened and threatened by his enemies, that he prayed this prayer. Observe,

1. To whom he prayed. Not to any of the gods of the Gentiles: no, he *called on the God of Israel*,

the living and true God, who alone can hear and answer prayer; and, in prayer, had an eye to him as the God of Israel, a God in covenant with his people, the God with whom Jacob wrestled and prevailed, and was thence called *Israel*.

2. What was the nature of his prayer. (1.) As the *margin* reads it, it was a solemn vow, *If thou wilt bless me indeed, &c.* and then the sense is imperfect, but may easily be filled up from Jacob's vow, or some such like, *then thou shalt be my God*. He does not express his promise, but leaves it to be understood; either because he was afraid to promise in his own strength, or because he resolved to devote himself entirely to God. He does, as it were, give God a blank paper, let him write what he pleases: "Lord, if thou wilt bless me and keep me, do what thou wilt with me, I will be at thy command and disposal, for ever." (2.) As the *text* reads it, it was the language of a most ardent and affectionate desire, *O that thou wouldest bless me!*

3. What was the matter of his prayer. Four things he prayed for: (1.) That God would *bless him indeed*. "That blessing, thou wilt bless me; bless me greatly with manifold and abundant blessings." Perhaps, he had an eye to the promise of God made to Abraham, Gen. 22. 17, *In blessing, I will bless thee*. "Let that blessing of Abraham come upon me." Spiritual blessings are the best blessings; and those are blessed indeed, who are blessed with them. God's blessings are real things, and produce real effects. We can but *wish* a blessing, he *commands* it: those whom he blesses, are blessed indeed. (2.) That he would *enlarge his coast*; that he would prosper his endeavours for the increase of what fell to his lot, either by work or war. That God would enlarge our hearts, and so enlarge our portion in himself, and in the heavenly Canaan, ought to be our desire and prayer. (3.) That God's *hand might be with him*. The prayer of Moses for this tribe of Judah, was, that his own *hands might be sufficient for him*, Deut. 33. 7. but Jabez expects not that, unless he have *God's hand* with him, and the presence of his power. God's hand with us, to lead us, protect us, strengthen us, and to work all our works in us and for us, is indeed a hand sufficient for us, all-sufficient. (4.) That he would *keep him from evil*; the evil of sin, the evil of trouble, all the evil designs of his enemies, that they might not hurt, nor grieve him, nor make him a *Jabez* indeed, *a man of sorrow*. In the original there is an allusion to his name, *Father in heaven, deliver me from evil*.

4. What was the success of his prayer. *God granted him that which he requested*; prospered him remarkably, and gave him success in his undertakings, in his studies, in his worldly business, in his conflicts with the Canaanites; and so he became *more honourable than his brethren*. God was of old ready to hear prayer, and *his ear is not yet heavy*.

11. And Chelub the brother of Shuah begat Mehir, which *was* the father of Esh-ton. 12. And Eshton begat Beth-rapha, and Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of Imhash. These *are* the men of Rechah. 13. And the sons of Kenaz; Othniel, and Seraiah: and the sons of Othniel; Hathath. 14. And Meonothai begat Ophrah: and Seraiah begat Joab, the father of the valley of Charashim; for they were craftsmen. 15. And the sons of Caleb the son of Jephunneh; Iru, Elah, and Naam: and the sons of Elah, even Kenaz. 16. And the sons

of Jehaleleel; Ziph, and Ziphah, Tiria, and Asareel. 17. And the sons of Ezra *were* Jether and Mered, and Ephraim, and Jalon: and she bare Miriam, and Shammai, and Ishbah the father of Eshtemoa. 18. And his wife Jehudijah bare Jered the father of Gedor, and Heber the father of Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah. And these *are* the sons of Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh, which Mered took. 19. And the sons of *his* wife Hodiah the sister of Naham, the father of Keilah the Garmite, and Eshtemoa the Maachathite. 20. And the sons of Shimon *were*, Amnon, and Rinnah, Benhanan, and Tilon. And the sons of Ishi *were*, Zobeth, and Ben-zobeth. 21. The sons of Shelah the son of Judah *were*, Er the father of Lecah, and Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen, of the house of Ashbea. 22. And Jokim, and the men of Chozeba, and Joash, and Saraph, who had the dominion in Moab, and Jashubilehem. And *these are* ancient things. 23. These *were* the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges: there they dwelt with the king for his work.

We may observe in these verses,

1. That here is a whole family of craftsmen, handicraft-tradesmen, that applied themselves to all sorts of manufactures, in which they were ingenious and industrious above their neighbours, *v.* 14. There was a valley where they lived, which was, from them, called *The valley of craftsmen*. They that are craftsmen, are not therefore to be looked upon as mean men. These craftsmen, though two of a trade often disagree, yet chose to live together, for the improving of arts by comparing notes, and that they might support one another's reputation.

2. That one of these married Pharaoh's daughter, *v.* 18. that was the common name of the kings of Egypt. If an Israelite in Egypt, before the bondage began, while Joseph's merits were yet fresh in mind, was preferred to be the king's son-in-law, it is not to be thought strange: few Israelites could, like Moses, refuse an alliance with the court.

3. That another is said to be the *father of the house of them that wrought fine linen*, *v.* 21. It is inserted in their genealogy as their honour, that they were the best weavers in the kingdom, and they brought up their children, from one generation to another, to the same business, not aiming to make them gentlemen. This Laadah is said to be the *father of them that wrought fine linen*; as, before the flood, Jubal is said to be the *father of musicians*, and Jabal of *shepherds*, &c. His posterity inhabited the city of Mareshah, the manufacture or staple-commodity of which place, was, linen-cloth, with which their kings and priests were clothed.

4. That another family had had *dominion in Moab*, but were now in *servitude in Babylon*, *v.* 22, 23. (1.) It was found among the *ancient things*, that they had the *dominion in Moab*; probably, in David's time, when that country was conquered, they transplanted themselves thither, and were put in places of power there, which they held for several generations; but this was a great while ago,

time out of mind. (2.) Their posterity were now potters and gardeners, as is supposed, in Babylon, where they *dwelt with the king for his work*; got a good livelihood by their industry, and therefore cared not for returning with their brethren to their own land, after the years of captivity were expired. They that now have dominion, know not what their posterity may be reduced to, nor what mean employments they may be glad to take up with. But they were unworthy the name of *Israelites*, that would dwell among *plants and hedges*, rather than be at the pains to return to Canaan.

24. The sons of Simeon *were*, Nemuel, and Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, and Shaul: 25. Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma his son. 26. And the sons of Mishma; Hamuel his son, Zacchur his son, Shimei his son. 27. And Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters; but his brethren had not many children, neither did all their family multiply, like to the children of Judah. 28. And they dwelt at Beer-sheba, and Moladah, and Hazar-shual, 29. And at Bilhah, and at Ezem, and at Tolad, 30. And at Bethuel, and at Hormah, and at Ziklag, 31. And at Beth-marcaboth, and Hazar-susim, and at Beth-birei, and at Shaaraim. These *were* their cities unto the reign of David. 32. And their villages *were* Etam, and Ain, Rimmon, and Tochen, and Ashan, five cities; 33. And all their villages that *were* round about the same cities, unto Baal. These *were* their habitations, and their genealogy. 34. And Meshobab, and Jamlech, and Joshah the son of Amaziah, 35. And Joel, and Jehu the son of Josibiah, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel, 36. And Elioenai, and Jaakobah, and Jeshohaiah, and Asaiah, and Adiel, and Jesimiel, and Benaiah, 37. And Ziza the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah: 38. These mentioned by *their names were* princes in their families; and the house of their fathers increased greatly. 39. And they went to the entrance of Gedor, *even* unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks. 40. And they found fat pasture and good, and the land *was* wide, and quiet, and peaceable; for *they* of Ham had dwelt there of old. 41. And these written by name came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and smote their tents, and the habitations that were found there, and destroyed them utterly unto this day, and dwelt in their rooms: because *there was* pasture there for their flocks. 42. And *some* of them, *even* of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to mount Seir, having for their captains Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi. 43. And they smote the rest of the Amalekites

that were escaped, and dwelt there unto this day.

We here have some of the genealogies of the tribe of Simeon, (though it was not a tribe of great note,) especially the princes of that tribe, v. 38. Of this tribe it is said that they *increased greatly*, but *not like to the children of Judah*, v. 27. They whom God increases, ought to be thankful, though they see others that are more increased.

Here observe, 1. The cities allotted them, v. 28. Of which see Josh. 19. 1, &c. When it is said that they were their's *unto the reign of David*, it intimates that when the ten tribes revolted from the house of David, many of the Simeonites quitted these cities, because they lay within Judah, and seated themselves elsewhere.

2. The ground they got elsewhere. When those of this tribe, that revolted from the house of David, were carried captive with the rest into Assyria, those that adhered to Judah, were remarkably owned of God, and prospered in their endeavours to enlarge their coasts. It was in the days of Hezekiah, that a generation of Simeonites, whose tribe had long crunched and truckled, was animated to make these bold efforts. (1.) Some of them attacked a place in Arabia, (as it should seem,) called the *entrance of Gedor*, inhabited by the posterity of cursed Ham, v. 40. made themselves masters of it, and dwelt there. This adds to the glory of Hezekiah's pious reign, that as his kingdom in general prospered, so did particular families. It is said that they found fat pastures, and yet *the land was quiet*; even then when the kings of Assyria were giving disturbance to all their neighbours, this land escaped their alarms. The inhabitants being shepherds, who molested none, were not themselves molested, till the Simeonites came and drove them out and succeeded them, not only in the plenty, but in the peace, of their land. Those who dwell (as we do) in a fruitful country, and whose land is wide, and quiet, and peaceable, have reason to own themselves indebted to that God who *appoints the bounds of our habitation*. (2.) Others of them, to the number of 500, under the command of 4 brethren, here named, made a descent upon mount Seir, and smote the remainder of the devoted Amalekites, and took possession of their country, v. 42, 43. Now the curses on Ham and Amalek had a further accomplishment, when they seemed dormant, if not dead; as had also the curse on Simeon, that he should be divided and scattered, Gen. 49. 7. yet to him it was turned into a blessing; for the families of Simeon, which thus transplanted themselves into those distant countries, are said to *dwell there unto this day*, v. 43. by which, it should seem, they escaped the calamities of the captivity. Providence sometimes sends those out of trouble, that are designed for preservation.

CHAP. V.

This chapter gives us some account of the two tribes and a half that were seated on the other side Jordan, I. Of Reuben, v. 1. . . 10. II. Of Gad, v. 11. . . 17. III. Of the half tribe of Manasseh, v. 23, 24. IV. Concerning all three acting in conjunction, we are told, 1. How they conquered the Hagarites, v. 18. . . 22. 2. How they were, at length, themselves conquered, and made captives, by the king of Assyria, because they had forsaken God, v. 25, 26.

1. **N**OW the sons of Reuben the first-born of Israel, (for he *was* the first-born; but forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the

genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. 2. For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him *came* the chief ruler; but the birthright *was* Joseph's;) 3. The sons, *I say*, of Reuben the first-born of Israel, *were*, Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. 4. The sons of Joel; Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son, 5. Micah his son, Reaia his son, Baal his son, 6. Beerah his son, whom Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria carried away *captive*: he *was* prince of the Reubenites. 7. And his brethren by their families, (when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned,) *were* the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah, 8. And Bela the son of Azaz, the son of Shema, the son of Joel, who dwelt in Aroer, even unto Nebo and Baal-meon: 9. And eastward he inhabited unto the entering in of the wilderness from the river Euphrates; because their cattle were multiplied in the land of Gilead. 10. And in the days of Saul they made war with the Hagarites, who fell by their hand: and they dwelt in their tents throughout all the east *land* of Gilead. 11. And the children of Gad dwelt over against them, in the land of Bashan, unto Salcah: 12. Joel the chief, and Shapham the next, and Jaanai, and Shaphat in Bashan. 13. And their brethren of the house of their fathers *were* Michael, and Meshullam, and Sheba, and Jorai, and Jachan, and Zia, and Heber, seven. 14. These *are* the children of Abihail the son of Huri, the son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshisai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz: 15. Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, chief of the house of their fathers. 16. And they dwelt in Gilead in Bashan, and in her towns, and in all the suburbs of Sharon, upon their borders. 17. All these were reckoned by genealogies in the days of Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel.

We have here an extract out of the genealogies.

I. Of the tribe of Reuben. Where we have,

(1.) The reason why this tribe is thus postponed. It is confessed that he was the first-born of Israel, and, upon that account, might challenge the precedence; but he forfeited his birth-right by defiling his father's concubine, and was for that sentenced *not to excel*, Gen. xlix. 4. Sin lessens men, thrusts them down from their excellency. Seventh commandment-sins especially, leave an indelible stain upon men's names and families, a reproach which time shall not wipe away. Reuben's seed, to the last, bear the disgrace of Reuben's sin. Yet though that tribe was degraded, it was not discarded or disinherited. The sully of the honour of an Israelite, is not the losing of his happiness. Reuben loses his birth-right, yet it does not devolve upon Simeon, the next in order; for it was typical; and

therefore must attend, not the course of nature, but the choice of grace. The advantages of the birth-right were dominion, and a double portion. Reuben having forfeited these, it was thought too much that both should be transferred to any one, and therefore they were divided. [1.] Joseph had the double portion; for two tribes descended from him, Ephraim and Manasseh, each of whom had a child's part: for so Jacob by faith blessed them, Heb. 11. 21. Gen. 48. 15. 22. and each of those two was as considerable, and made as good a figure, as any one of the twelve, except Judah. But, [2.] Judah had the dominion; on him the dying patriarch entailed the sceptre, Gen. 49. 10. Of him came the chief ruler, David first, and, in fullness of time, Messiah the Prince, Mic. 5. 2. This honour was secured to Judah; though the birth-right was Joseph's: and, having this, he needed not envy him the double portion.

(2.) The genealogy of the princes of this tribe, the chief family of it, (many, no doubt, being omitted,) to Beerah, who was head of this clan when the king of Assyria carried them captive, v. 4-6. Perhaps he is mentioned as prince of the Reubenites at that time, because he did not do his part to prevent it.

(3.) The enlargement of the coasts of this tribe. They increasing, and their cattle being multiplied, they crowded out their neighbours the Hagarites, and extended their conquests, though not to the river Euphrates, yet to the wilderness, which abutted upon that river, v. 9, 10. Thus God did for his people as he promised them; he cast out the enemy from before them by little and little, and gave them their land as they had occasion for it, Exod. 23. 30.

Of the tribe of Gad. Some great families of that tribe are here named, v. 12. Seven, that were the children of Abihail, whose pedigree is carried upward from the son to the father, v. 14, 15. as that, v. 4, 5. is brought downward from father to son. These genealogies were perfected in the days of Jotham king of Judah, but were begun some years before, in the reign of Jeroboam II. king of Israel. What particular reason there was for taking these accounts then, does not appear; but it was just before they were carried away captive by the Assyrians; as appears, 2 Kings 15. 29. 32. When the judgments of God were ready to break out against them for their wretched degeneracy and apostasy, then were they priding themselves in their genealogies, that they were the children of the covenant; as the Jews, in our Saviour's time, who, when they were ripe for ruin, boasted, *We have Abraham to our father*. Or, there might be a special providence in it, and a favourable intimation that though they were, for the present, cast out, they were not cast off for ever. What we design to call for hereafter, we keep an inventory of.

18. The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, of valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war, *were* four and forty thousand seven hundred and threescore, that went out to the war. 19. And they made war with the Hagarites, with Jetur, and Nephish, and Nodab. 20. And they were helped against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that *were* with them: for they cried to God in the battle, and he was entreated of them; because they put their trust in him. 21. And they took away their

cattle; of their camels fifty thousand, and of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of asses two thousand, and of men a hundred thousand. 22. For there fell down many slain, because the war *was* of God. And they dwelt in their steads until the captivity. 23. And the children of the half tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land: they increased from Bashan unto Baal-hermon, and Senir, and unto mount Hermon. 24. And these *were* the heads of the house of their fathers, even Ephraim, and Ishi, and Eliel, and Azriel, and Jeremiah, and Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, mighty men of valour, famous men, *and* heads of the house of their fathers. 25. And they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them. 26. And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, (even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh,) and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day.

The heads of the half tribe of Manasseh, that were seated on the other side Jordan, are named here, v. 23, 24. Their lot, at first, was Bashan; but afterward they increased so much in wealth and power, that they spread far north, even unto Hermon.

Two things only are here recorded concerning these tribes on the other side Jordan, in which they were all concerned. They all shared,

1. In a glorious victory over the *Hagarites*; so the Ishmaelites were now called, to remind them that they were the *sons of the bond-woman*, that was *cast out*. We are not told when this victory was obtained: whether it be the same with that of the Reubenites, which is said, v. 10. to be *in the days of Saul*; or whether that success of one of these tribes animated and excited the other two to join with them in another expedition, is not certain. It seems, though in Saul's time the common interests of the kingdom were weak and low, some of the tribes that acted separately, did well for themselves. We are here told, (1.) What a brave army these frontier-tribes brought into the field against the Hagarites, 44,000 men and upward, all strong and stout, and skilful in war; so many effective men, that knew how to manage their weapons, v. 18. How much more considerable might Israel have been than they were in the time of the judges, if all the tribes had acted in conjunction! (2.) What course they took to engage God for them: they *cried to God*, and *put their trust in him*, v. 20. Now they acted as Israelites indeed. [1.] As the seed of believing Abraham, they *put their trust in God*. Though they had a powerful army, they relied not on that, but on the divine power. They depended on the commission they had from God to wage war with their neighbours for the enlarging of their coasts, if there was occasion, even with those that were very far off, beside the devoted nations. See Deut. 20. 15. They depended on God's providence to give them success. [2.] As the seed of praying Jacob, they *cried unto God*, especially in

the battle, when, perhaps, at first, they were in danger of being overpowered. See the like done, 2 Chron. 13. 14. In distress, God expects we should cry to him; he distrains upon us for this tribute, this rent. In our spiritual conflicts, we must look up to Heaven for strength: and it is the believing prayer, that will be the prevailing prayer. (3.) We are told what success they had: *God was entreated of them*, though need drove them to him; so ready is he to hear and answer prayer. They were helped against their enemies; for God never yet failed any that trusted in him. And then they routed the enemy's army, though far superior in number to their's, slew many, v. 22. took 100,000 prisoners, enriched themselves greatly with the spoil, and settled themselves in their country, v. 21, 22. And all this, *because the war was of God*, undertaken in his fear, and carried on in a dependence upon him. If the battle be the Lord's, there is reason to hope it will be successful. Then we may expect to prosper in any enterprise, and then only, when we take God along with us.

2. They shared, at length, in an inglorious captivity. Had they kept close to God and their duty, they had continued to enjoy both their ancient lot and their new conquests; but they *transgressed against the God of their fathers*, v. 25. They lay upon the borders, and conversed most with the neighbouring nations, by which means they learned their idolatrous usages, and transmitted the infection to the other tribe; for this, God had a controversy with them. He was a *husband to them*, and no marvel that his jealousy burnt like fire, when they *went a whoring after other Gods*. Justly is a bill of divorce given to the adulteress. *God stirred up the spirit of the kings of Assyria*, first one, and then another, against them, served his own purposes by the designs of those ambitious monarchs, employed them to *chastise* these revoltors first, and when that reduced them not, then wholly to *root them out*, v. 26. These tribes were first placed, and they were first displaced. They would have the best land, not considering that it lay more exposed. But those who are governed more by sense than by reason or faith in their choices, may expect to fare accordingly.

CHAP. VI.

Though Joseph and Judah shared between them the forfeited honours of the birth-right, yet Levi was first of all the tribes, dignified and distinguished with an honour more valuable than either precedence or the double portion; and that was the priesthood. The tribe God set apart for himself; it was Moses's tribe, and perhaps for his sake was thus favoured. Of that tribe we have an account in this chapter. I. Their Pedigree; the first fathers of the tribe, v. 1. 3. the line of the priests, from Aaron to the captivity, v. 4. 15. and of some other of their families, v. 16. 30. II. Their work, the work of the Levites, v. 31. 48. of the priests, v. 49. 53. III. The cities appointed them in the land of Canaan, v. 54. 81.

1. **T**HE sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 2. And the sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel. 3. And the children of Amram; Aaron, and Moses, and Miriam. The sons also of Aaron; Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. 4. Eleazar begat Phinehas, Phinehas begat Abishua, 5. And Abishua begat Bukki, and Bukki begat Uzzi, 6. And Uzzi begat Zerariah, and Zerariah begat Meraioth, 7. Meraioth begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub, 8. And Ahi-

tub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Ahimaaz, 9. And Ahimaaz begat Azariah, and Azariah begat Johanan, 10. And Johanan begat Azariah, (he *it is* that executed the priest's office in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem,) 11. And Azariah begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub, 12. And Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Shallum, 13. And Shallum begat Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begat Azariah, 14. And Azariah begat Seraiah, and Seraiah begat Jehozadak, 15. And Jehozadak went *into captivity*, when the Lord carried away Judah and Jerusalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. 16. The sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 17. And these *be* the names of the sons of Gershon; Libni, and Shimei. 18. And the sons of Kohath *were*, Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel. 19. The sons of Merari; Mahli and Mushi. And these *are* the families of the Levites, according to their fathers. 20. Of Gershon; Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son, 21. Joah his son, Iddo his son, Zerah his son, Jeaterai his son. 22. The sons of Kohath; Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son, 23. Elkanah his son, and Ebiasaph his son, and Assir his son, 24. Tahath his son, Uriel his son, Uzziel his son, and Shaul his son. 25. And the sons of Elkanah; Amasai, and Ahimoth. 26. *As for* Elkanah; the sons of Elkanah; Zophai his son, and Nabath his son, 27. Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, Elkanah his son. 28. And the sons of Samuel; the first-born Vashni, and Abiah. 29. The sons of Merari; Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzza his son, 30. Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, Asaiah his son.

The priests and Levites were more concerned than any other Israelites, to preserve their pedigree clear, and to be able to prove it; because all the honours and privileges of their office depended upon their descent. And we read of those, who, though perhaps they really were children of the priests, yet, because they could not find the register of their genealogies, nor make out their descent by any authentic record, were, *as polluted, put from the priesthood*, and forbidden to eat of the holy things, Ezra 2. 62, 63.

It is but very little that is here recorded of the genealogies of this sacred tribe.

1. The first fathers of it are here named twice, v. 1, 16. Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, are three names which we were very conversant with in the book of Numbers, when the families of the Levites were marshalled, and had their work assigned them. Aaron, and Moses, and Miriam, we have known much more of than their names, and cannot pass them over here without remembering that this was that Moses and Aaron whom God honoured in making them the instruments of Israel's deliverance and settlement, and *figures of him that was to come*; Moses as a prophet, and Aaron as a priest. And the mention of Nadab and Abihu (though,

having no children, there was no occasion to bring them into the genealogy) cannot but remind us of the terrors of that divine justice, which they were made monuments of for offering strange fire, that we may always fear before him.

2. The line of Eleazar, the successor of Aaron, is here drawn down to the time of the captivity, v. 4.-15. It begins with Eleazar, who came out of the house of bondage in Egypt; and ends with Jehozadak, who went into the house of bondage in Babylon. Thus, for their sins, they were left as they were found; which might also intimate that the Levitical priesthood made nothing perfect: that was to be done by the *bringing in of a better hope*. All these here named, were not High Priests; for, in the time of the judges, that dignity was, upon some occasion or other, brought into the family of Ithamar, of which Eli was; but in Zadok it returned again to the right line. Of Azariah it is here said, v. 10, *He it is that executed the priest's office in the temple that Solomon built*. It is supposed that this was that Azariah who bravely opposed the presumption of king Uzziah when he invaded the priests' office, 2 Chron. 26. 17. though he ventured his neck by it. This was done like a priest, like one that was truly zealous for his God. He that thus boldly maintained and defended the priest's office, and made good its barriers against such a daring insult, may well be said to *execute it*; and this honour is put upon him for it; while Urijah, one of his successors, for a base compliance with king Ahaz, in building him an idolatrous altar, has the disgrace put upon him of being left out of this genealogy; as perhaps some others are. But some think that this remark upon this Azariah, should have been added to his grandfather of the same name, v. 9. who was the son of Ahimaaz; and that that was he who first officiated in Solomon's temple.

3. Some other of the families of the Levites are here accounted for. One of the families of Gershom (that of Libni) is here drawn down as far as Samuel, who had the honour of a prophet added to that of a Levite. One of the families of Merari (that of Mahli,) is likewise drawn down for some descents, v. 29, 30.

31. And these *are they* whom David set over the service of song in the house of the Lord, after that the ark had rest. 32. And they ministered before the dwelling-place of the tabernacle of the congregation with singing, until Solomon had built the house of the Lord in Jerusalem; and *then* they waited on their office according to their order. 33. And these *are* they that waited, with their children. Of the sons of the Kohathites; Heman a singer, the son of Joel, the son of Shemuel, 34. The son of Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Eliel, the son of Toah, 35. The son of Zuph, the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of Amasai, 36. The son of Elkanah, the son of Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah, 37. The son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, 38. The son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel: 39. And his brother Asaph, (who stood on his right hand,) *even* Asaph, the son of Berachiah, the son of Shimea, 40. The son of Michael, the son of Baaseiah, the son of

Malchiah, 41. The son of Ethni, the son of Zerah, the son of Adaiah, 42. The son of Ethan, the son of Zimmah, the son of Shimei, 43. The son of Jahath, the son of Gershom, the son of Levi. 44. And their brethren, the sons of Merari, *stood* on the left hand: Ethan the son of Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch, 45. The son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiah, 46. The son of Amzi, the son of Bani, the son of Shamer, 47. The son of Mahli, the son of Mushi, the son of Merari, the son of Levi. 48. Their brethren also the Levites *were* appointed unto all manner of service of the tabernacle of the house of God. 49. But Aaron and his sons offered upon the altar of the burnt-offering, and on the altar of incense, *and were appointed* for all the work of the *place* most holy, and to make an atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded. 50. And these *are* the sons of Aaron; Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son, 51. Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son, 52. Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son, 53. Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.

When the Levites were first ordained in the wilderness, much of the work then appointed them, lay in carrying, and taking care of, the tabernacle and the utensils of it, while they were in their march through the wilderness. In David's time, their number was increased; and, though the greater part of them were dispersed all the nation over, to teach the people the good knowledge of the Lord; yet of those that attended the house of God, there was not constant work for them all; and therefore David, by special commission and direction from God, new modelled the Levites, as we shall find in the latter part of this book. Here we are told what the work was, which he assigned them.

1. *Singing work*, v. 31. David was raised up on high to be the sweet psalmist of Israel, 2 Sam. 23. 1. not only to pen psalms, but to appoint the singing of them in the house of the Lord; (not so much because he was musical, as because he was devout;) and this he did *after that the ark had rest*. While that was in captivity, obscure, and unsettled, the harps were hung upon the willow-trees: singing was then thought unseasonable; (when the bridegroom is taken away they shall fast;) but the harps being resumed, and the songs revived, at the bringing up of the ark, they were continued afterward; for we should rejoice as much in the prolonging of our spiritual privileges, as in the restoring of them. When the service of the ark was superseded by its rest, they had other work cut out for them, (for Levites should never be idle,) and were employed in the service of song. Thus when the people of God come to the rest which remains for them above, they shall take leave of all their burthens, and be employed in everlasting songs. These singers kept up that service in the tabernacle, till the temple was built, and then they *waited on their office* there. v. 32. When they came to that stately magnificent house, they kept as close, both to their office and to their order, as they had done in the tabernacle. It is a pity that the preference of the Levites should ever make them remiss in their business.

We have here an account of the three great masters who were employed in the service of the sacred song, with their respective families; for they *walked with their children*, that is, such as descended from them, or were allied to them, v. 33. Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were the three that were appointed to this service; one of each of the three houses of the Levites, that there might be an equality in the distribution of this work and honour, and each might know his post; such an admirable order was there in this choir-service.

1. Of the house of Kohath, was Herman with his family, v. 33. a man of a sorrowful spirit, if it be the same Heman that penned the 88th psalm, and yet a singer. He was the grandson of Samuel the prophet, the son of Joel, of whom it is said, that *he walked not in the ways of Samuel*, 1 Sam. 8. 2, 3, but, it seems, though the son did not, the grandson did. Thus does the blessing entailed on the seed of the upright, sometimes pass over one generation, and fasten upon the next. And this Heman, though the grandson of that mighty prince, did not think it below him to be a precentor in the house of God. David himself was willing to have been a door-keeper. Rather, we may look upon this preferment of the grandson in the church, as a recompense for the humble modest resignation which the grandfather made of his authority in the state. Many such ways God has of making up his people's losses, and balancing their disgraces. Perhaps David, in making Heman the chief, had some respect to his old friend Samuel.

2. Of the house of Gershom, was Asaph, called *his brother*, because in the same office, and of the same tribe, though of another family. He was posted on Heman's right hand in the choir, v. 39. Several of the psalms bear his name, either penned by him, or tuned by him, as the chief musician. It is plain that he was the penman of some psalms; for we read of those that praised the Lord in the words of David, and of Asaph; for he was a seer, as well as a singer, 2 Chron. 29. 30. His pedigree is run up here through names utterly unknown, as high as Levi, v. 39. 43.

3. Of the house of Merari, was Ethan, v. 44. who was appointed to Heman's left hand. His pedigree is also run up to Levi, v. 47. If these were the Heman and Ethan that penned the 88th and 89th psalms, there appears no reason here why they should be called *Ezrahites*, (see the titles of those Psalms,) as there does why those should be called so, who are mentioned *ch.* 2. 6. and who were the sons of Zerach.

II. There was *serving work*, abundance of service to be done *in the tabernacle of the house of God*, v. 48. to provide water and fuel; to wash and sweep, and carry out ashes: to kill and slay, and boil the sacrifices; and to all such services there were Levites appointed, those of other families, or perhaps those that were not fit to be singers, that had either no good voice, or no good ear. *As every one hath received the gift, so let him minister*. They that could not sing, must not therefore be laid aside as good for nothing; though they were not fit for that service, there was other service they might be useful in.

III. There was *sacrificing-work*, and that was to be done by the priest only, v. 49. They only were to sprinkle the blood, and burn the incense; as for *the work of the place most holy*, that was to be done by the High Priest only. Each had his work, and they both needed one another, and both helped one another in it. Concerning the work of the priests, we are here told, 1. What was the end that they were to have in their eye; they were *to make an atonement for Israel*, to mediate between the people and God; not to magnify and enrich themselves,

but to serve the public. They were *ordained for men*, 2. What was the rule they were to have in their eye; they presided in God's house, yet must do as they were bidden, according to all that God commanded. That law the highest are subject to.

54. Now these *are* their dwelling-places throughout their castles in their coasts, of the sons of Aaron, of the families of the Kohathites; for theirs was the lot. 55. And they gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, and the suburbs thereof round about it. 56. But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh. 57. And to the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of Judah, *namely*, Hebron, *the city* of refuge, and Libnah with her suburbs, and Jattir, and Eshtemoa, with their suburbs, 58. And Hilen with her suburbs, Debir with her suburbs, 59. And Ashan with her suburbs, and Beth-shemesh with her suburbs: 60. And out of the tribe of Benjamin; Geba with her suburbs, and Alemeth with her suburbs, and Anathoth with her suburbs. All their cities, throughout their families, *were* thirteen cities. 61. And unto the sons of Kohath, which *were* left of the family of that tribe, *were cities given* out of the half tribe, *namely*, out of the half tribe of Manasseh, by lot, ten cities. 62. And to the sons of Gershom, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities. 63. Unto the sons of Merari *were given* by lot, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities. 64. And the children of Israel gave to the Levites *these* cities with their suburbs. 65. And they gave by lot, out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, and out of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, these cities which are called by their names. 66. And *the residue* of the families of the sons of Kohath had cities of their coasts out of the tribe of Ephraim. 67. And they gave unto them, *of* the cities of refuge, Shechem in mount Ephraim with her suburbs; *they gave* also Gezer with her suburbs, 68. And Jokmean with her suburbs, and Beth-horon with her suburbs, 69. And Ajalon with her suburbs, and Gath-rimmon with her suburbs: 70. And out of the half tribe of Manasseh; Aner with her suburbs, and Bileam with her suburbs, for the family of the remnant of the sons of Kohath. 71. Unto the sons of Gershom *were given* out of the family of the half tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan with

her suburbs, and Ashtaroth with her suburbs: 72. And out of the tribe of Issachar; Kedesh with her suburbs, Daberath with her suburbs, 73. And Ramoth with her suburbs, and Anem with her suburbs: 74. And out of the tribe of Asher; Mashal with her suburbs, and Abdon with her suburbs, 75. And Hukok with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs: 76. And out of the tribe of Naphtali; Kedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, and Hammon with her suburbs, and Kirjathaim with her suburbs. 77. Unto the rest of the children of Merari were given, out of the tribe of Zebulun, Rimmon with her suburbs, Tabor with her suburbs: 78. And on the other side Jordan by Jericho, on the east side of Jordan, were given them out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer in the wilderness with her suburbs, and Jahzah with her suburbs, 79. Kedemoth also with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs: 80. And out of the tribe of Gad; Ramoth in Gilead with her suburbs, and Mahanaim with her suburbs, 81. And Heshbon with her suburbs, and Jazer with her suburbs.

We have here an account of the Levites' cities; they are here called their *castles*, v. 54. not only because walled and fortified, and well-guarded by the country; (for it is the interest of every nation to protect its ministers;) but because they and their possessions were, in a particular manner, the care of the Divine providence: as God was their portion, so God was their protection; and a cottage will be a castle to those that abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

This account is much the same with that which we had, Josh. 21. We need not be critical in comparing them; (What good will it do us?) nor will it do any hurt to the credit of the holy scripture; if the names of some of the places be not just the same here that they were there. We know it is common for cities to have several names, *Sarum* and *Salisbury*, *Saloh* and *Shrewsbury*, are more unlike than *Hilen*, v. 58. and *Holon*, Josh. 21. 15. *Ashan*, v. 59. and *Ain*, Josh. 21. 16. *Almeth*, v. 60. and *Almon*, Josh. 21. 18. And time changes names.

We are only to observe, that in this appointment of cities for the Levites, God took care, 1. For the accomplishment of dying Jacob's prediction concerning this tribe, that it should be *scattered in Israel*, Gen. 49. 7. 2. For the diffusing of the knowledge of himself and his law in all parts of the land of Israel; every tribe had Levites' cities in it; and so every room was furnished with a candle, so that none could be ignorant of his duty, but it was either his own fault, or the Levites'. 3. For a comfortable maintenance for those that ministered in holy things. Beside their tithes and offerings, they had glebe lands, and cities of their own to dwell in. Some of the most considerable cities of Israel fell to the Levites' lot. Every tribe had benefit by the Levites; and therefore every tribe must contribute to their support. Let him that is taught in the word, communicate to him that teacheth, and do it cheerfully.

CHAP. VII.

In this chapter, we have some account of the genealogies,
I. Of Issachar, v. 1..5. II. Of Benjamin, v. 6..12.

III. Of Naphtali, v. 13. IV. Of Manasseh, v. 14..19. V. Of Ephraim, v. 20..29. VI. Of Asher, v. 30..40. Here is no account either of Zebulun or Dan. Why they only should be omitted, we can assign no reason; only it is the disgrace of the tribe of Dan, that idolatry began in that colony of the Danites, which fixed in Laish, and called it *Dan*, and there one of the golden calves was set up by Jeroboam. Dan is omitted, *Rev.* 7.

1. **N**OW the sons of Issachar were Tola, and Puah, Jashub, and Shimron, four. 2. And the sons of Tola; Uzzi, and Rephaiah, and Jeriel, and Jahmai, and Jibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their father's house, *to wit*, of Tola; *they were* valiant men of might in their generations; whose number *was*, in the days of David, two and twenty thousand and six hundred. 3. And the sons of Uzzi; Izrahiah: and the sons of Izrahiah; Michael, and Obadiah, and Joel, Ishiah, five: all of them chief men. 4. And with them, by their generations, after the house of their fathers, *were* bands of soldiers for war, six and thirty thousand *men*: for they had many wives and sons. 5. And their brethren, among all the families of Issachar, *were* men of might, reckoned in all, by their genealogies, fourscore and seven thousand. 6. *The sons of Benjamin*; Bela, and Becher, and Jediahel, three. 7. And the sons of Bela; Ezbon, and Uzzi, and Uzziel, and Jerimoth, and Iri, five; heads of the house of *their* fathers, mighty men of valour, and were reckoned, by their genealogies, twenty and two thousand and thirty and four. 8. And the sons of Becher; Zemira, and Joash, and Eliezer, and Elioenai, and Omri, and Jerimoth, and Abiah, and Anathoth, and Alameth. All these *are* the sons of Becher. 9. And the number of them, after their genealogy by their generations, heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour, *was* twenty thousand and two hundred. 10. The sons also of Jediahel; Bilhan: and the sons of Bilhan; Jeush, and Benjamin, and Ehud, and Chenaanah, and Zethan, and Tharshish, and Abishahar. 11. All these, the sons of Jediahel, by the heads of their fathers, mighty men of valour, *were* seventeen thousand and two hundred *soldiers*, fit to go out for war and battle. 12. Shuppim also, and Huppim, the children of Ir, and Hushim, the sons of Aher. 13. The sons of Naphtali; Jahziel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shallum, the sons of Bilhah. 14. The sons of Manasseh; Ashriel, whom she bare; (*but* his concubine the Aramitess bare Machir the father of Gilead. 15. And Machir took to wife *the sister* of Huppim and Shuppim, whose sister's name *was* Maachah; and the name of the second *was* Zelophehad: and Zelophehad had daughters. 16. And Maachah the wife of Machir bare

a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of his brother *was* Sheresh: and his sons *were* Ulam and Rakem. 17. And the sons of Ulam; Bedan. These *were* the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh. 18. And his sister Hammoleketh bare Ishod, and Abiezer, and Mahalah. 19. And the sons of Shemidah *were*, Ahian, and Shechem, and Likhi, and Aniam.

We have here a short view given us,

1. Of the tribe of Issachar, whom Jacob had compared to a *strong ass, couching between two burdens*, Gen. 49. 14. an industrious tribe, that minded their country-business very close, and *rejoiced in their tents*, Deut. 33. 18. And here it appears, (1.) That they were a numerous tribe; for they had many wives: so fruitful their country was, that they saw no danger of over-stocking the pasture; and so ingenious the people were, that they could find work for all hands. Let no people complain of their numbers, provided they suffer none to be idle. (2.) That they were a valiant tribe; *men of might*, v. 2, 5. *chief men*, v. 3. They that were inured to labour and business, were of all others the fittest to serve their country when there was occasion. The number of the respective families, as taken in the days of David, is here set down, amounting in the whole to above 145,000 men fit for war. The account, some think, was taken when Joab numbered the people, 2 Sam. 24. But I rather think it refers to some other computation that was made, perhaps, among themselves; because it is said, 1 Chron. 27. 24. that that account was not inserted into the chronicles of king David, it having offended God.

2. Of the tribe of Benjamin. Some account is given of this tribe here, but a much larger in the next chapter. The militia of this tribe scarcely reached to 60,000; but they are said to be *mighty men of valour*, v. 7, 9, 11. *Benjamin shall raven as a wolf*, Gen. 49. 27. It was the honour of this tribe, that it produced Saul the first king, and more its honour, that it adhered to the rightful kings of the house of David, when the other tribes revolted.

Here is mention, v. 12. of Hushim the sons of Aher. The sons of Dan are said to be *Hushim*, Gen. 46. 23. and therefore some read Aher appellatively, *Hushim the sons of another*, that is, another of Jacob's sons; or the sons of a stranger, which Israel should not be; but such the Danites were, when they set up Micah's graven and molten image among them.

3. Of the tribe of Naphtali, v. 13. The first fathers, only, of that tribe are named, the very same that we find, Gen. 46. 24. only that *Shillem* there, is *Shallum* here. None of their descendants are named, perhaps their genealogies were lost.

4. Of the tribe of Manasseh, that part of it, which was seated within Jordan; for of the other part we had some account before, ch. 5. 23, &c. Of this tribe observe, (1.) That one of them married an Aramitess, that is, a Syrian, v. 14. This was during their bondage in Egypt, so early did they begin to mingle with the nations. (2.) That though the father married a Syrian, Machir, the son of that marriage, perhaps, seeing the inconvenience of it in his father's house, took to wife a daughter of Benjamin, v. 15. It is good for the children to take warning by their father's mistakes, and not stumble at the same stone. (3.) Here is mention of *Bedan*, v. 17. who, perhaps, is the same with that Bedan, who is mentioned as one of Israel's deliverers, 1 Sam. 12. 11. Jair, perhaps, who was of Manasseh, Judg. 10. 3. was the man.

20. And the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah, and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son, 21. And Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath *that were* born in *that* land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle. 22. And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him. 23. And when he went in to his wife, she conceived and bare a son, and he called his name Beriah, because it went evil with his house. 24. (And his daughter *was* Sherah, who built Beth-horon the nether, and the upper, and Uzzen-sherah.) 25. And Rephah *was* his son, also Resheph, and Telah his son, and Tahan his son, 26. Laadan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son, 27. Non his son, Jehoshuah his son. 28. And their possessions and habitations *were* Beth-el and the towns thereof, and eastward Naaran, and westward Gezer with the towns thereof, Shechem also and the towns thereof, unto Gaza and the towns thereof: 29. And by the borders of the children of Manasseh, Beth-shean and her towns, Taanach and her towns, Megiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns. In these dwelt the children of Joseph the son of Israel. 30. The sons of Asher; Immah, and Isuah, and Ishuai, and Beriah, and Serah their sister. 31. And the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel, who *is* the father of Birzavith. 32. And Heber begat Japhlet, and Shomer, and Hotham, and Shua their sister. 33. And the sons of Japhlet; Pasach, and Bimbal, and Ashvath: these *are* the children of Japhlet. 34. And the sons of Shamer; Ahi, and Rohgab, Jehubbah, and Aram. 35. And the sons of his brother Helem; Zophah, and Imma, and Shelesh, and Amal. 36. The sons of Zophah; Suah, and Harnepher, and Shual, and Beri, and Imrah, 37. Bezer, and Hod, and Shamma, and Shilshah, and Ithran, and Beera. 38. And the sons of Jether; Jephunneh, and Pispah, and Ara. 39. And the sons of Ula; Arah, and Haniel, and Rezia. 40. All these *were* the children of Asher, heads of *their* father's house, choice *and* mighty men of valour, chief of the princes. And the number, throughout the genealogy of them that were apt to the war *and* to battle, *was* twenty and six thousand men.

We have here an account,

1. Of the tribe of Ephraim. Great things we read of that tribe, when it came to maturity. Here we have an account of the disasters of its infancy, while it was in Egypt as it should seem: for Ephraim himself was alive when these things were done; which yet is hard to imagine, if it were, as is

here computed, seven generations off. Therefore I am apt to think that either it was another Ephraim, or that those who were slain, were the immediate sons of that Ephraim that was the son of Joseph. In this passage, which is here only related, we have,

1. The great breach that was made upon the family of Ephraim. The men of Gath, Philistines, giants slew many of the sons of that family, *because they came down to take away their cattle*, v. 21. It is uncertain who were the aggressors here. (1.) Some make the men of Gath the aggressors, men *born in the land of Egypt*, but now resident in Gath, that they came down into the land of Goshen, to drive away the Ephraimites' cattle, and slew the owners, because they stood up in the defence of them. Many a man's life has been exposed and betrayed by his wealth; so far is it from being a strong city. (2.) Others think that the Ephraimites made a descent upon the men of Gath to plunder them, presuming that the time was come when they should be put in possession of Canaan; but they paid dear for their rashness and precipitation. They that will not wait God's time cannot expect God's blessing. I rather think that the men of Gath came down upon the Ephraimites; because the Israelites in Egypt were shepherds, not soldiers; abounded in cattle of their own, and therefore were not likely to venture their lives for their neighbours' cattle: and the words may be read, *The men of Gath slew them, for they came down to take away their cattle*. Zabab the son of Ephraim, and Shuthelah, and Ezer, and Elead, his grandchildren, were, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, the men that were slain. Jacob had foretold that the seed of Ephraim should become a *multitude of nations*, Gen. 48. 19. and yet that plant is thus nipped in the bud. God's providences often seem to contradict his promises; but when they do so, they really magnify the promise, and make the performance of it, notwithstanding, so much the more illustrious. The Ephraimites were the posterity of Joseph, and yet his power could not protect them, though some think he was yet living. The sword devours one as well as another.

2. The great grief which oppressed the father of the family, hereupon; *Ephraim mourned many days*. Nothing brings the aged to the grave with more sorrow, than their following the young that descend from them to the grave first; especially if in blood. It is often the burthen of those that live to be old, that they see those go before them, of whom they said, *These same shall comfort us*. It was a brotherly, friendly office, which his brethren did, when *they came to comfort him* under this great affliction, to express their sympathy with him, and concern for him, and to suggest that to him, which would support and quiet him under this sad Providence. Probably, they reminded him of the promise of increase with which Jacob had blessed him, when he laid his right hand upon his head. Although his house was not so with God as he hoped, but a house of mourning, a shattered family, yet that promise was sure, 2 Sam. 23. 5.

3. The repair of this breach, in some measure, by the addition of another son to his family in his old age, v. 23. like Seth, *another seed instead of that of Abel whom Cain slew*, Gen. 4. 25. When God thus restores comfort to his mourners, *makes glad according to the days wherein he afflicted*, setting the mercies over against the crosses, we ought therein to take notice of the kindness and tenderness of Divine Providence; it is as if it repented God concerning his servants, Ps. 90. 13, 15. Yet, joy that a man was born into his family, could not make him forget his grief; for he gives a melancholy name to his son, *Beriah, in trouble*; for he

was born when the family was in mourning, when *it went evil with his house*. It is good to have in remembrance the affliction and the misery, the wormwood and the gall, that our souls may be *humbled within us*, Lam. 3. 19. What name more proper for *man that is born of a woman*, than *Beriah*, because born into a troublesome world? It is added, as a further honour to the house of Ephraim, (1.) That a daughter of that tribe, *Sherah by name*, at the time of Israel's settling in Canaan, built some cities, either at her own charge, or by her own care; one of them bare her name, *Uzzen-sherah*, v. 24. A virtuous woman may be as great an honour and blessing to a family, as a mighty man. (2.) That a son of that tribe was employed in the conquest of Canaan, *Joshua the son of Nun*, v. 27. In this also the breach made on Ephraim's family, was further repaired; and perhaps the resentments of this injury formerly done by the Canaanites to the Ephraimites, might make him more vigorous in the war.

II. Of the tribe of Asher. Some men of note of that tribe are here named. Their militia was not numerous, in comparison with some other tribes, only 26,000 men in all: but their princes were *choice and mighty men of valour, chief of the princes*, v. 40. and perhaps it was their wisdom, that they coveted not to make their trained bands numerous; but rather to have a few, and those apt to the war, and serviceable men.

CHAP. VIII.

We have some account given us of Benjamin in the foregoing chapter; here we have a larger catalogue of the great men of that tribe. 1. Because of that tribe Saul came, the first king of Israel, to the story of whom Ezra is hastening, ch. 10. 1. 2. Because that tribe clave to Judah, inhabited much of Jerusalem, was one of the two tribes that went into captivity, and returned back; and that story also he has an eye to, ch. 9. 1. Here is, I. Some of the heads of that tribe named, v. 1. . . 32. II. A more particular account of the family of Saul, v. 33. . . 40.

1. **N**OW Benjamin begat Bela his first-born, Ashbel the second, and Aharah the third, 2. Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth. 3. And the sons of Bela were, Addar, and Gera, and Abihud, 4. And Abishua, and Naaman, and Ahoah, 5. And Gera, and Shephuphan, and Huram. 6. And these are the sons of Ehud: these are the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Geba, and they removed them to Manabath: 7. And Naaman, and Ahiah, and Gera, he removed them, and begat Uzza, and Abihud. 8. And Shaharaim begat children in the country of Moab, after he had sent them away; Hushim and Baara were his wives. 9. And he begat of Hodesh his wife, Jobab, and Zibia, and Mesha, and Malcham, 10. And Jeuz, and Shachia, and Mirma. These were his sons, heads of the fathers. 11. And of Hushim he begat Ahitub, and Elpaal. 12. The sons of Elpaal; Eber and Misham, and Shamed, who built Ono and Lod, with the towns thereof: 13. Beriah also, and Shema, who were heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Ajalon, who drove away the inhabitants of Gath: 14. And Ahio, Shashak, and

Jeremoth, 15. And Zebadiah, and Arad, and Ader, 16. And Michael, and Ispah, and Joha, the sons of Beriah; 17. And Zebadiah, and Meshullam, and Hezeki, and Heber, 18. Ishmerai also, and Jezliah, and Jobab, the sons of Elpaal; 19. And Jakim, and Zichri, and Zabdi, 20. And Elienai, and Zilthai, and Eliel, 21. And Adajiah, and Beraiah, and Shimrath, the sons of Shimbi; 22. And Ishpan, and Heber, and Eliel, 23. And Abdon, and Zichri, and Hanan, 24. And Hananiah, and Elam, and Antothijah, 25. And Iphedeiah, and Penuel, the sons of Shashak; 26. And Shamsherai, and Shehariah, and Athaliah, 27. And Jaresiah, and Eliah, and Zichri, the sons of Jeroham. 28. These *were* heads of the fathers, by their generations, chief men. These dwelt in Jerusalem. 29. And at Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon, (whose wife's name *was* Maachah;) 30. And his first-born son Abdon, and Zur, and Kish, and Baal, and Nadab, 31. And Gedor, and Abio, and Zacher. 32. And Mikloth begat Shimeah. And these also dwelt with their brethren in Jerusalem, over against them.

There is little or nothing of history that occurs in all these verses; we have not therefore much to observe.

1. As to the difficulties that occur in this and the foregoing genealogies, we need not perplex ourselves; I presume Ezra took them as he found them *in the books of the kings of Israel and Judah*, ch. 9. 1. according as they were given in by the several tribes, each observing what method they thought fit. Hence some *ascend*, others *descend*; some have *numbers* affixed, others *places*; some have historical remarks intermixed, others have not; some are shorter, others longer; some agree with other records, others differ; some, it is likely, were torn, razed, and blotted, others more legible. Those of Dan and Reuben were entirely lost. This holy man wrote as he was moved by the Holy Ghost; but there was no necessity for the making up of the defects, no nor for the rectifying of the mistakes, of these genealogies by inspiration: it was sufficient that he copied them out as they came to his hand, or so much of them as was requisite to the present purpose, which was the directing of the returned captives to settle, as near as they could, with those of their own family, and in the places of their former residence. We may suppose that many things in these genealogies, which to us seem intricate, abrupt, and perplexed, were plain and easy to them then, (who knew how to fill up the deficiencies,) and abundantly answered the intention of the publishing of them.

2. Many great and mighty nations there were now in being upon earth, and many illustrious men in them, whose names are buried in perpetual oblivion, while the names of multitudes of the Israel of God are here carefully preserved in everlasting remembrance. They are *Jasher*, *Jeshurun*, just ones, and the *memory of the just is blessed*. Many of these, we have reason to fear, came short of everlasting honour, (for even the wicked kings of Judah come into the genealogy,) yet the perpetuating of their names here, was a figure of the writing of the

names of all God's spiritual Israel in the Lamb's book of life.

3. The tribe of Benjamin was once brought to a very low ebb, in the time of the judges, upon the occasion of the iniquity of Gibeah, when only 600 men escaped the sword of justice; and yet, in these genealogies, it makes as good a figure as almost any other of the tribes: for it is the honour of God to help the weakest, and raise up those that are most diminished and abased.

4. Here is mention of one Ehud, v. 6. In the verse before, of one Gera, v. 5. and v. 8. of one that descended from him, that *begat children in the country of Moab*; which inclines me to think it was that Ehud, who was the second of the judges of Israel; for he is said to be *the son of Gera*, and a *Benjamite*, Judg. 3. 15. and he delivered Israel from the oppression of the Moabites, by killing the king of Moab, which might give him a greater sway in the country of Moab than we find evidence of in his history, and might occasion some of his posterity to settle there.

5. Here is mention of some of the Benjamites that *drove away the inhabitants of Gath*, v. 13. Perhaps, those that had slain the Ephraimites, ch. 7. 21. or their posterity, by way of reprisal: and one of them that did this piece of justice, was named *Beriah*, too, that name in which the memorial of that injury was preserved.

6. Particular notice is taken of them that *dwelt in Jerusalem*, v. 28. and again, v. 32. that they whose ancestors had had their residence there, might thereby be induced, at their return from captivity, to settle there too; which for aught that appears, few were willing to do, because it was the post of danger: and therefore we find, Neh. 11. 2, *The people blessed those that willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem*, the greater part being inclined to prefer the cities of Judah. They whose godly parents had their conversation in the new Jerusalem, should thereby be engaged to set their faces thitherward, and pursue the way thither, whatever it cost them.

33. And Ner begat Kish, and Kish begat Saul, and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-shua, and Abinadab, and Esh-baal. 34. And the son of Jonathan *was* Merib-baal; and Merib-baal begat Micah. 35. And the sons of Micah *were*, Pithon, and Melech, and Tarea, and Abaz. 36. And Ahaz begat Jehoadah; and Jehoadah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza, 37. And Moza begat Binea: Rapha *was* his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son. 38. And Azel had six sons, whose names *are* these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan. All these *were* the sons of Azel. 39. And the sons of Eshek his brother *were*, Ulam his first-born, Jehush the second, and Eliphelet the third. 40. And the sons of Ulim *were* mighty men of valour, archers, and had many sons, and sons' sons, a hundred and fifty. All these *are* the sons of Benjamin.

It is observable, that among all the genealogies of the tribes, there is no mention of any of the kings of Israel after their defection from the house of David, much less of their families; not a word

of Jeroboam's house, or Baasha's, or Omri's, or Jehu's; for they were all idolaters. But the family of Saul, which was the royal family before the elevation of David, we have here a particular account of.

1. Before Saul, Kish and Ner only are named, his father and grandfather, *v.* 33. His pedigree is carried higher, 1 Sam. 9. 1. and there, Kish is said to be the son of Abiel, here, of Ner. He was, in truth, the son of Ner, but the grandson of Abiel; as appears by 1 Sam. 14. 51. where it is said that *Ner was the son of Abiel*, and that Abner, who was the son of Ner, was Saul's uncle, that is, his father's brother; therefore his father was also the son of Ner. It is common, in all languages, to put sons for grandsons, and other descendants, much more in the scanty language of the Hebrews.

2. After Saul, divers of his sons are named, but the posterity of none of them, save Jonathan only, who was blessed with a numerous issue, and those honoured with a place in the sacred genealogies, for the sake of his sincere kindness to David. The line of Jonathan is drawn down here for about ten generations. Perhaps David was, in a particular manner, careful to preserve that, and assigned it a page by itself, because of the covenant made between his seed and Jonathan's seed for ever, 1 Sam. 20. 15, 23, 42. This genealogy ends in Ulam, whose family became famous in the tribe of Benjamin, for the number of its valiant men. Of that one man's posterity there were, as it should seem, at one time, 150 archers brought into the field of battle, that were *mighty men of valour*, *v.* 40. That is taken notice of concerning them, which is more a man's praise than his pomp or wealth is, that they were qualified to serve their country.

CHAP. IX.

This chapter intimates to us, that one end of recording all these genealogies, was, to direct the Jews, now that they were returned out of captivity, with whom to incorporate, and where to reside; for here we have an account of those who first took possession of Jerusalem, after their return from Babylon, and began the re-building of it upon the old foundation. I. The Israelites, *v.* 2.. 9. II. The priests, *v.* 10.. 13. III. The Levites and other Nethinim. IV. Here is the particular charge of some of the priests and Levites, *v.* 27.. 34. V. A repetition of the genealogy of king Saul, *v.* 35.. 44.

1. **S**O all Israel were reckoned by genealogies; and, behold, they were written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, who were carried away to Babylon, for their transgression. 2. Now the first inhabitants that dwell in their possessions in their cities were, the Israelites, the priests, the Levites, and the Nethinims. 3. And in Jerusalem dwelt the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim, and Manasseh; 4. Uthai the son of Ammihud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, of the children of Pharez the son of Judah. 5. And of the Shilonites; Asaiah the first-born, and his sons. 6. And of the sons of Zerah; Jeuel, and their brethren, six hundred and ninety. 7. And of the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hasenuah. 8. And Ibneiah the son of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri, and

Meshullam the son of Shephatiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah; 9. And their brethren, according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty and six. All these men were chief of the fathers in the house of their fathers. 10. And of the priests; Jedaiah, and Jehoiarib, and Jachin. 11. And Azariah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the ruler of the house of God; 12. And Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchijah, and Maasiai the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith, the son of Immer; 13. And their brethren, heads of the house of their fathers, a thousand and seven hundred and threescore; very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.

The first verse looks back upon the foregoing genealogies, and tells us they were gathered out of the books of the kings of Israel and Judah; not that which we have in the Canon of scripture, but another civil record, which was authentic, as the king's books with us. Mentioning Israel and Judah, he takes notice of their being carried away to Babylon for their transgression. Let that judgment never be forgotten, but ever be remembered for warning to posterity, to take heed of those sins that brought it upon them. Whenever we speak of any calamity that has befallen us, it is good to add this, "It was for my transgression," that God may be justified, and clear, when he judges.

Then follows an account of the first inhabitants, after their return from captivity, that dwelt in their cities, especially in Jerusalem.

1. The Israelites. The general name is used, *v.* 2. because with those of Judah and Benjamin there were many of Ephraim and Manasseh, and the other ten tribes, *v.* 3. such as had escaped to Judah when the body of the ten tribes were carried captive, or returned to Judah upon the revolution in Assyria, and so went into captivity with them, or met them when they were in Babylon, associated with them, and so shared in the benefit of their enlargement. It was foretold that the children of Judah and of Israel should be gathered together, and come up out of the land, Hos. 1. 11. and that they should be one nation again, Ezek. 37. 22. Trouble drives those together, that have been at variance; and the pieces of metal that had been separated, when melted in the same crucible, will run together again. Many, both of Judah and Israel, staid behind in captivity; but some of both, whose spirits God stirred up, inquired the way to Zion again. Divers are here named, and many more numbered, who were chief of the fathers, *v.* 9. who ought to be remembered with honour, as Israelites indeed.

2. The priests, *v.* 10. It was their praise, that they came with the first. Who should lead in a good work, if the priests, the Lord's ministers, do not? It was the people's praise that they would not come without them; for who but the priests should keep knowledge? Who but the priests should bless them in the name of the Lord? (1.) It is said of one of them, that he was the ruler of the house of God, *v.* 11. Not the chief ruler, for Joshua was then the High Priest; but the Sagan, the next under him, his deputy, who, perhaps, applied himself more to the business than the High Priest himself. In the house of God, it is requisite

that there be rulers, not to make new laws, but to take care that the laws of God be duly observed by priests as well as people. (2.) It is said of many of them, that they were *very able men for the service of the house of God*, v. 13. In the house of God, there is service to be done, constant service; and it is well for the church, when those are employed in that service, who are able for it; *able ministers of the New Testament*, 2 Cor. 3. 6. The service of the temple was such as required, at all times, especially in this critical juncture, when they were newly come out of Babylon, great courage and vigour of mind, as well as strength of body; and therefore they are praised as *mighty men of valour*.

14. And of the Levites; Shemaiah the son of Hashshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari; 15. And Bakbakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of Ziehri, the son of Asaph; 16. And Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun; and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, that dwelt in the villages of the Netophathites. 17. And the porters *were*, Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahiman, and their brethren: Shallum *was* the chief; 18. (Who hitherto *waited* in the king's gate eastward:) they *were* porters in the companies of the children of Levi. 19. And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, (of the house of his father,) the Korahites, *were* over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers, *being* over the host of the LORD, *were* keepers of the entry. 20. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar *was* the ruler over them in time past, *and* the LORD *was* with him. 21. And Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah *was* porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 22. All these, *which were* chosen to be porters in the gates, *were* two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages; whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office. 23. So they and their children *had* the oversight of the gates of the house of the LORD, *namely*, the house of the tabernacle, by wards. 24. In four quarters *were* the porters, toward the east, west, north, and south. 25. And their brethren, *which were* in their villages, *were* to come after seven days from time to time with them. 26. For these Levites, the four chief porters, *were* in *their* set office, and *were* over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God. 27. And they lodged round about the house of God, because the charge *was* upon them, and the opening thereof every morning *pertained* to them.

28. And *certain* of them had the charge of the ministering vessels, that they should bring them in and out by tale. 29. *Some* of them also *were* appointed to oversee the vessels, and all the instruments of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincense, and the spices. 30. And *some* of the sons of the priests made the ointment of the spices. 31. And Mattithiah, *one* of the Levites, who *was* the first-born of Shallum the Korahite, had the set office over the things that were made in the pans. 32. And *other* of their brethren, of the sons of the Kohathites, *were* over the show-bread, to prepare *it* every sabbath. 33. And these *are* the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites, *who remaining* in the chambers *were* free; for they were employed in *that* work day and night. 34. These chief fathers of the Levites *were* chief throughout their generations: these dwelt at Jerusalem.

We have here a further account of the good posture which the affairs of religion were put into, immediately upon their return out of Babylon. They had smelted for their former *neglect* of ordinances, and under the late *want* of ordinances; both these considerations made them very zealous and forward in setting up the worship of God among them; and so they began their work at the right end. Instances hereof we have here.

1. Before the house of the Lord was built, they had the house of the tabernacle; a plain and moveable tent, which they made use of in the mean time. They that cannot yet reach to have a temple, must not be without a tabernacle; but be thankful for that, and make the best of it. Never let God's work be left undone, for want of a place to do it in.

2. In allotting to the priests and Levites their respective employments, they had an eye to a model that was drawn up by David, and Samuel the seer, v. 22. Samuel, in his time, had drawn the scheme of it, and laid the foundation, though the ark was then in obscurity; and David afterward finished it; both by immediate direction of God. Or David, as soon as he was anointed, had this matter in his mind, and consulted Samuel about it, though he was then in his troubles, and the plan was formed in concert between them. This, perhaps, had been little regarded for many ages: but now after a long interruption, it is revived. In dividing the work, they observed these ancient land-marks.

3. The most of them dwelt in Jerusalem, v. 34. yet there were some that dwelt in the villages, v. 16, 22. because, it may be, there was not yet room for them in Jerusalem; but, however, they were employed in the service of the tabernacle, v. 23. *they were to come after seven days from time to time*. They had their week's attendance in their turns.

4. Many of the Levites were employed as porters at the gates of the house of God: 4 chief porters, v. 26. and, under them, to the number of 212, v. 22. They had the oversight of the *gates*, v. 23. *were* keepers of the *thresholds*, as it is in the margin, v. 19. and keepers of the *entry*. This seemed a mean office; and yet David would rather have it, than *dwell in the tents of wickedness*, Ps. 84. 10. Their office *was*, (1.) To open the doors of God's house every morning, v. 27. and shut them at night. (2.) To keep off the unclean, and hinder

those from thrusting in, that were forbidden by the law. (3.) To direct and introduce into the courts of the Lord, those that came thither to worship, and to show them whither to go, and what to do, that they might not incur punishment. This required care, and diligence, and constant attendance. Ministers have work to do of this kind.

5. Here is one Phinchas, a son of Eleazar, that is said to be a *ruler over them in time past*, v. 20. not the famous High Priest of that name; but (as is supposed) an eminent Levite, of whom it is here said, that *the Lord was with him*; or, as the Chaldee reads it, *the Word of the Lord was his helper*; the eternal Word, who is *Jehovah the mighty one, on whom help is laid*.

6. It is said of some of them, that because the charge was upon them, *they lodged round about the house of God*, v. 27. It is good for ministers to be near their work, that they may give themselves wholly to it. The Levites pitched about the tabernacle, when they marched through the wilderness. Then, they were porters in one sense, bearing the burthens of the sanctuary; now, porters in another sense, attending the gates and the doors—in both instances keeping the charge of the sanctuary.

7. Every one knew his charge. Some were intrusted with the plate, the ministering vessels, to bring them in and out by tale, v. 28. Others were appointed to prepare the fine flour, wine, oil, &c. v. 29. Others, that were priests, made up the holy anointing oil, v. 30. Others took care of the meat-offerings, v. 31. Others of the show-bread, v. 32. As in other great houses, so in God's house, the work is likely to be done well, when every one knows the duty of his place, and makes a business of it. God is the God of order; but that which is every body's work, will be nobody's work.

8. The singers *were employed in that work, day and night*, v. 33. They were the *chief fathers of the Levites*, that made a business of it; not mean singing-men, that made a trade of it. They remained in the chambers of the temple, that they might closely and constantly attend it; and were therefore discharged from all other services. It should seem, some companies were continually singing, at least, at stated hours, both day and night. Thus was God continually praised, as it is fit he should be, who is continually doing good. Thus devout people might, at any hour, have assistance in their devotion. Thus was that temple a figure of the heavenly one, where they *rest not day nor night*, from praising God, Rev. 4. 8. *Blessed are they that dwell in thine house, they will be still praising thee*.

35. And in Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon, Jehiel, whose wife's name was Machah: 36. And his first-born son Abdon, then Zur, and Kish, and Baal, and Ner, and Nadab, 37. And Gedor, and Ahio, and Zechariah, and Mikloth. 38. And Mikloth begat Shimeam. And they also dwelt with their brethren at Jerusalem, over against their brethren. 39. And Ner begat Kish; and Kish begat Saul; and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-shua, and Abinadab, and Esh-baal. 40. And the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal: and Merib-baal begat Micah. 41. And the sons of Micah were, Pithon, and Melech, and Tahrea, and Ahaz. 42. And Ahaz begat Jarah; and Jarah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri: and Zimri begat Moza; 43. And

Moza begat Binea; and Rephaiah his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son. 44. And Azel had six sons, whose names are these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan. These were the sons of Azel.

These verses are the very same with ch. 8. 29-38. giving an account of the ancestors of Saul, and the posterity of Jonathan. There, it is the conclusion of the genealogy of Benjamin; here, it is an introduction to the story of Saul. We take the repetition as we find it; but if we admit that there are in the originals, especially in these books, some errors of the transcribers, I should be tempted to think this repetition arose from a blunder. Some one, in copying out these genealogies, having written these words, v. 34. (*These dwell in Jerusalem*), cast his eye on the same words, ch. 8. 28. (*These dwell in Jerusalem*), and so went on with what followed there; and, when he perceived his mistake, was loath to make a blot in his book, and so let it stand. We have a rule in our law, *Redundans non nocet—Redundancies do no harm*.

CHAP. X.

The design of Ezra, in these books of the Chronicles, was, to preserve the records of the house of David, which, though much sunk and lessened, in a common eye, by the captivity, yet grew more and more illustrious in the eyes of those that lived by faith, by the nearer approach of the Son of David. And therefore he repeats, not the history of Saul's reign, but only of his death, by which, way was made for David to the throne. In this chapter, we have, I. The fatal rout which the Philistines gave to Saul's army, and the fatal stroke which he gave himself, v. 1-7. II. The Philistines' triumph therein, v. 8-10. III. The respect which the men of Jabesh-gilead showed the royal corpse, v. 11, 12. IV. The reason of Saul's rejection, v. 13, 14.

1. NOW the Philistines fought against Israel, and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa. 2. And the Philistines followed hard after Saul, and after his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchi-shua, the sons of Saul. 3. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was wounded of the archers. 4. Then said Saul to his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith, lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. 5. And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the sword, and died. 6. So Saul died, and his three sons, and all his house died together. 7. And when all the men of Israel that were in the valley saw that they fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, then they forsook their cities and fled: and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

This account of Saul's death, is the same with that which we had, 1 Sam. 31, 1, &c. We need not repeat the exposition of it. Only let us observe, 1. Princes sin, and the people suffer for it. It

was a bad time with Israel, when they *fled before the Philistines, and fell down slain*, v. 1. when they quitted their cities, and *the Philistines came, and dwell in them*, v. 7. We do not find that they were, at this time, guilty of idolatry, as they had been before, in the days of the judges, and were after, in the days of the kings. Samuel had reformed them, and they were reformed; and yet they are thus *given to the spoil, and to the robbers*. No doubt, there was enough in them to deserve it; but that which Divine Justice had chiefly an eye to, was the sin of Saul. Note, Princes and great men should, in a special manner, take heed of provoking God's wrath; for if they kindle that fire, they know not how many may be consumed by it for their sakes.

2. Parents sin, and the children suffer for it. When the measures of Saul's iniquity was full, and his day came to fall, (which David foresaw, 1 Sam. 26. 10.) he not only descended into battle, and perished himself, but his sons (all but Ish-bosheth) perished with him, and Jonathan among the rest, that gracious, generous, man; for *all things come alike to all*. Thus was the iniquity of the fathers visited upon the children; and they fell as parts of the condemned father. Note, They that love their seed, must leave their sins, lest they perish not alone in their iniquity, but bring ruin on their families with themselves, or entail a curse upon them when they are gone.

3. Sinners sin, and, at length, suffer for it themselves, though they be long reprieved; for though sentence be not executed speedily, it will be executed. It was so upon Saul; and the manner of his fall was such, as, in divers particulars, answered to his sin. (1.) He had thrown a javelin more than once at David, and missed him; but the archers hit him, and he was wounded of the archers. (2.) He had commanded Doeg to slay the priests of the Lord; and now, in despair, he commands his armour-bearer to *draw his sword, and thrust him through*. (3.) Him that had disobeyed the command of God, in not destroying the Amalekites, his armour-bearer disobeys, in not destroying him. (4.) He that was the murderer of the priests, is justly left to himself to be his own murderer; and his family is cut off, who cut off the city of the priests. See, and say, *The Lord is righteous*.

8. And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in mount Gilboa. 9. And when they had stripped him, they took his head, and his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry tidings unto their idols, and to the people. 10. And they put his armour in the house of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon. 11. And when all Jabesh-gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul, 12. They arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days. 13. So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, *even* against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking *counsel* of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it; 14. And inquired not of the Lord: therefore he slew him.

and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.

Here, 1. From the triumph of the Philistines over the body of Saul, we may learn, (1.) That the greater dignity men are advanced to, the greater disgrace they are in danger of falling into. Saul's dead body, because he was a king, was abused more than any other of the slain. Advancement makes men a mark for malice. (2.) That if we give not to God the glory of our successes, even the Philistines will rise up in judgment against us, and condemn us; for when they had obtained a victory over Saul, they *sent tidings to their idols*. Poor idols, that knew not what was done a few miles off, till the tidings were brought them; nor then neither! They also put Saul's armour in the house of their Gods, v. 10. Shall Dagon have so great a room in their triumphs, and the true and living God be forgotten in ours?

2. From the triumph of the men of Jabesh-gilead in the rescue of the bodies of Saul and his sons, we learn that there is a respect owing to the remains of the deceased, especially of dead princes. We are not to inquire concerning the eternal state; that must be left to God: but we must treat the dead body, as those who remember it has been united to an immortal soul, and must be so again.

3. From the triumphs of Divine Justice in the ruin of Saul, we may learn, (1.) That the sin of sinners will certainly find them out, sooner or later; *Saul died for his transgressions*. (2.) That no man's greatness can exempt him from the judgments of God. (3.) Disobedience is a killing thing. Saul died for *not keeping the word of the Lord*, by which he was ordered to destroy the Amalekites. (4.) Consulting with witches is a sin that fills the measure of iniquity as soon as any thing. Saul inquired of one that had a familiar spirit, and inquired *not of the Lord, therefore he slew him*, v. 13, 14. Saul slew himself, and yet it is said, *God slew him*. What is done by wicked hands, is yet done by the *determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God*. They that abandon themselves to the Devil, shall be abandoned to him; so shall their doom be. It is said, 1 Sam. 28. 6, Saul did *inquire of the Lord*, and he answered him not: but here it is said, *Saul did not inquire of God*; for he did not till he was brought to the last extremity; and then it was too late.

CHAP. XI.

In this chapter, is repeated, I. The elevation of David to the throne, immediately upon the death of Saul, by common consent, v. 1. . 3. II. His gaining the castle of Zion out of the hands of the Jebusites, v. 4. . 9. III. The catalogue of his Worthies, and the great men of his kingdom, v. 10. . 47.

1. **T**HEN all Israel gathered themselves to David unto Hebron, saying, Behold, we *are* thy bone and thy flesh. 2. And, moreover, in time past, even when Saul was king, thou *wast* he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the Lord thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel. 3. Therefore came all the elders of Israel to the king to Hebron: and David made a covenant with them in Hebron before the Lord; and they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the Lord by Samuel. 4. And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus:

where the Jebusites *were*, the inhabitants of the land. 5. And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, Thou shalt not come hither. Nevertheless David took the castle of Zion, which is the city of David. 6. And David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first shall be chief and captain. So Joab the son of Zeruiah went first up, and was chief. 7. And David dwelt in the castle; therefore they called it The city of David. 8. And he built the city round about, even from Millo round about: and Joab repaired the rest of the city. 9. So David waxed greater and greater: for the LORD of hosts *was* with him.

David is here brought to the possession,

1. Of the throne of Israel, after he had reigned 7 years in Hebron, over Judah only. In consideration of his relation to them, *v. 1.* his former good services, and especially the divine designation, *v. 2.* they anointed him their king; he covenanted to protect them, and they to bear faith and true allegiance to him, *v. 3.* Observe, (1.) God's counsels will be fulfilled at last, whatever difficulties lie in the way. If God have said, *David shall rule*, it is in vain to oppose it. (2.) Men that have long stood in their own light, when they have long wearied themselves with their lying vanities, it is to be hoped, will understand the things that belong to their peace, and return to *their own mercies*. (3.) Between prince and people there is an original contract, which both ought religiously to observe. If ever any prince might have claimed an absolute despotic power, David might, and might as safely as any have been intrusted with it; yet he made a covenant with the people, and took the coronation-oath, to rule by law.

2. Of the strong hold of Zion, which was held by the Jebusites till David's time. Whether God had a particular eye upon it as a place fit to make a royal city, or whether he had a promise of it from God, it seems that one or his first exploits was to make himself master of that fort; and when he had it, he called it the *city of David*, *v. 7.* To this, reference is had, Ps. 2. 6, *I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion*. See here what quickens and engages resolution in great undertakings. (1.) Opposition. When the Jebusites set David at defiance, and said, *Thou shalt not come hither*, he resolved to force it, whatever it cost him. (2.) Prospect of preferment. When David proposed to give the general's place to him that would lead the attack upon the castle of Zion, Joab was fired with the proposal, and he *went up first and was chief*. It has been said, "Take away honour out of the soldier's eye, and you cut off the spurs from his heels."

10. These also *are* the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom, *and* with all Israel, to make him king, according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel. 11. And this *is* the number of the mighty men whom David had; Jashobeam a Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lifted up his spear against three hundred, slain *by him* at one time. 12. And after him *was* Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, who *was one* of the three mighties: 13.

He was with David at Pas-dammim, and there the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a parcel of ground full of barley; and the people fled from before the Philistines. 14. And they set themselves in the midst of *that* parcel, and delivered it, and slew the Philistines; and the LORD saved *them* by a great deliverance. 15. Now three of the thirty captains went down to the rock of David, into the cave of Adullam; and the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim. 16. And David *was* then in the hold, and the Philistines' garrison *was* then at Beth-lehem. 17. And David longed, and said, Oh, that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, that *is* at the gate! 18. And the three brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem that *was* by the gate, and took *it*, and brought *it* to David: but David would not drink *of it*, but poured it out to the LORD, 19. And said, My God forbid it me, that I should do this thing: shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with *the jeopardy* of their lives they brought it. Therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mightiest. 20. And Abishai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three: for lifting up his spear against three hundred, he slew *them*, and had a name among the three. 21. Of the three, he was more honourable than the two, for he was their captain; howbeit he attained not to the *first* three. 22. Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, who had done many acts; he slew two lion-like men of Moab: also he went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day. 23. And he slew an Egyptian, a man of *great* stature, five cubits high; and in the Egyptian's hand *was* a spear like a weaver's beam; and he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear. 24. These *things* did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among the three mighties. 25. Behold, he was honourable among the thirty, but attained not to the *first* three; and David set him over his guard. 26. Also the valiant men of the armies *were*, Asabel the brother of Joab, Elhanan the son of Dodo of Beth-lehem. 27. Shammoth the Harorite, Helez the Pelonite. 28. Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, Abiezer the Antothite. 29. Sibbecai the Hushathite, Hai the Ahohite. 30. Maharai the Netophathite, Heled the son of Baanah the Netophathite,

31. Ithai the son of Ribai of Gibeah, *that pertained* to the children of Benjamin, Benaiah the Pirathonite, 32. Hurai of the brooks of Gaash, Abiel the Arbathite, 33. Azmaveth the Baharumite, Eliahba the Shaalbonte, 34. The sons of Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan the son of Shage the Hararite, 35. Ahiam the son of Sacar the Hararite, Eliphai the son of Ur, 36. Hephher the Mecherathite, Abijah the Pelonite, 37. Hezro the Carmelite, Naarai the son of Ezbai, 38. Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar the son of Haggeri, 39. Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite, the armour-bearer of Joab the son of Zeruah, 40. Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, 41. Uriah the Hittite, Zabad the son of Ahlai, 42. Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite, a captain of the Reubenites, and thirty with him. 43. Hanan the son of Maachah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite, 44. Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jehiel the sons of Hothan the Aroerite, 45. Jediahel the son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite, 46. Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai and Joshaviah, the sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite, 47. Eliel, and Obed, and Jasiel the Mesobaite.

We have here an account of David's worthies, the great men of his time that served him, and were preferred by him. The first edition of this catalogue we had, 2 Sam. 23. 8, &c. This is much the same, only that those named here, from v. 41. to the end, are added. Observe,

1. The connexion of this catalogue with that which is said concerning David, v. 9. (1.) *David waxed greater and greater*, and these were his mighty men. Much of the strength and honour of great men is borrowed from their servants, and depends upon them, which cannot but somewhat diminish pomp and power, in the opinion of those that are wise. David is great, because he has great men about him; take these away, and he is where he was. (2.) *The Lord of hosts was with him, and these were the mighty men which he had.* God was with him, and wrought for him, but by men and means, and the use of second causes. By *this* it appeared that God was with him, that he inclined the hearts of those to come over to him, that were able to serve his interest. As if God be for us, none can be against us; so if God be for us, all shall be for us, that we have occasion for. Yet David ascribed his success and increase, not to the hosts he had, but to the *Lord of hosts*; not to the mighty men that were with him, but to the mighty God, whose presence with us is all in all.

2. The title of this catalogue, v. 10. *These are the men who strengthened themselves with him.* In strengthening him, they strengthened themselves, and their own interest; for his advancement was their's. What we do in our places for the support of the kingdom of the Son of David, we shall be gainers by. In strengthening it, we strengthen ourselves. It may be read, *They held strongly with him and with all Israel.* Note, When God has work to do, he will not want fit instruments to do it with. If it be work that requires mighty men, mighty men shall be either found, or

made, to effect it, *according to the word of the Lord.*

3. That which made all these men honourable, was, the good service that they did to their king and country; they helped to make David king, v. 10. A good work! They slew the Philistines, and other public enemies, and were instrumental to save Israel. Note, The way to be great, is, to do good. Nor did they gain this honour without labour, and the hazard of their lives. The honours of Christ's kingdom are prepared for those that *fight the good fight of faith*, that labour and suffer, and are willing to venture all, even life itself, for Christ and a good conscience. It is by a patient continuance in well-doing, that we must seek for glory, and honour and immortality; and they that are faithful to the Son of David, shall find their names registered and enrolled much more to their honour than these are in the records of fame.

4. Among all the great exploits of David's mighty men, here is nothing great mentioned concerning David himself, but his *pouring out water before the Lord*, which he had longed for, v. 18, 19. Four very honourable dispositions of David appeared in that action, which, for aught I know, make it as great as any of the achievements of those worthies. (1.) Repentance for his own weakness. It is really an honour to a man, when he is made sensible that he has said or done any thing unadvisedly, to unsay it, and undo it again by repentance; as it is a shame to a man, when he had said or done amiss, to stand to it. (2.) Denial of his own appetite. He longed for the water of the well of Beth-lehem; but when he had it, he would not drink it, because he would not so far humour himself and gratify a foolish fancy. He that has such a rule as *this over his own spirit, is better than the mighty*. It is an honour to a man to have the command of himself; but he that will command himself, must sometimes cross himself. (3.) Devotion toward God. That water which he thought too good, too precious, for his own drinking, he *poured out to the Lord*, for a *drink-offering*. If we have any thing better than another, let God be honoured with it, who is the best, and should have the best. (4.) Tenderness of his servants. It put him into the greatest confusion imaginable, to think that three brave men should hazard their lives, to fetch water for him. In his account, it turns the water into blood. It is the honour of great men not to be prodigal of the blood of those they employ, but, in all the commands they give them, to put their own souls into their souls' stead.

5. In the wonderful achievements of these heroes, the power of God must be acknowledged. How could one slay 300, and another the same number, v. 11, 20. another two lion-like men, v. 22. and another an Egyptian giant, v. 23. if they had not had the extraordinary presence of God with them, according to that promise, Josh. 23. 10, *One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the Lord your God fighteth for you.*

One of these worthies is said to be an *Ammonite*, v. 39. another a *Moabite*, v. 46; and yet the law was, that an *Ammonite*, and a *Moabite*, should not enter into the congregation of the Lord, Deut. 23. 3. These, it is likely, had approved themselves so hearty for the interest of Israel, that in their case it was thought fit to dispense with that law, and the rather, because it was indication that the Son of David would have worthies among the Gentiles: with him there is neither Greek nor Jew.

CHAP. XII.

What the *mighty* men did toward making David king, we read in the foregoing chapter. Here we are told what the *many* did toward it. It was not all at once, but gradually, that David ascended the throne. His kingdom

was to last; and, therefore, like fruits that keep longest, is ripened slowly. After he had long waited for the vacancy of the throne, it was at 2 steps, and those above 7 years distant, that he ascended it. Now we are here told, 1. What help came in to him, to Ziklag, to make him king of Judah, v. 1. . 22. 11. What help came in to him, in Hebron, to make him king over all Israel, above 7 years after, v. 23. . 40.

1. **N**OW these *are* they that came to David to Ziklag, while he yet kept himself close, because of Saul the son of Kish: and they *were* among the mighty men, helpers of the war. 2. *They were* armed with bows, and could use both the right hand and the left in *hurling* stones and *shooting* arrows out of a bow, *even* of Saul's brethren of Benjamin. 3. The chief *was* Ahiezer, then Joash, the sons of She-maah the Gibeathite; and Jeziel and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth; and Berachah, and Jehu the Antothite, 4. And Ismaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty, and over the thirty; and Jeremiah, and Jahaziel, and Johanan, and Josabab the Gederathite, 5. Eluzai, and Jerimoth, and Bealiah, and Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Haruphite, 6. Elkanah, and Jesiah, and Azarcel, and Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korhites, 7. And Joelah, and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham of Gedor. 8. And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David, into the hold to the wilderness, men of might, *and* men of war *fit* for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces *were like* the faces of lions, and *were* as swift as the roes upon the mountains; 9. Ezer the first, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third, 10. Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth, 11. Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh, 12. Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth, 13. Jeremiah the tenth, Machbanaï the eleventh. 14. These *were* of the sons of Gad, captains of the host: one of the least *was* over a hundred, and the greatest over a thousand. 15. These *are* they that went over Jordan in the first month, when it had overflown all his banks; and they put to flight all *them* of the valleys, *both* toward the east and toward the west. 16. And there came of the children of Benjamin and Judah to the hold unto David. 17. And David went out to meet them, and answered and said unto them, If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, my heart shall be knit unto you: but if ye be come to betray me to mine enemies, seeing *there is* no wrong in my hands, the God of our fathers look *thereon*, and rebuke *it*. 18. Then the spirit came upon Amasai, *who was* chief of the captains, and he said, *Thine are we*, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace be

unto thee, and peace *be* to thy helpers; for thy God helpeth thee. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band. 19. And there fell *some* of Manasseh to David, when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle; but they helped them not: for the lords of the Philistines, upon advisement, sent him away, saying, He will fall to his master Saul, to *the jeopardy* of our heads. 20. As he went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manasseh, Adnah, and Jozabad, and Jediah, and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elihu, and Zilthai, captains of the thousands that *were* of Manasseh. 21. And they helped David against the band *of the rovers*: for they *were* all mighty men of valour, and were captains in the host. 22. For at *that* time, day by day, there came to David to help him, until *it was* a great host, like the host of God.

We have here an account of them that appeared and acted as David's friends, upon the death of Saul, to bring about the revolution. All the forces he had, while he was persecuted, was but 600 men, these served for his guards; but when the time was come that he must begin to act offensively, Providence brought in more to his assistance. Even while he *kept himself close, because of Saul*, v. 1. he did not appear to invite or encourage his friends, and well-wishers, to come in to him, not foreseeing that the death of Saul was so near. God was inclining and preparing them to come over to him with seasonable succours. They that trust God to do his work for them in his own way and time, shall find his providence outdoing all their forecast and contrivance. The war was God's, and he found out helpers of the war, whose forwardness to act for the man God designed for the government, is here recorded to their honour.

I. Some, even of Saul's brethren, of the tribe of Benjamin, and akin to him, came over to David, v. 2. What moved them to it, we are not told; probably, a generous indignation at the base treatment which Saul, one of their tribe, gave him, animated them to appear the more vigorously for him, that the guilt and reproach of it might not lie upon them. These Benjamites are described to be men of great dexterity, that were trained up in shooting and slinging, and used both hands alike; ingenious, active, men; a few of these might do David a great deal of service. Several of the leading men of them are here named. See Judges 20. 16.

II. Some of the tribe of Gad, though seated on the other side Jordan, had such a conviction of David's title to, and fitness for, the government, that they *separated themselves from their brethren*, (a laudable separation it was,) to go to David, though he was in the hold in the wilderness, v. 8. probably, some of his strong holds in the wilderness of Engedi; they were but few, eleven, in all, here named, but they added much to David's strength. Those that had hitherto come in to his assistance, were most of them men of broken fortunes, distressed, discontented, and soldiers of fortune, that came to him rather for protection, than to do him any service, 1 Sam. 22. 2. But these Gadites were brave men, *men of war*, and *fit for the battle*, v. 8. For 1. They were *able-bodied men*, men of incredible swiftness, not to fly from, but to fly upon, the enemy, and to pursue the scattered forces; in this they

were as swift as the roes upon the mountains, so that no man could run from them; and yet they had faces like the faces of lions, so that no man could out-fight them. 2. They were disciplined men, trained up to military exercise; they could handle shield and buckler, use both offensive and defensive weapons. 3. They were officers of the militia in their own tribe, *v. 14.* so that though they did not bring soldiers with them, they had them at command, hundreds, thousands. 4. They were daring men, that could break through the greatest difficulties. Upon some expedition or other, perhaps this to David, they swam over Jordan, when it overflowed all its banks, *v. 15.* Those are fit to be employed in the cause of God, that venture thus in a dependence upon the divine protection. 5. They were men that would go through with the business they engaged in. What enemies they were that they met with in the valleys, when they had passed Jordan, does not appear; but they put them to flight with their lion-like faces, and pursued them with matchless fury, both toward the east and toward the west; which way soever they turned, they followed the blow, and did not do their work by halves.

III. Some of Judah and Benjamin came to him, *v. 16.* Their leader was Amasai; whether the same with that Amasa that afterward sided with Absalom, (2 Sam. 17. 25.) or no, does not appear. Now here we have,

1. David's prudent treaty with them, *v. 17.* He was surprised to see them, and could not but conceive some jealousy of the intentions of their coming, having been so often in danger by the treachery of the men of Ziph, and the men of Keilah, who yet were all men of Judah. He might well be timorous, whose life was so much struck at; might well be suspicious, who had been deceived in so many, that he said, in his haste, *All men are liars.* No marvel that he meets these men of Judah with caution. Observe how he puts the matter to themselves, how fairly he deals with them. As they are, they shall find him; so shall all that deal with the son of David. (1.) If they be faithful and honourable, he will be their rewarder. "*If ye be come peaceably unto me, to help me, though ye come late, and have left me exposed a great while; though ye bring no great strength with you to turn the scale for me, yet I will thankfully accept your good-will, and my heart shall be knit unto you; I will love you and honour you, and do you all the kindness I can.*" Affection, respect, and service, that are cordial and sincere, will find favour with a good man, as they do with a good God, though clogged with infirmities, and turning to no great account. But, (2.) If they be false, and come to betray him into the hands of Saul, under colour of friendship, he leaves them to God to be their Avenger, as he is, and will be, of every thing that is treacherous and perfidious. Never was man more violently run down, than David was, (except the Son of David himself,) and yet he had the testimony of his conscience, that there was no wrong in his hands. He meant no harm to any man, which was his rejoicing in the day of evil, and enabled him, when he feared treachery, to commit his cause to him that judges righteously. He will not be judge in his own cause, though a wise man; nor avenge himself, though a man of valour; but let the righteous God, who hath said, *Vengeance is mine,* do both. *The God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke it.* Observe, in this appeal, [1.] He calls God, the God of our fathers, both his fathers and theirs. Thus he reminds them not to deal ill with him; for they were both descendants from the same patriarchs; they both were dependents on the same God. Thus he encourages himself to believe that God would right him, if he were abused; for he was the God of his fathers, and therefore a blessing

was entailed on him; and a God to all Israel, and therefore not only a Judge to all the earth, but particularly concerned in determining controversies between contending Israelites. [2.] He does not imprecate any fearful judgment upon them, though they should deal treacherously, but very modestly refers himself to the divine wisdom and just ce; The Lord look thereon, and judge as he sees, (for he sees men's hearts,) and rebuke it. It becomes those that appeal to God, to express themselves with great temper and moderation; for the wrath of man works not the righteousness of God.

2. Their hearty closure with him, *v. 18.* Amasai was their spokesman, on whom the Spirit of the Lord came; not a spirit of prophecy, but a spirit of wisdom and resolution, according to the occasion, putting words into his mouth, unpremeditated, which were proper both to give David satisfaction, and to animate those that accompanied him. Nothing could be said finer, more lively, or more pertinent to the occasion. For himself and all his associates, (1.) He professes a very cordial adherence to David, and his interest, against all that opposed him, and a resolution to stand by him with the hazard of all that was dear to him. *Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse.* In calling him son of Jesse, they remind themselves that he was lineally descended from Nahshon and Salmon, who, in their days, were princes of the tribe of Judah. Saul called him so in disdain, 1 Sam. 20. 27.—22. 7. but they look upon it as his honour. They were convinced that he was on God's side, and that God was on his side; and therefore *Thine are we, David, and on thy side.* It is good, if we must side, to side with those that side with God, and have God with them. (2.) He wishes prosperity to David and his cause, not drinking a health, but praying for peace to him and all his friends and well-wishers, "*Peace, peace, be unto thee,* all the good thy heart desires, and peace be to thine helpers, among whom we desire to be reckoned, that peace may be on us." (3.) He assures him of help from heaven; "*For thy God helpeth thee;* therefore we wish peace may be, and therefore we doubt not that peace shall be, to thee and thy helpers. God is thy God, and those that have him for their God, no doubt, have him for their Helper in every time of need and danger." From these expressions of Amasai, we may take instruction how to testify our affection and allegiance to the Lord Jesus; his we must be without reservation, or power of revocation; on his side we must be forward to appear and act; to his interest we must be hearty well-wishers: Hosanna; prosperity to his gospel and kingdom; for his God helpeth him, and will, till he have put down all opposing rule, principality and power.

3. David's cheerful acceptance of them into his interest and friendship. Charity and honour teach us to let fall our jealousies, as soon as satisfaction is given us; *David received them,* and preferred them to be captains of the band.

IV. Some of Manasseh likewise joined in with him, *v. 19.* Providence gave them a fair opportunity to do it, when he and his men marched through their country, upon this occasion. Achish took David with him, when he went out to fight with Saul; but the lords of the Philistines obliged him to withdraw. We have the story, 1 Sam. 29. 4, &c. In his return, some great men of Manasseh, who had no heart to join with Saul against the Philistines, struck in with David, and very seasonably, to help him against the band of the Amalekites, who had plundered Ziklag; they were not many, but they were all mighty men, and did David good service on that occasion, 1 Sam. 30. See how Providence provides. David's interest grew strangely, just then when he had occasion to make use of it, *v. 22*

Auxiliary forces flocked in daily, *till he had a great host*. When the promise comes to the birth, leave it to God to find strength to bring forth.

23. And these *are* the numbers of the bands *that were* ready armed to the war, and came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the LORD. 24. The children of Judah that bare shield and spear *were* six thousand and eight hundred, ready armed to the war. 25. Of the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour for the war, seven thousand and one hundred. 26. Of the children of Levi, four thousand and six hundred. 27. And Jehoiada *was* the leader of the Aaronites, and with him *were* three thousand and seven hundred; 28. And Zadok, a young man mighty of valour, and of his father's house twenty and two captains. 29. And of the children of Benjamin, the kindred of Saul, three thousand: for hitherto the greatest part of them had kept the ward of the house of Saul. 30. And of the children of Ephraim, twenty thousand and eight hundred, mighty men of valour, famous throughout the house of their fathers. 31. And of the half tribe of Manasseh eighteen thousand, which were expressed by name, to come and make David king. 32. And of the children of Issachar, *which were men* that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them *were* two hundred, and all their brethren *were* at their commandment. 33. Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank: *they were* not of double heart. 34. And of Naphtali a thousand captains, and with them, with shield and spear, thirty and seven thousand. 35. And of the Danites, expert in war, twenty and eight thousand and six hundred. 36. And of Asher, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, forty thousand. 37. And on the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and of the half tribe of Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, a hundred and twenty thousand. 38. All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also of Israel *were* of one heart to make David king. 39. And there they were with David three days, eating and drinking: for their brethren had prepared for them. 40. Moreover, they that were nigh them, *even* unto Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen; and meat, meal, cakes of figs, and

bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for *there was* joy in Israel.

We have here an account of those who were active in perfecting the settlement of David upon the throne, after the death of Ish-bosheth. We read, *ch.* 11. 1. and before, 2. Sam. 5. 1. that *all the tribes of Israel came*, either themselves, or by their representatives, to Hebron, to make David king; now, here we have an account of the quota which every tribe brought in *ready armed to war*, in case there should have been any opposition, *v.* 23. We may observe here,

1. That those tribes that lived nearest, brought in the fewest; Judah but 6800, *v.* 24. Simeon but 7100, *v.* 25. whereas Zebulun, that lay remote, brought 50,000, Asher, 40,000, and the two tribes and a half on the other side Jordan, 120,000. Not as if the next adjacent tribes were cold in the cause; but they showed as much of their prudence in bringing few, since all the rest lay so near within call, as the others did of their zeal in bringing so many. The men of Judah had enough to do, to entertain those that came from afar.

2. The Levites themselves, and the priests, called here the *Aaronites*, appeared very hearty in this cause, and were ready, if there were occasion, to fight for David, as well as pray for him; because they knew he was called of God to the government, *v.* 26-28.

3. Even some of the kindred of Saul came over to David, *v.* 29. not so many as of the other tribes; because a foolish affection for their own tribe, and a jealousy for the honour of it, kept many of them long in the sinking interest of Saul's family. Kindred should never overrule conscience. Call no man *Father*, to this extent, but God only.

4. It is said of most of those, that they were *mighty men of valour*, *v.* 25, 28, 30. of others, that they were *expert in war*, *v.* 35, 36. and of them all, that they *could keep rank*, *v.* 38. They had a great deal of martial fire, and yet were governable, and subject to the rules of order; warm hearts but cool heads.

5. Some were so considerate as to bring with them arms, and all instruments for war, *v.* 24, 33, 37. for how could they think that David should be able to furnish them!

6. The men of Issachar were the fewest of all, but 200; and yet as serviceable to David's interest, as those that brought in the greatest numbers; these few being, in effect, the whole tribe. For, (1.) They were men of *great conduct*, above any of their neighbours; men that *had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do*. They understood the natural times, could *discern the face of the sky*, were weather-wise, could advise their neighbours in the proper times for ploughing, sowing, reaping, &c.; the *ceremonial times*, the times appointed for the solemn feasts; therefore they are said to *call the people to the mountain*, Deut. 33. 19.; for almanacks were not then so common as now. Or, rather, the *political times*, they understood public affairs, the temper of the nation, and the tendencies of the present events. It is the periphrasis of statesmen, that they *know the times*, Esth. 1. 13. Those of that tribe were greatly intent on public affairs, and had good intelligence from abroad: and they made a good use of it; they knew *what Israel ought to do*: from their observation and experience, they learned both their own and others' duty and interest. In this critical juncture, they knew Israel ought to make David king. It was not only expedient, but necessary; the present posture of affairs called for it. The men of Issachar dealt mostly in country-business, and did

not much intermeddle in public affairs; which gave them an opportunity of observing others, and conversing with themselves. A stander-by sees sometimes more than a gamester. (2.) They were men of great interests; for *all their brethren were at their commandment*. The commonalty of that tribe having *bowed their shoulders to bear*, (Gen. 49. 15.) the great men had them at their beck. Hence we read of *the princes of Issachar*, Judg. 5. 15. They knew how to rule, and the rest knew how to obey. It is happy indeed, when those that should lead, are intelligent and judicious; and those who are to follow modest and obsequious.

7. It is said of them all, that they engaged in this enterprise, *with a perfect heart*, v. 38. and particularly of the men of Zebulun, that they were *not of double heart*, v. 33. They were, in this matter, *Israelites indeed, in whom was no guile*. And this was their perfection, that they were of one heart in it, v. 38. None had any separate interests, but all for the public good.

Lastly, The men of Judah, and others of the adjacent tribes, prepared for the victualling of their respective camps, when they came to Hebron, v. 39, 40. They that were at the least pains in travelling to this convention or congress of the states, thought themselves obliged to be at so much the more charge in entertaining the rest, that there might be something of an equality. A noble feast was made, (*was made for laughter*, Eccl. 10. 19.) upon this occasion, for there was *joy in Israel*, v. 40. And good reason; for *when the righteous bear rule, the city rejoices*. Thus, when the throne of Christ is set up in a soul, there is, ought to be, great joy in that soul: and provision is made for the feasting of it; not as here, for two or three days, but for the whole life, nay, for eternity.

CHAP. XIII.

In the foregoing chapter, we have David made king, by which the civil government was happily settled. In this chapter, care is taken about religion. I. David consults with the representatives of the people about bringing up the ark out of its obscurity into a public place; and it is resolved on, v. 1. 4. II. With a great deal of solemnity and joy, it is carried from Kirjath-jearim, v. 5. 8. III. Uzza is struck dead for touching it; which, for the present, spoils the solemnity, and stops the proceedings, v. 9. 14.

1. **AND** David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, *and with every leader*. 2. And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, *If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the Lord our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites which are in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us*: 3. And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we inquired not at it in the days of Saul. 4. And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people. 5. So David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Hemath, to bring the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim. 6. And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, *that is, to Kirjath-jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the Lord*,

that dwelleth *between* the cherubims, whose name is called *on it*. 7. And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart. 8. And David and all Israel played before God with all *their* might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

Here is,

I. David's pious proposal to bring up the ark of God to Jerusalem, that the *royal* city might be the *holy* city, v. 1. 3. This part of the story we had not in Samuel. We may observe in this proposal,

1. That as soon as David was well seated on his throne, he had thoughts concerning the Ark of God: *Let us bring that to us*, v. 3. Two things he aimed at herein. (1.) To do honour to God, by showing respect to his ark, the token of his presence. As soon as he had power in his hand, he would use it for the advancement and encouragement of religion. Note, It ought to be the first and great care of those that are enriched and preferred, to honour God with their honours, and to serve him, and the interests of his kingdom among men, with their wealth and power. David said not, "What pompous thing shall I do now?" Or, "What pleasant thing?" But, "What pious thing, to have the comfort and benefit of that sacred oracle. Let us bring it to us, not only that we may be a credit to it, but that it may be a blessing to us." They that honour God, profit themselves. Note, It is the wisdom of those who are setting out in the world, to take God's ark with them, and to make his oracles their counsellors, and his laws their rule. These are likely to proceed in the favour of God, who thus begin in the fear of God.

2. That he consulted with the leaders of the people about it, v. 1. Though it was, without doubt, a very good work, and, being king, he had authority to command the doing of it; yet he chose rather to do it by consultation. (1.) That he might show respect to the great men of the kingdom, and put honour upon them. Though they made him king, yet he would not rule with a high hand; saying, "We will and command, and it is our royal pleasure that you do so and so; and we will be obeyed;" but, "*If it seem good to you*, and you think that the motion comes from the Lord our God, let us send our orders for this purpose." No prince that is wise, will covet to be absolute. The people's allegiance is best secured by taking their concurrence in their representatives. Happy then art thou, O Britain! (2.) That he might be advised by them in the manner of doing it; whether just now, whether publicly. David was a very intelligent man himself, and yet consulted with his captains; *for in the multitude of counsellors there is safety*. It is wisdom to make use of the wisdom of others. (2.) That they joining in it, it might pass the better for a national act, and so might procure a national blessing.

3. That he would have all the people summoned to attend on this occasion, both to the honour of the ark, and for the people's satisfaction and edification, v. 2. Observe, (1.) He calls the common people *brethren*; which bespeaks his humility and condescension, (notwithstanding his advancement,) and the tender concern he had for them. Thus our Lord Jesus is not ashamed to call his people *brethren*, Heb. 2. 11. (2.) He speaks of the people as a remnant that was escaped: *our brethren that are left in all the land of Israel*. They had been under scattering providences. Their wars with the Phi-

hstines, and with the house of Saul, had wasted the country, and cut off many. We now hope to see an end of these troubles: let them that are left, be quickened by late judgments, and present mercies, to seek unto God. (3.) He takes care that the priests and Levites, especially, should be summoned to attend the ark; for it was their province in a particular manner. Thus christian magistrates should stir up ministers to do their duty, when they see them remiss. (4.) That all this is upon supposition, that it is *of the Lord their God*. Though it should *seem good to you* and me; yet, if it be not *of the Lord our God*, we will not do it. Whatever we undertake, this must be our inquiry: "Is it of the Lord; Is it agreeable to his mind? Can we approve ourselves to him in it? May we expect that he will own us?" (5.) That thus it was requisite they should amend what had been amiss in the last reign, and, as it were, atone for their neglect: "For *we inquired not at it in the days of Saul*; and that was the reason things went on so ill with us: let that original error be amended, and then we may hope to see our affairs in a better posture. Observe, David makes no peevish reflections upon Saul. He does not say, "Saul never cared for the ark, at least, in the latter end of his reign." but, in general, *We inquired not at it*; making himself with others guilty of the neglect. It better becomes us to judge ourselves than others. Humble, good men lament their own share in national guilt, and take shame to themselves, Dan. 9. 5, &c.

II. The people's ready agreement to this proposal, *v. 4, The thing was right in the eyes of all the people*. No body could say to the contrary, but that it was a very good work, and very seasonable; so that it was resolved, *namine contradicente—unanimously*, that they would do so. They that prudently propose a good work, and lead in it, will perhaps find a more ready concurrence in it than they expected. Great men know not what a great deal of good they are capable of doing by their influence on others.

3. The solemnity of bringing up the ark, *v. 5, &c.* which we read before, 2 Sam. 6. 1, &c. Here therefore we shall only observe, (1.) That it is worth while to travel far, to attend the ark of God. They came out of all parts of the country, from the *river of Egypt*, the utmost part south, to the entering of Hemath, which lay furthest north, *v. 5*. to grace this solemnity. (2.) That we have reason greatly to rejoice in the revival of neglected ordinances, and the return of the token of God's presence. When the light of religion shines out of obscurity, when it is openly and freely professed, is brought into reputation, and countenanced by princes and great ones, it is such a happy omen to a people, as is worthy to be welcomed with all possible expressions of joy. (3.) When, after long disuse, ordinances come to be revived, it is too common for even wise and good men to make some mistakes. Who would have thought that David would have committed such an error as this, to carry the ark upon a cart? *v. 7*. Because the Philistines so carried it, and a special providence drove the cart, 1 Sam. 6. 12. he thought they might do so too. But we must walk by rule, not by example, when it varies from the rule; even those examples which Providence has owned, are not to be followed, in violation of the rule.

9. And when they came unto the threshing-floor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled. 10. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because

he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God. 11. And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called Perez-uzza to this day. 12. And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God *home* to me? 13. So David brought not the ark *home* to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. 14. And the ark of God remained with the family of Obed-edom in his house three months. And the LORD blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that he had.

This breach upon Uzza, which caused all the joy to cease, we had an account of, 2 Sam. 6. 6, &c.

1. Let the sin of Uzza warn us all to take heed of presumption, rashness and irreverence, in dealing about holy things, *v. 9*. and not to think that a good intention will justify a bad action. In our communion with God, we must carefully watch over our own hearts, lest familiarity breed contempt, and we think God is any way beholden to us.

2. Let the punishment of Uzza convince us that the God with whom we have to do, is a jealous God. His death, like that of Nadab and Abihu, proclaims aloud that God will be *sanctified in those that come nigh unto him*, Lev. 10. 3. and that the nearer they are to him, the more displeased he is with their presumptions. Let us not dare trifle with God in our approaches to him; and yet let us, through Christ, *come boldly to a throne of grace*; for we are under the dispensation of liberty and grace, not of bondage and terror.

3. Let the damp this gave to the joy of Israel, be a memorandum to us, always to rejoice with trembling, and to *serve the Lord with fear*, even then when we *serve him with gladness*.

4. Let David's displeasure, upon this occasion, caution us to take heed to our spirits, when we are under divine rebukes, lest, instead of submitting to God, we quarrel with him. If God be angry with us, shall we dare be angry with him?

5. Let the stop thus put to the solemnity, caution us not to be driven off from our duty by those providences which are only intended to drive us from our sins. David should have gone on with this work, notwithstanding the breach made upon Uzza; so might the breach have been made up.

Lastly, Let the blessing which the ark brought with it to the house of Obed-edom, encourage us to welcome God's ordinances into our house, as those that believe the ark is a guest nobody shall lose by; nor let it be the less precious to us, for its being to some a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence. If the gospel be to some a savour of death unto death, as the ark was to Uzza; yet let us receive it in the love of it, and it will be to us a savour of life unto life.

CHAP. XIV.

In this chapter, we have, I. David's kingdom established. II. His family built up, *v. 3. 7*. III. His enemies, the Philistines, routed in two campaigns, *v. 8. 17*. This is repeated here from 2 Sam. 5. 11, &c.

1. **N**OW Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timber of cedars, with masons and carpenters to build

him a house. 2. And David perceived that the LORD had confirmed him king over Israel; for his kingdom was lifted up on high, because of his people Israel. 3. And David took more wives at Jerusalem: and David begat more sons and daughters. 4. Now these are the names of his children which he had in Jerusalem; Shammua, and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon. 5. And Ithar, and Elishua, and Elpalet. 6. And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia. 7. And Elishama, and Beeliada, and Eliphalet.

We may observe here,

1. There is no man that has such a sufficiency in himself, but he has need of his neighbours, and has reason to be thankful for their help. David had a very large kingdom, Hiram a very little one; yet David cannot build him a house to his mind, unless Hiram furnish him both workmen and materials, *v. 1.* which is a reason why we should despise none, but, as we have opportunity, be obliging to all.

2. It is a great satisfaction to a wise man, to be settled, and to a good man, to see the special providence of God in his settlement. The people had made David king; but he could not be easy, nor think himself happy, till he perceived that *the Lord had confirmed him king over Israel, v. 1.* Who shall unhx me, if God hath fixed me?

3. We must look upon all our advancements as designed for our usefulness. *David's kingdom was lift up on high*, not for his own sake, that he might look great; but because of his people Israel, that he might be a guide and protector to them. We are *therefore* blessed, that we may be blessings. See Gen. 12. 2. We are not born, nor do we live, for ourselves.

4. It is hard to thrive, and not grow secure and indulgent to the flesh. It was David's infirmity, that when he was settled in his kingdom, *he took more wives, v. 3.* yet the numerous issue he had, added to his honour and strength. Lo, *children are a heritage of the Lord.* We had an account of David's children, not only in Samuel, but in this book, *ch. 3. 1.* &c. and now here again; for it was their honour to have such a father.

8. And when the Philistines heard that David was anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David: and David heard of it, and went out against them. 9. And the Philistines came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim. 10. And David inquired of God, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? and wilt thou deliver them into my hand? And the LORD said unto him, Go up; for I will deliver them into thy hand. 11. So they came up to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there. Then David said, God hath broken in upon mine enemies by my hand, like the breaking forth of waters: therefore they called the name of that place Baal-perazim. 12. And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burnt with fire. 13. And the Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley. 14. Therefore

David inquired again of God: and God said unto him, Go not up after them; turn away from them, and come upon them over against the mulberry-trees. 15. And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry-trees, *that* then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee to smite the host of the Philistines. 16. David therefore did as God commanded him: and they smote the host of the Philistines from Gibeon even to Gazer. 17. And the fame of David went out into all lands; and the LORD brought the fear of him upon all nations.

This narrative of David's triumph over the Philistines, is much the same with that, 2 Sam. 5. 17, &c.

1. Let the attack which the Philistines made upon David, forbid us to be secure in any settlement or advancement, and engage us to expect molestation in this world. When we are most easy, something or other may come to be a terror or vexation to us. Christ's kingdom will thus be insulted by the serpent's seed, especially when it makes any advances.

2. Let David's inquiry of God, once, and again, upon occasion of the Philistines invading him, direct us in all our ways to acknowledge him, in distress, to fly to him, when we are wronged, to appeal to him, and when we know not what to do, to ask counsel at his oracles, to put ourselves under his conduct, and to beg of him to show us the right way.

3. Let David's success encourage us to resist our spiritual enemies, in observance of divine directions, and in dependence on divine strength. Resist the Devil, and he shall fly as the Philistines did before David.

4. Let the sound of the going in the top of the mulberry trees, direct us to attend God's motion, both in his providence and in the influence of his Spirit. When we perceive God to go before, let us gird up our loins, gird on our armour, and follow him.

5. Let David's burning the gods of the Philistines, when they fell into his hands, teach us a holy indignation against idolatry, and all the remains of it.

6. Let David's thankful acknowledgment of the hand of God in his successes, direct us to bring all our sacrifices of praise to God's altar. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory.*

Lastly, Let the name of David, not only in his own kingdom, but among his neighbours, be looked upon as a type and figure of the exalted honour of the Son of David, *v. 17.* *The fame of David went out into all lands:* he was generally talked of, and admired by all people, and *the Lord brought the fear of him upon all nations.* All looked upon him as a formidable enemy, and a desirable ally. Thus has God highly exalted our Redeemer, and given him a name above every name.

CHAP. XV.

The bringing in of the ark to the city of David, was a very good work; it was resolved upon, *ch. 13. 3.* and attempted, but not perfected; it lay by the way in the house of Obadedom. Now this chapter gives us an account of the completing of that good work. I. How it was done more regularly than before. 1. A place was prepared for it, *v. 1.* 2. The priests were ordered to carry it, *v. 2. . . 15.* 3. The Levites had their offices assigned them in attending on it, *16. . . 24.* II. How it was done more successfully than before, *v. 25.* 1. The Levites made no mistake in their work, *v. 26.* 2. David and the people

met with no damp upon their joy, v. 27, 28. As for Michal's despising David, it was nothing, v. 29.

1. **A**ND David made him houses in the city of David, and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent. 2. Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever. 3. And David gathered all Israel together to Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD unto his place which he had prepared for it. 4. And David assembled the children of Aaron, and the Levites: 5. Of the sons of Kohath; Uriel the chief, and his brethren, a hundred and twenty. 6. Of the sons of Merari; Asaiah the chief, and his brethren, two hundred and twenty. 7. Of the sons of Gershom; Joel the chief, and his brethren, a hundred and thirty. 8. Of the sons of Elizaphan; Shemaiah the chief, and his brethren, two hundred. 9. Of the sons of Hebron; Eliel the chief, and his brethren, fourscore. 10. Of the sons of Uzziel; Amminadab the chief, and his brethren, a hundred and twelve. 11. And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab, 12. And said unto them, Ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it. 13. For because ye *did it* not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order. 14. So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel. 15. And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders, with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded, according to the word of the LORD. 16. And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of music, psalteries, and harps, and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy. 17. So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, Asaph the son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari their brethren, Ethan the son of Kushaiah; 18. And with them their brethren of the second degree, Zechariah, Ben, and Jaaziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaseiah, and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah; and Obed-edom and Jeiel the porters. 19. So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were appointed to sound with

cymbals of brass; 20. And Zechariah, and Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with psalteries on Alamoth; 21. And Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah, with harps on the Sheminith to excel. 22. And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was for song: he instructed about the song, because he was skilful. 23. And Berechiah and Elkanah were door-keepers for the ark. 24. And Shebaniah, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God; and Obed-edom and Jehiah were door-keepers for the ark.

Preparation is here made for the bringing of the ark home to the city of David, from the house of Obed-edom. It is here owned that in the former attempt, though it was a very good work, and in it they sought God, yet they sought him not after the due order, v. 13. "We did not go about our work considerably; and therefore we sped so ill." Note, 1. It is not enough that we do that which is good, but we must do it well; nor enough that we seek God in a due ordinance, but we must seek him in a due order. 2. When we have suffered for our irregularities, we must learn thereby to be more regular; then we answer the end of chastisement.

Let us see how the matter was mended.

1. David now prepared a place for the reception of the ark, before he brought it to him; and thus he sought in the due order. He had not time to build a house, but he pitched a tent, for it, v. 1. probably, according to the pattern showed to Moses in the mount, or as near it as might be, of curtains and boards. Observe, When he made houses for himself in the city of David, he prepared a place for the ark. Note, Wherever we build for ourselves, we must be sure to make room for God's ark, for a church in the house.

2. David now ordered that the Levites or priests should carry the ark upon their shoulders. Now he thought himself of that which he could not but know before, that none ought to carry the ark but the Levites, v. 2. The Kohathites carried it in their ordinary marches, and therefore had no waggons allotted them, because their work was to bear upon their shoulders, Numb. 7. 9. But, upon extraordinary occasions, as when they passed Jordan, and compassed Jericho, the priests carried it. This rule was express, and yet David himself forgot it, and put the ark upon a cart. Note, Even they that are very knowing in the word of God, yet have it not always so ready to them as were to be wished, when they have occasion to use it. Wise and good men may be guilty of an oversight, which as soon as they are aware of, they will correct. David does not go about to justify what had been done amiss, nor to lay the blame on others, but owns himself guilty, with others, of not seeking God in a due order, and now takes care not only to summon the Levites to the solemnity, as he did all Israel, v. 3. and had done before, ch. 13. 2. but to see that they were assembled, v. 4. especially the sons of Aaron, v. 11. To them he gives that solemn charge, v. 12, Ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites, therefore bring up the ark of the Lord. Note, It is expected that those who are advanced above others in dignity, go before others in duty; "You are the chief, and therefore more is expected from you than from

others, both by way of service yourselves, and influence on the rest. You did it not at first, neither did your duty yourselves, nor took care to instruct us; and we smarted for it, *the Lord made a breach upon us*. We have all smarted for your neglect: *this has been by your means*;" (See Mal. 1. 9.) therefore sanctify yourselves, and mind your business. When those that suffered for doing ill, thus learn to do better, the correction is well bestowed.

3. The Levites and priests were sanctified themselves, v. 14. and were ready to carry the ark on their shoulders, according to the law, v. 15. Note, Many that are very remiss in their duty, if they were but faithfully told of it, would reform, and do better. The breach upon Uzza made the priests more careful to sanctify themselves, that is, to cleanse themselves from all ceremonial pollution, and to compose themselves for the solemn service of God, so as to strike a reverence upon the people. Some are made examples, that others may be made exemplary and very cautious.

4. Officers were appointed to be ready to bid the ark welcome, with all possible expressions of joy, v. 16. David ordered the chief of the Levites to nominate those that they knew to be proficient, for this service. Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were now first appointed, v. 17. They undertook to sound with cymbals, v. 19. others with psalteries, v. 20. others with harps, on the *Shemith*, or *eighth*, eight notes higher or lower than the rest, according to the rules of concert, v. 21. Some that were priests, blew with the trumpet, v. 24. as was usual at the removal of the ark, Numb. 10. 8. and at solemn feasts, Ps. 81. 3. And one was appointed for song, v. 22. for he was skilful in it, could sing well himself, and instruct others. Note, As every man has *received the gift*, so he ought to *minister the same*, 1 Pet. 4. 10. And those that excel in any endowment, should not only use it for the common good themselves, but teach others also, and not grudge to make others as wise as themselves. This way of praising God by musical instruments had not hitherto been in use: but David, being a prophet, instituted it by divine direction, and added it to the other *cardinal ordinances* of that dispensation, as the apostle calls them, Heb. 9. 10. The New Testament keeps up singing of psalms, but has not appointed church music. Some were appointed to be porters, v. 18. others door-keepers for the ark, v. 23, 24. and one of them was Obed-edom, who reckoned it, no doubt, a place of honour, and accepted it as a recompense for the entertainment he had given to the ark. He had been, for three months, housekeeper to the ark, and indeed its landlord. But when he might not be so any longer, such an affection had he for it, that he was glad to be its door-keeper.

25. So David, and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the house of Obed-edom with joy. 26. And it came to pass, when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, that they offered seven bullocks and seven rams. 27. And David *was* clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the song with the singers: David also *had* upon him an ephod of linen. 28. Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting, and with sound

of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps. 29. And it came to pass, *as* the ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the city of David, that Michal, the daughter of Saul, looking out at a window, saw king David dancing and playing: and she despised him in her heart.

All things being got ready for the carrying of the ark to the city of David, and its reception there, we have here an account of the solemnity of this conveyance thither from the house of Obed-edom.

1. God helped the Levites that carried it. The ark was no very great burthen, that they who carried it, needed any extraordinary help. But, (1.) It is good to take notice of the assistance of the Divine Providence, even in those things that fall within the compass of our natural powers: if God did not help us, we could not stir a step. (2.) In all our religious exercises, we must particularly derive help from Heaven. See Acts 26. 22. All our sufficiency for holy duties is from God. (3.) The Levites, perhaps, remembering the breach upon Uzza, were ready to tremble when they took up the ark; but God helped them, that is, he encouraged them to it, silenced their fears, and strengthened their faith. (4.) God helped them to do it decently and well, and without making any mistake. If we perform any religious duties, so as to escape a breach, and come off with our lives, we must own it was God that helped us; for had we been left to ourselves, we should have been guilty of some fatal miscarriages. God's ministers that bear the vessels of the Lord, have special need of divine help in their ministrations, that God in them may be glorified, and his church edified. And if God help the Levites, the people have the benefit of it.

2. When they experienced the tokens of God's presence with them, they offered sacrifices of praise to him, v. 26. This also he helped them to do. They offered these bullocks and rams, perhaps, by way of atonement for the former error, that that might not now be remembered against them, as well as by way of acknowledgment for the help now received.

3. There were great expressions of rejoicing used; the sacred music played, David danced, the singers sang, and the common people shouted, v. 27, 28. This we had before, 2 Sam. 6. 14, 15. Learn hence, (1.) That we serve a good Master, who delights to have his servants sing at their work. (2.) That times of public reformation are, and should be, times of public rejoicing. These are unworthy of the ark, that are not glad of it. (3.) It is not any disparagement to the greatest of men, to show themselves zealous in the acts of devotion. Michal indeed despised David, v. 29.; but *her* despising him did not make him at all despicable; he did not regard it himself, nor did any that were wise and good, (and why should we covet the esteem of any but such?) think the worse of him.

CHAP. XVI.

This chapter concludes that great affair of the settlement of the ark in the royal city, and, with it, the settlement of the public worship of God during the reign of king David. Here is, I. The solemnity with which the ark was fixed, v. 1. 6. II. The psalm David gave to be sung on this occasion, v. 7. 36. III. The setting of the constant worship of God in order, thenceforward, v. 37. 43.

1. **S**O they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that

David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt-sacrifices and peace-offerings before God. 2. And when David had made an end of offering the burnt-offerings and the peace-offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD. 3. And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. 4. And he appointed *certain* of the Levites to minister before the ark of the LORD, and to record, and to thank and praise the LORD God of Israel: 5. Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed-edom; and Jeiel with psalteries and with harps; but Asaph made a sound with cymbals; 6. Benaiah also and Jahaziel the priests with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.

It was a glorious day when the ark of God was safely lodged in the tent David had pitched for it. That good man had his heart much upon it, could not sleep contentedly till it was done, Ps. 132. 4. The circumstances of the ark were now, 1. Better than what they had been. It had been obscure in a country-town, in the fields of the wood; now it is removed to a public place, to the royal city, where all might have resorted to it. It had been neglected, as a despised broken vessel; now it is attended with veneration, and God is inquired of by it. It had borrowed a room in a private house, which it enjoyed by the good-will of an individual; now it has a habitation of its own, entire to itself, is set in the midst of it, and not crowded into a corner. Note, Though God's word and ordinances may be clouded and eclipsed for a time, they shall, at length, shine out of obscurity. Yet, 2. They were much short of what was intended in the next reign, when the temple was to be built. This was but a tent, a poor mean dwelling, yet this was the tabernacle, the temple, which David, in his psalms, often speaks of with so much affection. David, who pitched a tent for the ark, and continued steadfast to it, did far better than Solomon, who built a temple for it, and yet, in his latter end, turned his back upon it. The church's poorest times were its purest.

Now David is easy in his mind; the ark is fixed, and fixed near him. Now see how he takes care,

(1.) That God have the glory of it. Two ways, he gives him honour upon this occasion; [1.] By sacrifices; *v.* 1. burnt-offerings, in adoration of his perfections; peace-offerings, in acknowledgment of his favours. [2.] By songs; he appointed Levites to record this story in a song for the benefit of others, or to celebrate it themselves by *thanking and praising the God of Israel*, *v.* 4. All our rejoicings must express themselves in thanksgivings to him from whom all our comforts are received.

(2.) That the people have the joy of it. They shall fare the better for this day's solemnity; for he gives them all, what was worth coming for, a royal treat, in honour of the day, *v.* 3.; in which David showed himself generous to his subjects, as he had found God gracious to him. They, whose hearts are enlarged with holy joy, should show it by being open-handed. But (which was far better) he gave

them also a *blessing in the name of the Lord*, as a father, as a prophet, *v.* 2.; he prayed to God for them, and commended them to his grace. *In the name of the Word of the Lord*, so the Targum, the essential eternal Word, who is Jehovah, and through whom all blessings come to us.

7. Then on that day David delivered first *this psalm*, to thank the LORD, into the hand of Asaph and his brethren. 8. Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. 9. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works. 10. Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD. 11. Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually. 12. Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth; 13. O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen ones. 14. He *is* the LORD our God; his judgments *are* in all the earth. 15. Be ye mindful always of his covenant, the word *which* he commanded to a thousand generations; 16. *Even of the covenant* which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; 17. And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, *and* to Israel *for* an everlasting covenant, 18. Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance; 19. When ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it. 20. And *when* they went from nation to nation, and from *one* kingdom to another people; 21. He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes, 22. *Saying*, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm. 23. Sing unto the LORD, all the earth; show forth from day to day his salvation. 24. Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations. 25. For great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised: he also *is* to be feared above all gods. 26. For all the gods of the people *are* idols: but the LORD made the heavens. 27. Glory and honour *are* in his presence; strength and gladness *are* in his place. 28. Give unto the LORD, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength. 29. Give unto the LORD the glory *due* unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. 30. Fear before him, all the earth: the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved. 31. Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let *men* say among the nations, The LORD reigneth. 32. Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; let the fields rejoice, and all that *is*

therein. 33. Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, because he cometh to judge the earth. 34. O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is good*: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. 35. And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, *and* glory in thy praise. 36. Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD.

We have here the thanksgiving-psalm which David, by the Spirit, composed, and delivered by the chief musician, to be sung upon occasion of the public entry the ark made into the tent prepared for it; some think he had appointed this hymn to be daily used in the temple-service, as duly as the day came; whatever other psalms they sung, they must not omit this. David had penned many psalms before this, some in the time of his troubles by Saul. This was composed before; but was now first delivered into the hand of Asaph, for the use of the church. It is gathered out of several psalms. From the beginning to v. 23. is taken from Ps. 105. 1, &c.; and then v. 23. to v. 34. is the whole 96th psalm, with little variation; v. 34. is taken from Ps. 136. 1. and divers others; and then the two last verses are taken from the close of Ps. 106. which, some think, warrants us to do likewise, to make up hymns out of David's psalms, a part of one, and a part of another, put together, so as may be most proper to express and excite the devotion of christians.

These psalms will be best expounded in their proper places; (if the Lord will;) here we take them as they are put together, with a design to *thank the Lord*, v. 7. a great duty, to which we need to be excited, and in which we need to be assisted.

1. Let God be glorified in our praises, let his honour be the centre in which all the lines meet. Let us glorify him by our thanksgivings, *Give thanks to the Lord*; by our prayers, *Call on his name*, v. 8.; by our songs, *Sing psalms unto him*; by our discourse, *Talk of all his wondrous works*, v. 9. Glorify him as a great God, and greatly to be praised, v. 25. as supreme God, (above all gods,) as sole God: for all others are idols, v. 26. Glorify him as most bright and blessed in himself, *Glory and honour are in his presence*, v. 27.; as Creator, *The Lord made the heavens*; as the Ruler of the whole creation, *His judgments are in all the earth*, v. 14.; and as our's, *He is the Lord our God*. Thus must we give unto the Lord the glory due to his name, v. 28, 29. and own it, and much more, his due.

2. Let others be edified and instructed. *Make known his deeds among the people*, v. 8. *Declare his glory among the heathen*, v. 24. that those who are strangers to him, may be led into acquaintance with him, allegiance to him, and the adoration of him. Thus must we serve the interests of his kingdom among men, that all the earth may *fear before him*, v. 30.

3. Let us be ourselves encouraged to triumph and trust in God. They that give glory to God's name, are allowed to *glory in it*, v. 10. to value themselves upon their relation to God, and venture themselves upon his promise to them. *Let the heart of them rejoice, that seek the Lord*, much more they that have found him. *Seek him, and his*

strength, and his face; that is, seek him by the ark of his strength, in which he manifests himself.

4. Let the everlasting covenant be the great matter of our joy and praise; v. 15. *Be ye mindful of his covenant*. In the parallel place it is, *He will be ever mindful of it*, Ps. 105. 8. Seeing God never will forget it, we never must. The covenant is said to be *commanded*; because God has obliged us to obey the conditions of it, and because he has both authority to make the promise, and ability to make it good. This covenant was ancient, yet never to be forgotten. It was made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were long since dead, v. 16-18. yet still sure to the spiritual seed, and the promises of it pleasurable.

5. Let God's former mercies to his people of old, to our ancestors and predecessors in profession, be commemorated by us now, with thankfulness to his praise. Let it be remembered, how God protected the patriarchs in their unsettled condition, when they came strangers to Canaan, and were sojourners in it; when they were few, and might easily have been swallowed up; when they were continually upon the remove, and so exposed; when there were many that bore them ill-will, and sought to do them mischief: yet no man was suffered to do them wrong; not the Canaanites, Philistines, Egyptians; kings were reprov'd, and plagued, for their sakes. Pharaoh was so, and Abimelech. They were the *anointed of the Lord*, sanctified by his grace, sanctified to his glory, and had received the unction of the Spirit. They were his prophets, instructed in the things of God themselves, and commissioned to instruct others; (and prophets are said to be *anointed*, 1 Kings 19. 16. Isa. 61. 1.) and therefore if any touch them, they touch the apple of God's eye; if any harm them, it is at their peril, v. 19-22.

6. Let the great salvation of the Lord be especially the subject of our praises: v. 23. *Show forth from day to day his salvation*; that is, (says Bishop Patrick,) his promised salvation by Christ. We have reason to celebrate that, from day to day; for we daily receive the benefit of it, and it is a subject that can never be exhausted.

7. Let God be praised by a due and constant attendance upon him in the ordinances he has appointed; *Bring an offering, then*, the fruit of the ground, *now*, the fruit of the lips, of the heart, Heb. 13. 15.; and *worship him in the beauty of holiness*, in the holy place, and in a holy manner, v. 29. Holiness is the beauty of the Lord, the beauty of all sanctified souls, and all religious performances.

8. Let God's universal monarchy be the fear and joy of all people. Let us reverence it; *Fear before him, all the earth*. And let us rejoice in it: *Let the heavens be glad and rejoice*, because *the Lord reigns*; and that establishes the world, so that though it be moved, it cannot be removed, nor the measures broken, which Infinite Wisdom has taken in the government of it, v. 30, 31.

9. Let the prospect of the judgment to come, inspire us with an awful pleasure. Let earth and sea, fields and woods, though in the great day of the Lord they will all be consumed, yet rejoice that he will come, doth come, to *judge the earth*, v. 32, 33.

10. In the midst of our praises, we must not forget to pray for the succour and relief of those saints and servants of God, that are in distress; v. 25. *Save us, gather us, deliver us from the heathen*, those of us that are scattered, and oppressed. When we are rejoicing in God's favours to us, we must remember our afflicted brethren, and pray for their salvation and deliverance as our own. We are members one of another; and therefore when we mean, "Lord, save *them*," it is not improper to say, "Lord, save *us*."

Lastly, Let us make God the Alpha and Omega of all our praises. He began, v. 8, *Give thanks to the Lord*; he concludes, v. 36, *Blessed be the Lord*. And whereas in the place whence this doxology is taken, (Ps. 106. 48.) it is added, *Let all the people say, Amen; Hallelujah*; here we find that they did according to that directory: *All the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord*. When the Levites had finished this psalm of prayer and praise, then, and not till then, the people that attended, signified their consent and concurrence, by saying, *Amen*. And so they praised the Lord, much affected, no doubt, with this newly instituted way of devotion, which had been hitherto used in the schools of the prophets only, 1 Sam. 10. 5. And if this way of praising God, *please the Lord better than an ox or a bullock that has horns and hoofs, the humble shall see it, and be glad*, Ps. 69. 31, 32.

37. So he left there, before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, as every day's work required: 38. And Obed-edom, with their brethren, three-score and eight; Obed-edom also, the son of Jeduthun, and Hosah, *to be porters*: 39. And Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the LORD in the high place that *was* at Gibeon, 40. To offer burnt-offerings unto the LORD upon the altar of the burnt-offering continually, morning and evening, and *to do* according to all that is written in the law of the LORD, which he commanded Israel: 41. And with them Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest that were chosen, who were expressed by name, to give thanks to the LORD, because his mercy *endureth* for ever: 42. And with them Heman and Jeduthun, with trumpets and cymbals for those that should make a sound, and with musical instruments of God. And the sons of Jeduthun *were* porters. 43. And all the people departed, every man to his house: and David returned to bless his house.

The worship of God is not only to be the work of a solemn day now and then, brought in to grace a triumph; but it ought to be the work of every day. David therefore settles it here for a constancy; puts it into a method, which he obliged those that officiated to observe in their respective posts.

In the tabernacle of Moses, and afterward in the temple of Solomon, the ark and the altar were together; but ever since Eli's time, they had been separated, and still continued so till the temple was built. I cannot conceive what reason there was, why David, who knew the law, and was zealous for it, did not either bring the ark to Gibeon, where the tabernacle and the altar were, or bring them to mount Zion, where the ark was. Perhaps the curtains and hangings of Moses's tabernacle were so worn with time and weather, that they were not fit to be removed, nor fit to be a shelter for the ark; and yet he would not make all new, but only a tent for the ark, because the time was at hand when the temple should be built. Whatever was the reason, all David's time, they were asunder: but he took care that neither of them should be neglected.

1 At Jerusalem where the ark was, Asaph and

his brethren were appointed to attend, to *minister before the ark continually*, with songs of praise, *as every day's work required*, v. 37. No sacrifices were offered there, nor incense burnt, because the altars were not there; but David's prayers were directed as incense, and the lifting up of his hands as the evening sacrifice, Ps. 141. 2. So early did spiritual worship take place of ceremonial.

2. Yet the ceremonial worship, being of divine institution, must by no means be omitted; and therefore at Gibeon were the altars where the priests attended; for their work was to sacrifice, and burn incense; and that they did *continually, morning and evening, according to the law of Moses*, v. 39, 40. These must be kept up, because, however in their own nature they were inferior to the moral services of prayer and praise, yet, as they were types of the mediation of Christ, they had a great deal of honour put upon them, and the observance of them was of great consequence. Here Zadok attended, to preside in the service of the altar; as (it is probable) Abiathar settled in Jerusalem, to attend the ark, because he had the breast-plate of judgment, which must be consulted before the ark: this is the reason why we read that in David's time, both Zadok and Abiathar were the priests, 2 Sam. 8. 17.—15. 29. one, where the altar was, and the other, where the ark was. At Gibeon, where the altars were, David also appointed *singers to give thanks to the Lord*; and the burthen of all their songs must be, *For his mercy endureth for ever*, v. 41. They did it *with musical instruments of God*; such instruments as were appointed and appropriated to this service, not such as they used on other occasions. Between common mirth, and holy joy, there is a vast difference; and the limits and distances between them must be carefully observed and kept up.

Matters being thus settled, and the affairs of religion put into a happy channel, (1.) The people were satisfied, and went home pleased. (2.) David returned to bless his house, resolving to keep up his family-worship still, which public worship must not supersede.

CHAP. XVII.

This excellent chapter is the same with 2 Sam. 7. It will be worth while to look back upon what was there said upon it. Two things in general we have in it. I. God's gracious acceptance of David's purpose to build him a house, and the promise he made thereupon, v. 1.—15. II. David's gracious acceptance of God's good promise to build him a house, and the *prayer* he made thereupon, v. 16.—27.

1. **N**OW it came to pass, as David sat in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, Lo, I dwell in a house of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the LORD *remaineth* under curtains. 2. Then Nathan said unto David, Do all that is in thy heart; for God is with thee. 3. And it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came to Nathan, saying, 4. Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the LORD. Thou shalt not build me a house to dwell in: 5. For I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but have gone from tent to tent, and from *one tabernacle to another*. 6. Wheresoever I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my

people, saying, Why have ye not built me a house of cedars? 7. Now therefore thou shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, *even* from following the sheep, that thou shouldst be ruler over my people Israel; 8. And I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a name like the name of the great men that *are* in the earth. 9. Also I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them any more, as at the beginning, 10. And since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people Israel. Moreover, I will subdue all thine enemies. Furthermore I tell thee, that the LORD will build thee a house. 11. And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired, that thou must go *to be* with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. 12. He shall build me a house, and I will establish his throne for ever. 13. I will be his father, and he shall be my son; and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took *it* from *him* that was before thee: 14. But I will settle him in my house and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for evermore. 15. According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

Let us observe here,

I. How desirous and solicitous good people should be, to serve the interests of God's kingdom in the world, to the utmost of their capacity. David could not be easy in a house of cedar, while the ark was lodged within curtains, v. 1. The concerns of the public should always be near our hearts. What pleasure can we take in our own prosperity, if we see not the good of Jerusalem? When David is advanced to wealth and power, see what his cares and projects are. Not, "What shall I do for my children, to get portions for them? What shall I do to fill my coffers, and enlarge my dominions?" But, "What shall I do for God, to serve and honour him?" They that are contriving where to bestow their fruits and their goods, would do well to inquire what condition the ark is in, and whether some may not be well bestowed upon it.

II. How ready God's prophets should be to encourage every good purpose. Nathan was no sooner aware of David's good design, than he bade him *go, and do all that was within his heart*, v. 2. for he had no reason to doubt that God was with him in it. Ministers should stir up the gifts and graces that are in others, as well as in themselves.

III. How little God affects external pomp and splendor in his service. His ark was content with a tabernacle, v. 5. and he never so much as mentioned the building of a house for it; no, not when he had fixed his people in great and goodly cities

which they builded not, Deut. 6. 10. He commanded the judges to *feed his people*, but never bid them *build him a house*, v. 6. We may well be content a while with mean accommodations; God's ark was so.

IV. How graciously God accepts his people's good purposes, yea, though he himself prevents the performance of them. David must not *build this house*, v. 4. He must prepare for it, but not do it; as Moses must bring Israel within sight of Canaan, but must then leave it to Joshua to put them in possession of it. It is the prerogative of Christ to be both the Author and Finisher of his work. Yet he must not think that, because he was not permitted to build the temple, 1. His preferment was in vain; no, "*I took thee from the sheepcote*, though not to be a builder of the temple, yet to be *ruler over my people Israel*; that is honour enough for thee, leave the other to one that shall come after thee," v. 7. Why should one man think to engross all the business, and to bring every good work to perfection; let something be left for them that succeed. God had given him victories, and made him a name, v. 8. and, further, intended by him to establish his people Israel, and secure them against their enemies, v. 9. That must be *his* work, who is a man of war, and fit for it, and he must let building of churches alone for one that was never cut out for a soldier. Nor, 2. Must he think that his good purpose was in vain, and that he should lose the reward of it; no, it being God's act to prevent the execution of it, he shall be as fully recompensed as if he had done it. *The Lord will build thee a house*, and annex the crown of Israel to it, v. 10. If there be a willing mind, it shall not only be accepted, but thus rewarded. Nor, 3. Must he think that because *he* might not do this good work, therefore it never would be done, and that it was in vain to think of it; no, *I will raise up thy seed, and he shall build me a house*, v. 11, 12. God's temple shall be built in the time appointed, though we may not have the honour of helping to build it, or the satisfaction of seeing it built. Nor, 4. Must he confine his thoughts to the temporal prosperity of his family, but must entertain himself with the prospect of the kingdom of the Messiah, who should descend from his loins, and whose throne should be *established for evermore*, v. 14. Solomon was not so settled in God's house, as he should have been, nor was his family settled in the kingdom; "But there shall be one descend from thee whom I will settle in my house, and in my kingdom;" which intimates that he should be both a High Priest over the house of God, and should have the sole administration of the affairs of God's kingdom among men, all power both in heaven and in earth, in the house and in the kingdom, in the church, and in the world. He shall be *a Priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both, and he shall build the temple of the Lord*, Zech. 6. 12, 13.

16. And David the king came and sat before the LORD, and said, Who *am* I, O LORD God, and what *is* my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? 17. And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; for thou hast *also* spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O LORD God. 18. What can David *speak* more to thee for the honour of thy servant? for thou knowest thy servant. 19. O LORD, for thy servant's

sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all this greatness, in making known all these great things. 20. O LORD, *there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.* 21. And what one nation in the earth *is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be his own people, to make thee a name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt?* 22. For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and thou, LORD, becamest their God. 23. Therefore now, LORD, let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, be established for ever, and do as thou hast said. 24. Let it even be established, that thy name may be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts *is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel*: and *let the house of David thy servant be established before thee.* 25. For thou, O my God, hast told thy servant that thou wilt build him a house; therefore thy servant hath found *in his heart* to pray before thee. 26. And now, LORD, thou art God, and hast promised this goodness unto thy servant; 27. Now, therefore, let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever: for thou blessest, O LORD, and *it shall be blessed for ever.*

We have here David's solemn address to God, in answer to the gracious message he had now received from him. By faith he receives the promises, embraces them, and is persuaded of them, as the patriarchs, Heb. 11. 13. How humbly does he here abase himself, and acknowledge his own unworthiness! How highly does he advance the name of God, and admire his condescending grace and favour! With what devout affections does he magnify the God of Israel, and what a value has he for the Israel of God! With what an assurance does he build upon the promise, and with what a lively faith does he put it in suit! What an example is this to us of humble, believing, fervent, prayers! The Lord enables us all thus to seek him! These things were largely observed, 2 Sam. 7. We shall therefore here observe only those few expressions, in which the prayer, as we find it here, differs from the record of it there, and has something added to it.

I. That which is there expressed by way of question, (*Is this the manner of men, O Lord God?*) is here an acknowledgment, "*Thou hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree.*" Thou hast made me a great man, and then treated me accordingly." God by the covenant relations into which he admits believers, the titles he gives them, the favours he bestows on them, and the preparations he has made for them, regards them according to the estate of men of high degree, though they are mean and vile. Having himself distinguished them, he treats them as persons of distinction, according to the quality he has

been pleased to put upon them. Some give these words here another reading, *Thou hast looked upon me in the form of a man, who art in the highest, the Lord God*; or, *Thou hast made me to see, according to the form of a man, the majesty of the Lord God.*" And so it points at the Messiah; for as Abraham, so David, saw his day, and was glad; saw it by faith, saw him *in fashion, as a man, the Word made flesh*; and yet saw his glory as that of *the only begotten of the Father.* And this was it, that God spake concerning his house, for a great while to come, the foresight of which affected him more than any thing. And let it not be thought strange that David should speak so plainly of the two natures of Christ, who in spirit called him *Lord*, though he knew he was to be his *Son*, Ps. 110. 1. and foresaw him *lower than the angels* for a little while, but afterward *crowned with glory and honour*, Heb. 2. 6, 7.

II. *What can David say more unto thee, it is here added, for the honour of thy servant?* v. 18. Note, The honour God puts upon his servants, by taking them into covenant and communion with himself, is so great, that they need not, they cannot, desire to be more highly honoured. Were they to sit down and wish, they could not speak more for their own honour, than that which the word of God has spoken.

III. It is very observable that what in Samuel is said to be *for thy word's sake*, is here said to be *for thy servant's sake*, v. 18. Jesus Christ is both *the Word of God*, Rev. 19. 13. and *the Servant of God*, Isa. 42. 1. and it is for his sake, upon the score of his mediation, that the promises are both made, and made good, to all believers; it is in him, that they are *yea and amen*. For his sake it is done, for his sake it is made known; to him we owe all this greatness, from him we are to expect all these great things; they are *the unsearchable riches of Christ*, which, if by faith we see in themselves, and see in the hand of the Lord Jesus, we cannot but magnify as great things, the only true greatness, and speak honourably of accordingly.

IV. In Samuel, the Lord of hosts is said to be *the God over Israel*; here he is said to be *the God of Israel, even a God to Israel*, v. 24. His being the God of Israel, bespeaks his having the name of *their God*, and so calling himself; his being a God to Israel, bespeaks his answering to the name, his filling up the relation, and doing all that to them, which might be expected from him. There were those that were called *gods* of such and such nations, gods of Assyria and Egypt, gods of Hamad and Arpad; but they were no gods to them, for they stood them in no stead at all, were mere ciphers, and nothing but a name; but *the God of Israel* is a *God to Israel*; all his attributes and perfections redound to their real benefit and advantage. *Happy therefore, thrice happy, is the people whose God is Jehovah*, for he will be a God to them, a God all-sufficient.

V. The closing words, in Samuel, are, *With thy blessing let the house of thy servant be blessed for ever.* That is the language of a holy desire. But the closing words here, are the language of a most holy faith; *For thou blessest, O Lord, and it shall be blessed for ever*, v. 27. 1. He is therefore encouraged to beg a blessing because God had intimated to him that he had blessings in store for him and his family; "*Thou blessest, O Lord*, and therefore unto thee shall all flesh come for a blessing; unto thee do I come for the blessing promised to me." Promises are intended to direct and excite prayer. Has God said, *I will bless?* Let our hearts answer, *Lord bless me.* 2. He is therefore earnest for the blessing, because these whom God blesses, are truly and eternally blessed. *Thou blessest, and*

shall be blessed. Men can but *beg* the blessing, it is God that *commands* it; what he designs, he effects; what he promises, he performs; saying and doing are not two things with him. Nay, *it shall be blessed for ever.* His blessings shall not be revoked, cannot be opposed, and the benefits conferred by them, are such as will survive time and days. David's prayer concludes as God's promise did, *v. 14.* with that which is *for ever.* God's word looks at things eternal, and so should our desires and hopes.

CHAP. XVIII.

David's piety and his prayer we had an account of in the foregoing chapter; here follows immediately that which which one might reasonably expect, an account of his prosperity; for they that seek first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, as David did, shall have other things added to them, as far as God sees good for them. Here is, I. His prosperity abroad. He conquered the Philistines, *v. 1.* the Moabites, *v. 2.* the king of Zobah, *v. 3.* the Syrians, *v. 6.* 8. made the king of Hamath his tributary, *v. 9.* 11. and the Edomites, *v. 12.* 13. II. His prosperity at home. His court and kingdom flourished, *v. 14.* 17. All this we had an account of before, *2 Sam. 8.*

1. **N**OW after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines. 2. And he smote Moab: and the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts. 3. And David smote Hadarezer king of Zobah unto Hamath, as he went to stablish his dominion by the river Euphrates. 4. And David took from him a thousand chariots, and seven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: David also houghed all the chariot-horses, but reserved of them a hundred chariots. 5. And when the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadarezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men. 6. Then David put garrisons in Syria-damascus; and the Syrians became David's servants, and brought gifts. Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went. 7. And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadarezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. 8. Likewise from Tibhath, and from Chun, cities of Hadarezer, brought David very much brass, wherewith Solomon made the brazen sea, and the pillars, and the vessels of brass.

After this, it is said, *v. 1.* David did those great exploits. After the sweet communion he had with God by the word and prayer in the foregoing chapter, he went on in his work with an extraordinary vigour and courage, *conquering, and to conquer.* Thus Jacob, after his vision, lifted up his feet, *Gen. 29. 1.*

We have taken a view of these victories before, and shall now only observe,

1. Those that have been long enemies to the Israel of God will be brought down at last. The Philistines had, for several generations, been vexatious to Israel, but now *David subdued them, v. 1.* Thus shall all opposing rule, principality and pow-

er, be, at the end of time, put down by the Son of David, and the most inveterate enemies shall fall before him.

2. Such is the uncertainty of this world, that frequently men lose their wealth and power, then when they think to confirm it. Hadarezer was smitten *as he went to establish his dominion, v. 3.*

3. *A horse is a vain thing for safety,* so David said, *Ps. 33. 17.* and, it seems, he believed what he said, for he *houghed the chariot-horses, v. 4.* Being resolved not to trust to them, (*Ps. 20. 7.*) he would not use them.

4. The enemies of God's church are often made to ruin themselves by helping one another, *v. 5.* The Syrians of Damascus were smitten when they came to help Hadarezer. When hand thus joins in hand, they shall not only not go unpunished, but thereby they shall be gathered *as the sheaves into the floor, Mic. 4. 11, 12.*

5. The *wealth of the sinner* sometimes proves to have been *laid up for the just.* The *Syrians brought gifts, v. 6.* Their shields of gold, and their brass, were brought to Jerusalem, *v. 7, 8.* As the tabernacle was built of the spoils of the Egyptians, so the temple of the spoils of other Gentile nations. A happy presage of the interest the Gentiles should have in the gospel church.

9. Now when Tou king of Hamath heard how David had smitten all the host of Hadarezer king of Zobah, 10. He sent Hadoram his son to king David, to inquire of his welfare, and to congratulate him, because he had fought against Hadarezer, and smitten him; (for Hadarezer had war with Tou;) and *with him* all manner of vessels of gold and silver and brass. 11. Them also king David dedicated unto the LORD, with the silver and the gold that he brought from all *these* nations; from Edom and from Moab, and from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines, and from Amalek. 12. Moreover Abishai the son of Zeruiah slew of the Edomites, in the valley of Salt, eighteen thousand. 13. And he put garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites became David's servants. Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went. 14. So David reigned over all Israel, and executed judgment and justice among all his people. 15. And Joab the son of Zeruiah *was* over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, recorder. 16. And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Abimelech the son of Abiathar, *were* the priests; and Shavsha *was* scribe; 17. And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and the sons of David *were* chief about the king.

Here let us learn,

1. That it is our interest to make those our friends, who have the presence of God with them. The king of Hamath hearing of David's great success, sent to congratulate him, and to court his favour with a noble present, *v. 9, 10.* It is in vain to contend with the Son of David: *Kiss the Son,* therefore, *lest he be angry;* let the kings and judges of the

earth, and all inferior people too, be thus wise, thus instructed. The presents we are to bring him, are not *vessels of gold and silver*, as here; (those shall be welcome to him, who have no such presents to bring;) but our hearts and sincere affections, our own selves, our whole selves, we must present to him as living sacrifices.

2. That what God blesses us with, we must honour him with. The presents of his friends, as well as the spoils of his enemies, *David dedicated unto the Lord*, v. 11. that is, he laid them up toward the building and enriching of the temple. That is most truly and most comfortably our own, which we have consecrated unto the Lord, and which we use for his glory. Let our *merchandise and our hire be holiness to the Lord*, Isa. 23. 18.

3. That those who take God along with them whithersoever they go, may expect to prosper, and be preserved, whithersoever they go. It was said before, v. 6. and here again, v. 13, that *the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went*. Those are always under the eye of God, that have God always in their eye.

4. God gives men power, not that they may look great with it, but that they may do good with it. When David reigned over all Israel, *he executed judgment and justice among all his people*, and so answered the end of his elevation. He was not so intent on his conquests abroad, as to neglect the administration of justice at home. Herein he served the purposes of the kingdom of providence, and of that God who *sits in the throne judging right*; and was an eminent type of the Messiah, *the sceptre of whose kingdom is a right sceptre*.

CHAP. XIX.

The story is here repeated of David's war with the Ammonites, and the Syrians their allies, and the victories he obtained over them, which we read just as it is here related, 2 Sam. 10. Here is I. David's civility to the king of Ammon, in sending an embassy of condolence to him, on occasion of his father's death, v. 1, 2. II. His great incivility to David, in the base usage he gave to his ambassadors, v. 3, 4. III. David's just resentment of it, and the war which broke out, thereupon, in which the Ammonites acted politically, in bringing the Syrians to their assistance, v. 6, 7. Joab did bravely, v. 8, 13, and Israel was once and again victorious, v. 14, 19.

1. **N**OW it came to pass after this, that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his stead. 2. And David said, I will show kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me. And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. So the servants of David came into the land of the children of Ammon to Hanun, to comfort him. 3. But the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun, Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? are not his servants come unto thee for to search, and to overthrow, and to spy out the land? 4. Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved them, and cut off their garments in the midst, hard by their buttocks, and sent them away. 5. Then there went *certain*, and told David how the men were served. And he sent to meet them; (for the men were greatly ashamed.) And the king said, Tarry at Je-

richo until your beards be grown, and *then* return.

Let us here observe,

1. That it becomes good people to be neighbourly, and especially to be grateful. David will pay respect to Hanun, because he is his neighbour; and religion teaches us to be civil and obliging to all, to honour all men, and to be ready to do all offices of kindness to those we live among; nor must difference in religion be an obstruction to it. But, beside this, David remembers the kindness which his father showed to him. They that have received kindness, must return it, as they have ability and opportunity: they that have received it from the parents, must return it to the children, when they are gone.

2. That, as saith the proverb of the ancients, *Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked*, 1 Sam. 24. 13. The vile person will speak villany, and the instruments of the churl will be evil, to *destroy those with lying words, that speak right*, Isa. 32. 6, 7. They that are base, and design ill themselves, are apt to be jealous, and to suspect ill of others without cause. Hanun's servants suggested that David's ambassadors came as spies; as if so great and mighty a man as David, needed to do so mean a thing. If he had any design upon the Ammonites, he could effect it by open force, and had no occasion for any fraudulent practices; or, as if a man of such virtue and honour would do so base a thing. Yet Hanun hearkened to the suggestion, and, against the law of nations, treated David's ambassadors villainously.

3. Masters ought to protect their servants, and, with the greatest tenderness, to concern themselves for them, if they come by any loss or damage in their service. David did so for his ambassadors, v. 5. Christ will do so for his ministers; and let all masters thus *give unto their servants that which is just and equal*.

6. And when the children of Ammon saw that they had made themselves odious to David, Hanun and the children of Ammon sent a thousand talents of silver to hire them chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia, and out of Syria-maachah, and out of Zobah. 7. So they hired thirty and two thousand chariots, and the king of Maachah and his people, who came and pitched before Medeba. And the children of Ammon gathered themselves together from their cities, and came to battle. 8. And when David heard *of it*, he sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men. 9. And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array before the gate of the city; and the kings that were come *were* by themselves in the field. 10. Now when Joab saw that the battle was set against him before and behind, he chose out of all the choice of Israel, and put *them* in array against the Syrians. 11. And the rest of the people he delivered unto the hand of Abishai his brother, and they set *themselves* in array against the children of Ammon. 12. And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will help thee.

13. Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God; and let the LORD do *that which is good* in his sight. 14. So Joab, and the people that *were* with him, drew nigh before the Syrians unto the battle; and they fled before him. 15. And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, they likewise fled before Abishai his brother, and entered into the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem. 16. And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they sent messengers, and drew forth the Syrians that *were* beyond the river; and Shophach, the captain of the host of Hadarezer, *went* before them. 17. And it was told David; and he gathered all Israel, and passed over Jordan, and came upon them, and set *the battle* in array against them. So when David had put the battle in array against the Syrians, they fought with him. 18. But the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians seven thousand *men which fought in* chariots, and forty thousand footmen, and killed Shophach the captain of the host. 19. And when the servants of Hadarezer saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they made peace with David, and became his servants; neither would the Syrians help the children of Ammon any more.

We may see here,

1. How the hearts of sinners that are marked for ruin, are hardened to their destruction. The children of Ammon saw that they *had made themselves odious to David*, v. 6. and then it had been their wisdom to have desired conditions of peace, to have humbled themselves, and offered any satisfaction for the injury they had done him; the rather, because they had made themselves not only odious to David, but obnoxious to the justice of God, who is *King of nations*, and will assert the injured rights, and maintain the violated laws of nations. But, instead of this, they prepared for war, and so brought upon themselves, by David's hand, those desolations which he never intended them.

2. How the courage of brave men is heightened and invigorated by difficulties. When Joab saw that the battle was set against him, before and behind, v. 10. instead of meditating a retreat, he doubled his resolution; and though he could not double, he divided his army, and not only spake, but acted, like a gallant man, that had great presence of mind when he saw himself surrounded. He engaged with his brother for mutual assistance, v. 12. excited himself, and the rest of the officers, to act vigorously in their respective posts, with an eye to God's glory, and their country's good, not to any honour and advantage of their own; and then left the issue to God: *Let the Lord do that which is right in his sight*.

3. How vain the greatest art and strength are against justice and equity. The Ammonites did their utmost; they brought as good a force into the field, and disposed it with as much policy as possible; yet, having a bad cause, and acting in defence of wrong, it would not do; they were put to the worst. Right will prevail, and triumph at last.

4. To how little purpose is it for those to rally again, and reinforce themselves, that have not God on their side. The Syrians, though no way concerned in the merits of the cause, but serving only as mercenaries, to the Ammonites, when they were beaten, thought themselves concerned to retrieve their honour; and therefore called in the assistance of the Syrians on the other side Euphrates; but to no purpose, still they *fled before Israel*, v. 18. they lost 7000 men, who are said to be the men of 700 chariots, 2. Sam. 10. 18. For as now, in a man of war for sea-service, they allot ten men to a gun; so then, in land-service, ten men to a chariot.

5. Those who have *meddled with strife that belongs not to them*, and have found that they *meddled to their own hurt*, do well to learn wit at length, and meddle no further. The Syrians finding that Israel was the conquering side, not only brake off their alliance with the Ammonites, and would help them no more, v. 19, but *made peace with David, and became his servants*. Let those who have in vain stood it out against God, be thus wise for themselves, and *agree with him quickly while they are in the way*. Let them become his servants; for they cannot but see themselves undone, if they be his enemies.

CHAP. XX.

Here is a repetition of the story of David's wars, I. With the Ammonites, and the taking of Rabbah, v. 1.. 3. II. With the giants of the Philistines, v. 4.. 8.

1. **A**ND it came to pass, that after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out to *battle*, Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah; (but David tarried at Jerusalem.) And Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it. 2. And David took the crown of their king from off his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and *there were* precious stones in it: and it was set upon David's head: and he brought also exceeding much spoil out of the city. 3. And he brought out the people that *were* in it, and cut *them* with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes: even so dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

How the army of the Ammonites, and their allies, were routed in the field, we read in the foregoing chapters. Here we have the destruction of Rabbah, the metropolis of their kingdom, v. 1. the putting of their king's crown upon David's head, v. 2. and the great severity that was used toward the people, v. 3. This we had a more full account of, 2 Sam. 11. and 12. and cannot but remember by this sad token, that while Joab was besieging Rabbah, David fell into that great sin, in the matter of Uriah.

But it is observable that though the rest of the story be repeated, that is not; a hint only is given of it in those words, (*But David tarried at Jerusalem*), which lie here in a parenthesis. If he had been abroad with his army, he had been out of the way of that temptation; but, indulging his ease, he fell into uncleanness. Now, as the relating of the sin David fell into, is an instance of the impartiality and fidelity of the sacred writers, so the avoiding

of the repetition of it here, when there was a fair occasion given to speak of it again, is designed to teach us that though there may be a just occasion to speak of the faults and miscarriages of others, yet we should not take delight in the repetition of them. That should always be looked upon as an unpleasing subject, which, though sometimes one cannot help falling upon, yet one would not choose to dwell upon, any more than we should love to rake in a dunghill. The persons, or actions, we can say no good of, we had best say nothing of.

4. And it came to pass after this, that there arose war at Gezer with the Philistines, at which time Sibbecai the Hushathite slew Sippai, *that was* of the children of the giant: and they were subdued. 5. And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi, the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear's staff *was* like a weaver's beam. 6. And yet again there was war at Gath, where was a man of *great* stature, whose fingers and toes *were* four and twenty, six *on each hand*, and six *on each foot*: and he also was the son of the giant. 7. But when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea, David's brother, slew him. 8. These were born unto the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

The Philistines were nearly subdued, *ch.* 18. 1. but as in the destruction of the Canaanites by Joshua, the sons of Anak were last subdued, Josh. 11. 21. so here in the conquest of the Philistines, the giants of Gath were last brought down. In the conflicts between grace and corruption, there are some sins, which, like these giants, keep their ground a great while, and are not mastered without much difficulty, and a long struggle; but judgment will be brought forth into victory at last.

Observe, 1. We never read of giants among the Israelites, as we do of giants among the Philistines; the giants of Gath, but not giants of Jerusalem. The growth of God's plants is in usefulness, not in bulk. They who covet to have *cubits added to their stature*, do not consider that it will but make them more unwieldy. In the balance of the sanctuary, David far outweighs Goliath.

2. The servants of David, though men of ordinary stature, were too hard for the giants of Gath, in every encounter; because they had God on their side, who takes pleasure in abasing lofty looks, and mortifying the giants that are in the earth, as he did of old by the deluge, though they were men of renown. Never let the church's friends be disheartened by the power and pride of the church's enemies. We need not fear great men against us, while we have the great God for us. What will a finger more on each hand, do, or a toe more on each foot, in contest with omnipotence?

3. These giants *defied Israel*, v. 7. and were thus made to pay for their insolence. None are more visibly marked for ruin, than those who reproach God and his Israel. God will do great things, rather than suffer the enemy to *behave themselves proudly*, Deut. 32. 27. The victories of the Son of David, like those of David himself, are gradual. *We see not yet all things put under him*; but it will be seen shortly: and death itself, the last enemy, like these giants, triumphed over.

CHAP. XXI.

As this rehearsal makes no mention of David's sin in the matter of Uriah, so neither of the troubles of his family, that followed upon it; not a word of Absalom's rebellion, or Sheba's. But David's sin, in numbering the people, is here related, because, in the atonement made for that sin, an intimation was given of the spot of ground on which the temple should be built. Here is, I. David's sin, in forcing Joab to number the people, v. 1..4. II. David's sorrow for what he had done, as soon as he perceived the sinfulness of it, v. 5..8. III. The sad dilemma (or *trilemma* rather) he was brought to, when it was put to him to choose how he would be punished for this sin, and what rod he would be beaten with, v. 9..13. IV. The woul havee which was made by the pestilence in the country, and the narrow escape which Jerusalem had, from being laid waste by it, v. 14..16. V. David's repentance, and sacrifice, upon this occasion, and the staying of the plague thereupon, v. 18..30. This awful story we met with, and meditated upon, 2 Sam. 24.

1. **AND** Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel. 2. And David said to Joab, and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beer-sheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it. 3. And Joab answered, The LORD make his people a hundred times so many more as they be: but, my lord the king, *are* they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel? 4. Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab: wherefore Joab departed, and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem. 5. And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all *they of* Israel were a thousand thousand and a hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah *was* four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword. 6. But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them; for the king's word was abominable to Joab.

Numbering the people, one would think, was no bad thing. Why should not the shepherd know the count of his flock? But God sees not as man sees. It is plain it was wrong in David to do it, and a great provocation to God; because he did it in the pride of his heart: and there is no sin that has in it more of contradiction, and therefore more of offence, to God, than pride. The sin was David's, he alone must bear the blame of it: but here we are told,

I. How active the tempter was in it; v. 1, *Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to do it*. It is said, 2 Sam. 24. 1, *that the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David to do it*. The righteous judgments of God are to be observed and acknowledged even in the sins and unrighteousness of men. We are sure that God is not the Author of sin, he *tempts no man*; and therefore when it is said that he moved David to do it, it must be explained by what is intimated here, that, for wise and holy ends, he permitted the Devil to do it. Here we trace this foul stream to its fountain. 1. That Satan, the enemy of God and all good, should *stand up against Israel*, is not strange. It is what he aims at, to weaken the strength, diminish the numbers, and eclipse the

glory, of God's Israel, to whom he is a *Satan*, a sworn *adversary*. But, 2. That he should influence David, the man after God's own heart, to do a wrong thing, may well be wondered at. One would think him one of those whom the wicked one touches not. No, even the best saints, till they come to heaven, are forbidden to think themselves out of the reach of Satan's temptations.

Now, when Satan meant to do Israel a mischief, what course did he take? He did not *move God against them to destroy them*, as he did against Job, *ch.* 2. 3. but he provoked David, the best friend they had, to number them, and so to offend God, and set him against them. Note, (1.) The Devil does us more mischief by tempting us to sin against our God, than he does by accusing us before our God. He destroys none but by their own hands. (2.) The greatest spite he can do the church of God, is, to tempt the rulers of the church to pride; for none can conceive the fatal consequence of that sin in all, especially in church rulers. *Ye shall not be so*, Luke 22. 26.

II. How passive the instrument was. Joab was the person employed, an active man in public business; but to this he was perfectly forced, and did it with the greatest reluctance imaginable.

1. He put in a remonstrance against it, before he began it. No man more forward than he in any thing that really tended to the honour of the king, or the welfare of the kingdom; but in this matter, he would gladly be excused. For, (1.) It was a *needless* thing, there was no occasion at all for it. God had promised to multiply them, and he needed not question the accomplishment of that promise: they were all his servants, and he needed not doubt of their loyalty and affection to him. Their number was as much his strength as he could desire. (2.) It was a *dangerous* thing. In doing it, he might be a cause of trespass to Israel, and might provoke God against them. This Joab apprehended, and yet David himself did not. The most learned in the laws of God, are not always the most quick-sighted in the application of those laws.

2. He was quite weary of it before he had done it; for the *king's word was abominable to Joab*, *v.* 6. Time was, when whatever king David did, *pleased all the people*, 2 Sam. 3. 36. But now there was a general disgust at these orders, which confirmed Joab in his dislike of them, so that though the produce of this muster was really very great, yet he had no heart to perfect it, but left two tribes unnumbered, *v.* 5, 6. two considerable ones, Levi and Benjamin; and, perhaps, was not very exact in numbering the rest, because he did not do it with any pleasure; which might be one occasion of the difference between the sums here and 2 Sam. 24. 9.

7. And God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel. 8. And David said unto God, I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly. 9. And the LORD spake unto Gad, David's seer, saying, 10. Go and tell David, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things: choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee. 11. So Gad came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Choose thee 12. Either three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while

that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh thee; or else three days the sword of the LORD, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now, therefore, advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me. 13. And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very great *are* his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man. 14. So the LORD sent pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men. 15. And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld, and he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. 16. And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem: then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. 17. And David said unto God, *Is it not I that* commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed: but *as for* these sheep, what have they done? Let thy hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued.

David is here under the rod for numbering the people; that rod of correction, which drives out the foolishness that is bound up in the heart, the foolishness of pride. Let us briefly observe,

I. How he was corrected. If God's dearest children do amiss, they must expect to smart for it.

1. He is given to understand that God is displeased; and that is no small uneasiness to so good a man as David, *v.* 7. God takes notice of, and is displeased with, the sins of his people; and no sin is more displeasing to him than pride of heart: nor is any thing more humbling, and grieving, and mortifying to a gracious soul, than to see itself under God's displeasure.

2. He is put to his choice, whether he will be punished by war, famine, or pestilence; for punished he must be, and by one of these. Thus, for his further humiliation, he is put into a strait, a great strait; and has the terror of all the three judgments impressed upon his mind, no doubt, to his great amazement, while he is considering which he shall choose.

3. He hears of 70,000 of his subjects, who, in a few hours, were struck dead by the pestilence, *v.* 14. He was proud of the multitude of his people, but Divine Justice took a course to make them fewer. Justly is that taken from us, weakened, or imbibited to us, which we are proud of. David must have the people numbered: *Bring me the number of them*, says he, *that I may know it*. But now God numbers them after another manner, *numbers to the sword*, Isa. 65. 12. And David had another number of them brought, more to his confusion than that was to his satisfaction, namely, the

number of the slain: a black bill of mortality, which is a drawback to his muster-roll.

4. He sees the destroying angel, with his sword drawn against Jerusalem, v. 16. This could not but be very terrible to him, as it was a visible indication of the anger of Heaven, and threatened the utter destruction of that beloved city. Pestilences make the greatest devastations in the most populous places. The sight of an angel, though coming peaceably, and on a friendly errand, has made even mighty men to tremble; how dreadful then must this sight be, of an angel with a drawn sword in his hand, a flaming sword, like that of the cherubim, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life! While we lie under the wrath of God, the holy angels are armed against us, though we see them not as David did.

II. How he bore the correction.

1. He made a very penitent confession of his sin, and prayed earnestly for the pardon of it, v. 8. Now he owns that he had sinned, had sinned greatly, had done foolishly, very foolishly; and he entreats that however he might be corrected for it, the iniquity of it might be done away.

2. He accepted the punishment of his iniquity; "*Let thy hand be on me, and on my father's house. I submit to the rod, only let me be the sufferer, for I am the sinner; mine is the guilty head at which the sword should be pointed.*"

3. He cast himself upon the mercy of God, (though he knew he was angry with him,) and did not entertain any hard thoughts of him. However it be, *Let us fall into the hands of the Lord, for his mercies are great*, v. 13. Good men, even when God frowns upon them, think well of him; *though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.*

4. He expressed a very tender concern for the people, and it went to his heart to see them plagued for his transgression: *These sheep, what have they done?*

18. Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the LORD in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. 19. And David went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of the LORD. 20. And Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was threshing wheat. 21. And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked, and saw David, and went out of the threshing-floor, and bowed himself to David with *his* face to the ground. 22. Then David said to Ornan, Grant me the place of *this* threshing-floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the LORD; thou shalt grant it me for the full price, that the plague may be stayed from the people. 23. And Ornan said unto David, Take it to thee, and let my lord the king do *that which is good* in his eyes: lo, I give *thee* the oxen *also* for burnt-offerings, and the threshing-instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat-offering: I give it all. 24. And king David said to Ornan, Nay; but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take *that which is thine* for the LORD, nor offer burnt-offerings without cost. 25. So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred

shekels of gold by weight. 26. And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and called upon the LORD; and he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering. 27. And the LORD commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof. 28. At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there. 29. For the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt-offering, *were* at that season in the high place at Gibeon: 30. But David could not go before it to inquire of God; for he was afraid, because of the sword of the angel of the LORD.

We have here the controversy concluded, and, upon David's repentance, his peace made with God, *Though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away.*

1. A stop was put to the progress of the execution, v. 15. When David repented him of the sin, God repented him of the judgment, and ordered the destroying angel to *stay his hand, and sheath his sword*, v. 27.

2. Direction was given to David to rear an altar in the threshing-floor of Ornan, v. 18. The angel commanded the prophet Gad to bring David this direction. The same angel that had, in God's name, carried on the war, is here forward to set on foot the treaty of peace; for angels do not desire the woful day. The angel could have given this order to David himself; but he chose to do it by his seer, that he might put an honour upon the prophetic office. Thus the revelation of Jesus Christ was notified by the angel to John, and by him to the churches. The commanding of David to build an altar, was a blessed token of reconciliation; for if God had been pleased to kill him, he would not have appointed, because he would not have accepted, a sacrifice at his hands.

3. David immediately made a bargain with Ornan for the threshing-floor; for he would not serve God at other people's charge. Ornan generously offered it him gratis, not only in complaisance to the king, but because he had himself *seen the angel*, v. 20. which so terrified him, that he and his four sons hid themselves, as unable to bear the brightness of his glory, and afraid of his drawn sword. Under these apprehensions, he was willing to do any thing toward making the atonement. Those that are duly sensible of the terrors of the Lord, will do all they can, in their places, to promote religion, and use all the methods of reconciliation for the turning away of God's wrath.

4. God testified his acceptance of David's offerings on this altar: he *answered him from heaven by fire*, v. 26. To signify that God's anger was turned away from him, the fire that might justly have fastened upon the sinner, fastened upon the sacrifice, and consumed that and, upon this, the destroying sword was returned into its sheath. Thus Christ was made sin, and a curse, for us, and it pleased the Lord to bruise him, that through him God might be to us, not a consuming Fire, but a reconciler Father.

5. He continued to offer his sacrifices upon this altar. The brazen altar which Moses made, was at Gibeon, v. 29. and there all the sacrifices of Is-

rael were offered: but David was so terrified at the sight of the sword of the angel, that he *could not go thither*, v. 30. The business required haste, when the plague was begun. Aaron must go quickly, nay, he must *run*, to make atonement, Numb. 16. 46, 47. And the case here was no less urgent; so that David had not time to go to Gibeon: nor durst he leave the angel, with his sword drawn over Jerusalem, lest the fatal stroke should be given, before he came back. And therefore God, in tenderness to him, bade him build an altar in that place, dispensing with his own law concerning one altar, because of the present distress, and accepting the sacrifices offered on this new altar, which was not set up in opposition to that, but in concurrence with it. The symbols of unity were not so much insisted on, as unity itself. Nay, when the present distress was over, (as it should seem,) David, as long as he lived, sacrificed there, though the altar at Gibeon was still kept up; for God had owned the sacrifices that were here offered, and had testified his acceptance of them, v. 28. On those administrations in which we have experienced the tokens of God's presence, and have found that he is with us of a truth, it is good to continue our attendance. "Here God has graciously met me, and therefore I will still expect to meet with him."

CHAP. XXII.

Out of the eater comes forth meat. It was upon occasion of the terrible judgment inflicted on Israel for the sin of David, that God gave intimation of the setting up of another altar, and of the place where he would have the temple to be built; upon which, David was excited with great vigour to make preparation for the great work; wherein, though he had long since designed it, it should seem, he was, of late, grown remiss, till awakened by the alarm of that judgment. The tokens of God's favour he received, after those of his displeasure, 1. Directed him to the place, v. 1. II. Encouraged and quickened him to the work. 1. He set himself to prepare for the building, v. 2. 5. 2. He instructed Solomon, and gave him a charge concerning this work, v. 6. 16. 3. He commanded the princes to assist him in it, v. 17. 19. There is a great deal of difference between the frame of David's spirit in the beginning of the former chapter, and in the beginning of this. There, in the pride of his heart, he was numbering the people; here, in his humility, preparing for the service of God. There corruption was uppermost; (but the well of living water in the soul, though it may be muddied, will work itself clear again;) grace here has recovered the upper hand.

1. **THEN** David said, *This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar of the burnt-offering for Israel.* 2. And David commanded to gather together the strangers that *were* in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God. 3. And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance without weight; 4. Also cedar-trees in abundance: for the Zidonians and they of Tyre brought much cedar-wood to David. 5. And David said, Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be build for the LORD must be exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death.

Here is,

I The place for the building of the temple, v.

1, *Then David said*, by inspiration of God, and as a declaration of his mind, *This is the house of the LORD God.* If a temple must be built for God, it is fit that it be left to him to choose the ground, for all the earth is his; and this is the ground he makes choice of; it had pertained to a Jebusite, and, perhaps, there was not a spot of ground besides, in or about Jerusalem, that did so; a happy presage of the setting up of the gospel-temple among the Gentiles. See Acts 15. 16, 17. The ground was a threshing-floor; for the church of the living God, is his floor, his threshing, and *the corn of his floor*, Isa. 21. 10. Christ's fan is in his hand, thoroughly to purge his floor. This is to be the house, because this is the altar: the temple was built for the sake of the altar: there were altars long before there were temples.

II. Preparations made for that building. David must not build it, but he would do all he could towards it; he *prepared abundantly before his death*, v. 5. It intimates that the consideration of his age and growing infirmities, which showed him his death approaching, quickened him, toward his latter end, to be very diligent in making this preparation. What our hands find to do for God, and our souls, and our generation, let us do it with all our might, before our death, because, after death, there is no device nor working.

Now we are here told,

1. What induced him to make such preparation; two things he considered. (1.) That Solomon was young and tender, and not likely to apply himself with any great vigour to this business at first; so that unless he found the wheels set a-going, he would be in danger of losing a great deal of time at first, the rather, because, being young, he would be tempted to put it off; whereas, if he found the materials got ready to his hand, the most difficult part of the work would be over, and it would excite and encourage him to go about it in the beginning of his reign. Note, Those that are aged and experienced, should consider those that are young and tender, and provide them what help they can, that they may make the work of God as easy to them as possible. (2.) That the house must be exceeding magnificent, very stately and sumptuous, strong and beautiful, every thing about it the best in its kind; for a good reason, it was intended for the honour of the great God, the Lord of the whole earth, and was to be a type of Christ; in whom all fulness dwells, and in whom are hid all treasures. Men were then to be taught by sensible methods: the grandeur of the house would help to affect the worshippers with a holy awe and reverence of God, and would invite strangers to come to see it, as the wonder of the world, who thereby would be brought acquainted with the true God; therefore it is here designed to be of fame and glory throughout all countries. David foretold this good effect of its being magnificent Ps. 68. 29, *Because of thy temple at Jerusalem, shall kings bring presents unto thee.*

2. What preparation he made: in general, he prepared abundantly, as we shall find afterward: cedar and stones, iron and brass, are here specified v. 2. 4. Cedar he had from the Tyrians and the Zidonians, *The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift*, Ps. 45. 12. He also got workmen together, the strangers that *were* in the land of Israel. Some think that he employed them, because they were generally better artists, and more ingenious in manual operations, than the Israelites; or, rather, because he would not employ the free-born Israelites in any thing that looked mean and servile. They were delivered from the bondage of making bricks in Egypt, and must not return to hew stone. These strangers were proselytes to the Jewish reli-

gion, who though not enslaved, yet were not of equal dignity with Israelites.

6. Then he called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build a house for the LORD God of Israel. 7. And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build a house unto the name of the LORD my God: 8. But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build a house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight. 9. Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. 10. He shall build a house for my name, and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever. 11. Now, my son, the LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath said of thee. 12. Only the LORD give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God. 13. Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed. 14. Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD a hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto. 15. Moreover, there are workmen with thee in abundance, hewers and workers of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work. 16. Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, there is no number. Arise therefore, and be doing, and the LORD be with thee.

Though Solomon was young and tender, he was capable of receiving instructions concerning the work for which he was designed: accordingly, his father here gives him instructions. When David came to the throne, he had many things to do, for the foundations were all out of course; but Solomon had only one thing in charge, and that was, to build a house for the Lord God of Israel, v. 6. Now,

I. He tells him why he did not do it himself. It was in his mind to do it, v. 7. but God forbade him, because he had shed much blood, v. 8. Some think it refers to the blood of Uriah, which fastened such a reproach upon him, as rendered him unworthy the honour of building the temple; but that honour was forbidden him before he had shed that blood: therefore it must be meant, as it is here explained,

of the blood he shed in his wars, for he had been a man of war, from his youth; which, though shed very justly and honourably, and in the service of God and Israel, yet made him unfit to be employed in this service, or rather less fit than another that had never been called to such bloody work. God, by assigning this as the reason of laying David aside from this work, showed how precious human life is to him, and intended a type of him who should build the gospel-temple, not by destroying men's lives, but saving them, Luke 9. 56.

II. He gives him the reason why he imposed this task upon him. 1. Because God had designed him for it, nominated him as the man that should do it. *A son shall be born to thee, that shall be called Solomon, and he shall build a house for my name, v. 9, 10.* Nothing is more powerful to engage us to, and encourage us in, any service for God, than to know that hereunto we are appointed. 2. Because he would have leisure and opportunity to do it. He should be a man of rest, and therefore should not have his time, or thoughts, or wealth, diverted from this business. He should have rest from his enemies abroad, (none of them should invade or threaten him, or give him provocation,) and he should have peace and quietness at home; and therefore let him build the house. Note, Where God gives rest, he expects work. 3. Because God had promised to establish his kingdom. Let this encourage him to honour God, that God had honour in store for him; let him build up God's house, and God will build up his throne. Note, God's gracious promises should quicken and invigorate our religious service.

III. He delivers him an account of the vast preparations he had made for this building, v. 14. not in a way of pride or vain-glory, (he speaks of it as a poor thing; *I have in my poverty, prepared,* margin,) but as an encouragement to Solomon to engage cheerfully in the work, for which so solid a foundation was laid. The treasure here mentioned of 100,000 talents of gold, and 1,000,000 talents of silver, amounts to such an incredible sum, that most interpreters either allow an error in the copy, or think the talent here signifies no more than a plate or piece; *ingots* we call them. I am inclined to suppose that a certain number is here put for an uncertain, because it is said, v. 16. that of the gold and silver, as well as of the brass and iron, there was no number; and that David here includes all the dedicated things, ch. 18. 11. which he designed for the house of the Lord, that is, not only for the building of it, but for the treasure of it; and, putting all together, it might come near what is here spoken of. Hundreds and thousands are numbers which we often use to express that which is very much, when yet we would not be understood strictly.

IV. He charges him to keep God's commandments, and to take heed to his duty in every thing, v. 13. He must not think, by building the temple, to purchase a dispensation to sin; no, on the contrary, his doing that, would not be accepted nor accounted of, if he did not take heed to fulfil the statutes which the Lord charged Moses with, v. 13. Though he was to be king of Israel, he must always remember that he was a subject to the God of Israel.

V. He encourages him to go about this great work, and to go on in it, v. 13, "*Be strong, and of good courage*; though it is a vast undertaking, then needest not fear coming under the reproach of the foolish builder, who began to build, and was not able to finish; it is God's work, and it shall come to perfection; *dread not, nor be dismayed.*" In our spiritual work, as well as in our spiritual warfare, we have need of courage and resolution.

VI. He quickens him not to rest in the prepara-

tions he had made, but to add thereto, v. 14. Those that enter into the labours of others, and build upon their advantages, must still be improving.

Lastly, He prays for him: The Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, v. 12. Whatever charge we have, if we see God giving us the charge, and calling us to it, we may hope he will give us wisdom for the discharge of it. Perhaps Solomon had an eye to this prayer of his father for him, in the prayer he offered for himself, *Lord, give me a wise and understanding heart.* He concludes, v. 16 *Upl, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.* Hope of God's presence must not slacken our endeavours: though the Lord be with us, we must *rise and be doing*, which, if we do, we have reason to believe he is, and will be, with us. Work out your salvation, and God will work in you.

17. David also commanded all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, *saying, 18. Is not the LORD your God with you? and hath he not given you rest on every side? for he hath given the inhabitants of the land into my hand; and the land is subdued before the LORD, and before his people.* 19. Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God: arise, therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the LORD.

David here engages the princes of Israel to assist Solomon in the great work he had to do, and every one to lend him a hand toward the carrying of it on. Those that are in the throne, cannot do the good they would, unless those about the throne, set in with them. David would therefore have the princes to advise Solomon, and quicken him, and make the work as easy to him as they could, by promoting it every one in his place.

1. He shows them what obligations they lay under to be zealous in this matter, in gratitude to God for the great things he had done for them; he had given them victory, and rest, and a good land for an inheritance, v. 18. The more God has done for us, the more we should study to do for him.

2. He presses that upon them, which should make them zealous in it, v. 19. "*Set your heart and soul to serve God, place your happiness in his favour, and keep your eye upon his glory; seek him as your chief good and highest end, and this, with your heart and soul; make religion your choice and business; and then you will grudge no pains or cost to promote the building of his sanctuary.*" Let but the heart be sincerely engaged for God, and the head and hand, the estate and interest, and all, will be cheerfully employed for him.

CHAP. XXIII.

David, having given charge concerning the building of the temple, in this and the following chapters, settles the method of the temple-service, and puts into order the offices of it. In the late irregular times, and during the wars in the beginning of his reign, we may suppose that though the Levitical ordinances were kept up, yet it was not in the order, nor with the beauty and exactness, that were desirable. Now David, being a prophet, as well as a prince, by divine warrant and direction, *set in order the things that were wanting.* In this chapter, 1. He declared Solomon to be his successor, v. 1. II. He numbered the Levites, and appointed them to their respective offices, v. 2. .5. III. He took an account of the

several families of the Levites, v. 6. .23. IV. He made a new reckoning of them from twenty years old, and appointed them their work, v. 24. .32. And in this, he prepared for the temple, as truly as when he laid up gold and silver for it; for the place is of small account, in comparison with the work.

1. **S**O when David was old and full of days, he made Solomon his son king over Israel. 2. And he gathered together all the princes of Israel, with the priests and the Levites. 3. Now the Levites were numbered from the age of thirty years and upward; and their number by their polls, man by man, was thirty and eight thousand. 4. Of which, twenty and four thousand were to set forward the work of the house of the LORD; and six thousand were officers and judges. 5. Moreover, four thousand were porters: and four thousand praised the LORD with the instruments which I made (*said David*) to praise *therewith*. 6. And David divided them into courses among the sons of Levi, *namely*, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 7. Of the Gershonites were Laadan and Shimei. 8. The sons of Laadan; the chief was Jehiel, and Zetham, and Joel, three. 9. The sons of Shimei; Shelomith, and Haziel, and Haran, three. These were the chief of the fathers of Laadan. 10. And the sons of Shimei were, Jahath, Zina, and Jeush, and Beriah. These four were the sons of Shimei. 11. And Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the second; but Jeush and Beriah had not many sons; therefore they were in one reckoning, according to *their father's house*. 12. The sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four. 13. The sons of Amram; Aaron and Moses; and Aaron was separated, that he should sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons for ever, to burn incense before the LORD, to minister unto him, and to bless in his name for ever. 14. Now concerning Moses the man of God, his sons were named of the tribe of Levi. 15. The sons of Moses were Gershon and Eliezer. 16. Of the sons of Gershon, Shebuel was the chief. 17. And the sons of Eliezer were, Rehabiah the chief. And Eliezer had none other sons; but the sons of Rehabiah were very many. 18. Of the sons of Izhar; Shelomith the chief. 19. Of the sons of Hebron; Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth. 20. Of the sons of Uzziel; Micah the first, and Jesiah the second. 21. The sons of Merari; Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli; Eleazar and Kish. 22. And Eleazar died, and had no sons, but daughters: and their brethren the sons of Kish took them. 23. The sons of

Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jerimoth, three.

Here we have,

I. The crown entailed, according to the divine appointment, *v.* 1. David made Solomon king, not to reign with him, or reign under him, but only to reign after him. This he did, 1. When he was old and full of days. He was but 70 years old when he died, and yet he was full of days, *satur dierum*—*satisfied with living* in this world. When he found himself going off, he showed his strong desire for the prosperity of the kingdom, when he should be gone, and pleased himself with the hopeful prospects of a happy settlement, both in church and state. 2. He did it in parliament, in a solemn assembly of all the princes of Israel, which made Adonijah's attempt to break in upon Solomon's title, and set it aside, notwithstanding this public recognition and establishment of it, the more impudent, impious, and ridiculous. Note, The settling and securing of the crown in the interests of the temple, is a great blessing to a people, and a great satisfaction to those who are themselves leaving the world.

II. The Levites numbered, according to the rule in Moses's time, from 30 years old to 50, Numb. 4. 2, 3. Their number, in Moses's time, by this rule, was 8580, Numb. 4. 47, 48. but now it was increased above four-fold, much more in proportion than the rest of the tribes; for the servicable men of Levi's tribe, were now 38,000; unless we suppose that here those were reckoned, who were above 50, which was not the case there. Joab had not numbered the Levites, *ch.* 21. 6. but David now did; not in pride, but for a good purpose, and then he needed not fear wrath for it.

III. The Levites distributed to their respective posts, *v.* 4, 5, that every hand might be employed, (for, of all men, an idle Levite makes the worst figure,) and that every part of the work might be carefully done. Now, 1. It was for the honour of God, that so great a number of servants attended his house, and the business of it. Much of the state of great men consists in the greatness of their retinue. When God kept house in Israel, see what a great household he had, and all well-fed and well-taught. But what were these to the attendants of his throne above, and the innumerable company of angels? 2. It was the happiness of Israel, that they had among them such a considerable body of men, who were obliged by their office to promote and keep up religion among them. If the worship of God go to decay in Israel, let it not be said that it was for want of due provision for the support of it, but that they who should have done it, were careless and false.

The work assigned the Levites, was four-fold, (1.) Some, and indeed far the greater number, were to set forward the work of the house of the Lord. Twenty-four thousand, almost two-thirds, were appointed for this service, to attend the priests in killing the sacrifices; slaying them; washing them; cutting them up; burning them; to have the meat-offerings and drink-offerings ready, to carry out dirt, and keep all the vessels and utensils of the temple clean, and every thing in its place, that the service might be performed both with expedition and with exactness. These served a thousand a week, and so went round in twenty-four courses. Perhaps, while the temple was in building, some of these were employed to set forward that work, to assist the builders, at least, to quicken them, and keep good order among them, and the decorum which became temple-work. (2.) Others were officers and judges, not in the affairs of the temple, and in controversies that arose there, (for there we may suppose, the priests presided,) but in the coun-

try; they were magistrates, to give the laws of God in charge, to resolve difficulties, and to determine controversies that arose upon them. Of these there were 6000 in the several parts of the kingdom, that assisted the princes and elders of every tribe, in the administration of justice. (3.) Others were porters, to guard all the avenues of the house of God, to examine them that desired entrance, and to resist those that would force an entrance. These were the life-guards of the temple, and, probably, were armed accordingly. (4.) Others were singers, and players on instruments, whose business it was to keep up that part of the service; this was a new-erected office.

IV. The Levites mustered, and disposed of into their respective families and kindreds, that an account of them might the better be kept, and those that neglected their duty, might the more easily be discovered, by calling over the roll, and obliging them to answer to their names, which each family might do for itself. When those of the same family were employed together, it would engage them to love and assist one another. When Christ sent forth his disciples two and two, he put together those that were brethren. Two families were here joined in one, *v.* 11. because they had not many sons. Those that are weak and little, separately, may be put together, and appear considerable.

That which is most observable in the account of the families of the Levites, is, that the posterity of Moses (that great man) stood upon the level with common Levites, and had no dignities or privileges at all peculiar to them; while the posterity of Aaron were advanced to the priest's office, to *sanctify the most holy things*, *v.* 13. It is said indeed of the grandson of Moses, Rehabiah, that *his sons were highly multiplied*, *v.* 17. margin. When God proposed to him, that if he would let fall his intercession for Israel, he would make of him a great nation, he generously refused it; in recompense for which, his family is here greatly increased, and makes up in number what it wants in figure, in the tribe of Levi. Now, 1. The levelling of Moses's family with the rest, is an evidence of his self-denial. Such an interest had he both with God and man, that if he had aimed to raise his own family, to dignify and enrich that, he might easily have done it; but he was no self-seeking man, as appears from his leaving to his children no marks of distinction; which was a sign that he had the spirit of God, and not the spirit of the world. 2. The elevation of Aaron's family above the rest, was a recompense for his self-denial. When Moses (his younger brother) was made a god to Pharaoh, and he only his prophet or spokesman, to observe his orders, and do as he was bidden, Aaron never disputed it, nor insisted upon his seniority, but readily took the inferior post God put him in, submitted to Moses, and, upon occasion, called him *his Lord*; and because he thus submitted himself, in his own person, to his junior, in compliance with the will of God, God highly exalted his family, even above that of Moses himself. Those that are content to stoop, are in the fairest way to rise. Before honour is humility.

24. These were the sons of Levi, after the house of their fathers; *even* the chief of the fathers, as they were counted by number of names by their polls, that did the work for the service of the house of the LORD, from the age of twenty years and upward. 25. For David said, The LORD God of Israel hath given rest unto his people, that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever: 26. And

also unto the Levites; they shall no *more* carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof. 27. For by the last words of David, the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and above: 28. Because their office *was* to wait on the sons of Aaron, for the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God; 29. Both for the show-bread, and for the fine flour for meat-offering, and for the unleavened cakes, and for *that which is baked in the pan*, and for *that which is fried*, and for all manner of measure and size; 30. And to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even; 31. And to offer all burnt-sacrifices unto the LORD, in the sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the LORD: 32. And that they should keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the holy *place*, and the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren, in the service of the house of the LORD.

Here is,

I. An alteration made in the computation of the effective men of the Levites—that, whereas, in Moses's time, they were not enlisted, or taken into service, till they were 30 years old, nor admitted as probationers till 25, (Numb. 8. 24.) David ordered, by direction from God, that they should be numbered *for the service of the house of the Lord*, from the age of 20 years and upward, v. 24. This order he confirmed by his last words, v. 27. When he put his last hand to the draught of this establishment, he expressly appointed this to be done for ever after; yet not he, but the Lord. 1. Perhaps the young Levites, having no work appointed them till 25 years old, had many of them got a habit of idleness, or grew addicted to their pleasures, which proved both a blemish to their reputation, and a hindrance to their usefulness afterward; to prevent which inconvenience, they are set to work, and brought under discipline, at 20 years old. Those that will be eminent, must learn to take care, and take pains, betimes. 2. When the work of the Levites was to carry burdens, heavy burdens, the tabernacle and the furniture of it, God would not call any to it till they were come to their full strength; for he considers our fame, and, in service as well as sufferings, will lay no more upon us than we are able to bear. But now God had given rest to his people, and made Jerusalem his dwelling-place for ever; so that there was no more occasion to carry the tabernacle and the vessels thereof; the service was much easier, and what would not over-work them, nor over-load them, if they entered upon it at 20 years old. 3. Now the people of Israel were multiplied, and there was a more general resort to Jerusalem, and would be when the temple was built, than had ever been to Shiloh, or Nob, or Gibeon; it was therefore requisite there should be more hands employed in the temple-service, that every Israelite who brought an offering, might find a Levite ready to assist him. When more work is to be done, it is pity but there should be more workmen fetched in for the doing

of it. When the harvest is plenteous, why should the labourers be few?

II. A further account of the Levites' work. What the work of the priests was, we were told, v. 13, *To sanctify the most holy things, to burn incense before the Lord*, and to *bless in his name*; that work the Levites were not to meddle with, and yet they had work enough, and good work, according to that which they were appointed, v. 4, 5. 1. Those of them that were to *set forward the work of the house of God*, v. 4. were therein to *wait on the sons of Aaron*, v. 28. were to do the drudgery-work (if any work for God is to be called *drudgery*) of the house of God, to keep the courts and chambers clean, set things in their places, and have them ready when there was occasion to use them. They were to prepare the show-bread which the priests were to set on the table, to provide the flour and cakes for the meat-offerings, that the priests might have every thing ready to their hands. 2. Those of them that were judges and officers, had an eye upon all *measure and size*, v. 29. The standards of all weights and measures were kept in the sanctuary; and the Levites had the care of them, to see that they were exact, and to try other weights and measures by them when they were appealed to. 3. The work of the singers was, to *thank and praise the Lord*, v. 30. at the offering of the morning and evening sacrifices, and other oblations on the sabbaths, new moons, &c. v. 31. Moses appointed that they should blow with trumpets over their burnt-offerings, and other sacrifices, and on their solemn days, Numb. 10. 10. The sound of this was awful, and might be affecting to the worshippers, but was not articulate, nor such a reasonable service as this which David appointed, of singing psalms on those occasions. As the Jewish church grew up from its infancy, it grew more and more intelligent in its devotions, till it came, at length, in the gospel, to *put away childish things*, 1 Cor. 13. 11. Gal. 4. 3, 9. 4. The work of the porters, (v. 5.) was, to keep *the charge of the tabernacle, and of the holy place*, that none might come nigh but such as were allowed, and those no nearer than was allowed them, v. 32. They were likewise to keep the charge of the sons of Aaron, to be at their beck, and go on their errands, who yet are called *their brethren*, to be a memorandum to the priests, that though they were advanced to a high station, yet they were *hewn out of the same rock* with common Levites, and therefore must not lord it over them, but, in all instances, treat them as brethren.

CHAP. XXIV.

This chapter gives us a more particular account of the distribution of the priests and Levites into their respective classes, for the more regular discharge of their offices, according to their families. I. Of the priests, v. 1. . 19. II. Of the Levites, v. 20. . 31.

1. **N**OW these are the divisions of the sons of Aaron. The sons of Aaron; Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 2. But Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and had no children: therefore Eleazar and Ithamar executed the priest's office. 3. And David distributed them, both Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, according to their offices in their service. 4. And there were more chief men found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar; and *thus* were they divided: among the sons of Eleazar *there*

were sixteen chief men of the house of *their* fathers, and eight among the sons of Ithamar, according to the house of their fathers. 5. Thus were they divided by lot, one sort with another: for the governors of the sanctuary, and governors of the house of God, were of the sons of Eleazar, and of the sons of Ithamar. 6. And Shemaiah the son of Nethaneel the scribe, *one* of the Levites, wrote them before the king, and the princes, and Zadok the priest, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and *before* the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites: one principal household being taken for Eleazar, and *one* taken for Ithamar. 7. Now the first lot came forth to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, 8. The third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, 9. The fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin, 10. The seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah, 11. The ninth to Jeshuah, the tenth to Shecaniah, 12. The eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim, 13. The thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab, 14. The fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer, 15. The seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Apses, 16. The nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezkeel, 17. The one and twentieth to Jachin, the two and twentieth to Gamul, 18. The three and twentieth to Delaiah, the four and twentieth to Maaziah. 19. These *were* the orderings of them in their service, to come into the house of the LORD, according to their manner, under Aaron their father, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded him.

The particular account of these establishments is of little use to us now; but when Ezra published it, it was of great use to direct their church affairs after their return from captivity into the old channel again. The title of this record we have, *v. 1, These are the divisions of the sons of Aaron*; not by which they divided one from another, or were at variance one with another; (it is pity there should ever be any such divisions among the sons of Israel, but especially among the sons of Aaron;) but the distribution of them, in order to the dividing of their work among themselves; it was a division which God made, and was made for him.

1. This distribution was made for the more regular discharge of their office. God was, and still is, the God of order, and not of confusion; particularly in the things of his worship. Number without order is but a clog, and an occasion of tumult; but when every one has, and knows, and keeps, his place and work, the more the better. In the mystical body, every member has its use, for the good of the whole, Rom. 12. 4, 5. 1 Cor. 12. 12.

2. It was made by lot, that the disposal thereof might be of the Lord, and so, all quarrels and contentions might be prevented, and no man could be charged with partiality, nor could any say that they had wrong done them. As God is the God of order, so he is the God of peace. Solomon says of the lot, that it *causeth contention to cease*.

3. The lot was cast publicly, and with great solemnity, in the presence of the king, princes, and priests, that there might be no room for any fraudu-

lent practices, or the suspicion of them. The lot is an appeal to God, and ought to be managed with corresponding reverence and sincerity. Matthias was chosen to the apostleship by lot, with prayer, Acts 1. 24, 26. and I know not but it might be still used in faith, in parallel cases, as an instituted ordinance. We have here the name of the public notary that was employed in writing the names, and drawing the lots, *v. 6, Shemaiah, one of the Levites*.

4. What those priests were chosen to, was, to preside in the affairs of the sanctuary, *v. 5*, in their several courses and turns. That which was to be determined by the lot, was only the precedency, not who should serve, (for they chose all the chief men,) but who should serve first, and who next, that every one might know his course, and attend in it. Of the twenty-four chief men of the priests, sixteen were of the house of Eleazar, and eight of Ithamar; for the house of Ithamar might well be supposed to have dwindled since the sentence passed on the family of Eli, who was of that house. The method of drawing the lots, is intimated, *v. 6*, one chief household being taken for Eleazar, and one for Ithamar. The sixteen chief names of Eleazar, were put in one urn, the eight for Ithamar, in another, and they drew out of them alternately, as long as those for Ithamar lasted, and then out of those only for Eleazar; or two for Eleazar, and then one for Ithamar, throughout.

5. Among these twenty-four courses, the eighth is that of Abijah or Abia, *v. 10*, which is mentioned, Luke 1. 5, as the course which Zachariah was of, the father of John Baptist; by which it appears that these courses which David now settled, though interrupted perhaps in the bad reigns, and long broken off by the captivity, yet continued in succession till the destruction of the second temple by the Romans. And each course was called by the name of him in whom it was first founded, as the High Priest is here called *Aaron*, *v. 19*, because succeeding in his dignity and power, though we read not of any of them, that bore that name. Whoever was High Priest, must be revered and observed by the inferior priests as their father, as Aaron their father. Christ is High Priest over the house of God, to whom all believers, being made priests, are to be in subjection.

20. And the rest of the sons of Levi *were these*: Of the sons of Amram; Shubael: of the sons of Shubael; Jehdeiah. 21. Concerning Rehabiah; of the sons of Rehabiah, the first was Isshiah. 22. Of the Izharites; Shelomoth: of the sons of Shelomoth; Jahath. 23. And the sons of *Hebron*; Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth. 24. Of the sons of Uzziel; Michah: of the sons of Michah; Shamir. 25. The brother of Michah was Isshiah: of the sons of Isshiah; Zechariah. 26. The sons of Merari *were* Mahli and Mushi: the sons of Jaaziah; Beno. 27. The sons of Merari by Jaaziah; Beno, and Shoham, and Zaccur, and Ibri. 28. Of Mahli came Eleazar, who had no sons. 29. Concerning Kish; the son of Kish was Jerahmeel. 30. The sons also of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jerimoth. These *were* the sons of the Levites, after the house of their fathers. 31. These likewise cast lots over against their brethren the sons of Aaron, in the presence of David the king, and Zadok

and Ahimelech, and the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites, even the principal fathers, over against their younger brethren.

Most of the Levites here named, were mentioned before, *ch.* 23. 16, &c. They were of those who were to attend the priests in the service of the house of God. But they are here mentioned again as heads of the twenty-four courses of Levites, (and about so many are here named,) who were to attend the twenty-four courses of the priests: they are therefore said to *cast lots over against their brethren*, (so they are called, not their *lords*) *the sons of Aaron*, who were not to lord it over God's *clergy*, as the original word is, 1 Pet. 5. 3. And that the whole disposal of the affair might be of the Lord, the principal fathers cast lots over against their younger brethren: that is, those that were of the elder house, came upon the level with those of the younger families, and took their place not by seniority, but as God by the lot directed. Note, In Christ, no difference is made between bond and free, elder and younger. The younger brethren, if they be faithful and sincere, shall be no less acceptable to Christ than the principal fathers.

CHAP. XXV.

David, having settled the courses of these Levites that were to attend the priests in their ministrations, proceeds, in this chapter, to put these into a method, that were appointed to be singers and musicians in the temple. Here is, I. The persons that were to be employed, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, v. 1. their sons, v. 2., 6. and other skilful persons, v. 7. II. The order in which they were to attend, determined by lot, v. 8., 31.

1. **M**OREOVER, David, and the captains of the host, separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals: and the number of the workmen, according to their service, was; 2. Of the sons of Asaph; Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nathaniah, and Asarelah, the sons of Asaph, under the hands of Asaph, which prophesied according to the order of the king. 3. Of Jeduthun: the sons of Jeduthun; Gedaliah, and Zeri, and Jesaiah, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp, to give thanks and to praise the LORD. 4. Of Heman: the sons of Heman; Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth: 5. All these were the sons of Heman the king's seer in the words of God, to lift up the horn. And God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters. 6. All these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of the LORD, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God, according to the king's order to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman. 7. So the number of them with their brethren, that were instructed in the songs of the LORD,

even all that were cunning, was two hundred fourscore and eight.

Observe,

I. Singing the praises of God, is here called *prophesying*, v. 1.-3. not that all those that were employed in this service, were honoured with the visions of God, or could foretell things to come. Heman indeed is said to be the *king's seer in the words of God*, v. 5. but the psalms they sang, were composed by prophets, and many of them were prophetic; and the edification of the church was intended in it, as well as the glory of God. In Samuel's time, singing the praises of God, went by the name of *prophesying*, 1 Sam. 10. 5.—19. 20. and perhaps that is intended in what St. Paul calls *prophesying*, 1 Cor. 11. 4.—14. 24.

II. This is here called a *service*, and the persons employed in it, *workmen*, v. 1. Not but that it is the greatest liberty and pleasure to be employed in praising God: what is heaven but that? But it intimates that it is our duty to make a business of it, and stir up all that is within us to it; and that, in our present state of corruption and infirmity, it will not be done, as it should be done, without labour and struggle. We must take pains with our hearts to bring them, and keep them, to this work, and to engage all that is within us.

III. Here were, in compliance with the temper of that dispensation, a great variety of musical instruments used, *harps, psalteries, cymbals*, v. 1, 6. and here was one that *lifted up the horn*, v. 5. that is, used wind-music. The bringing of such concerts of music into the worship of God now, is what none pretend to.* But those who use such concerts for their own entertainment, should feel themselves obliged to preserve them always free from any thing that savours of immorality or profaneness; by this consideration, that time was, when they were sacred; and then they were justly condemned, who brought them into common use: Amos 6. 5, *They invented to themselves instruments of music, like David*.

IV. The glory and honour of God were principally intended in all this temple-music, whether vocal or instrumental. It was to *give thanks and praise the Lord*, that they were employed, v. 3. It was in the songs of the Lord that they were instructed, v. 7. that is, *songs in the house of the Lord*, v. 6. This agrees with the intention of the perpetuating of psalmody in the gospel-church, which is, to *make melody with the heart*, in conjunction with the voice, *unto the Lord*, Eph. 5.-19.

V. The order of the king is likewise taken notice of, v. 2. and again, v. 6. In those matters indeed, David acted as a prophet; but his taking care for the due and regular observance of divine institutions, both ancient and modern, is an example to all in authority to use their power for the promoting of religion, and the enforcing of the laws of Christ. Let them thus be *ministers of God, for good*.

VI. The fathers presided in this service; Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, v. 1. and the children were *under the hands of their father*, v. 2, 3, 6. This gives a good example to parents to train up their children, and indeed to all seniors to instruct their juniors, in the service of God, and particularly in praising of him, than which there is no part of our work more necessary, or more worthy to be transmitted to the succeeding generations. It gives also an example to the younger to *submit themselves to the elder*, (whose experience and observation fit them for direction,) and, as far as may be, to do

* It is obvious that Mr. HENRY would not express himself thus were he now living.—Ed.

what they do, *under their hand*. It is probable that Heman, Asaph, and Jeduthun, were bred up under Samuel, and had their education in the schools of the prophets, which he was the founder and president of; then they were pupils, now they came to be masters. Those that would be eminent, must begin early, and take time to prepare themselves. This good work of singing God's praises, Samuel revived and set on foot, but lived not to see it brought to the perfection it appears in here. Solomon perfects what David began, so David perfects what Samuel began. Let all, in their day, do what they can for God and his church, though they cannot carry it so far as they would; when they are gone, God can, out of stones raise up others, who shall build upon their foundation, and bring forth the top stone.

VII. There were others also, beside the sons of these three great men, who are called their *brethren*, (probably, because they had been wont to join with them in their private concerts,) who were *instructed in the songs of the Lord*, and were cunning or well skilled therein, *v. 7*. They were all Levites, and were in number 288. Now, 1. These were a good number, and a competent number to keep up the service in the house of God; for they were all skilful in the work to which they were called. When David the king was so much addicted to divine poesy and music, many others, all that had a genius for it, applied their studies and endeavours that way. Those do religion a great deal of good service, that bring the exercises of religion into reputation. 2. Yet these were but a small number in comparison with the 4000 whom David appointed thus to *praise the Lord*, *ch. 23. 5*. Where were all the rest, when only 288, and those but by 12 in a course, were separated to this service? It is probable that all the rest were divided into as many courses, and were to follow as these led. Or, perhaps, these were *for song in the house of the Lord*, *v. 6*, with whom any that worshipped in the courts of that house might join; and the rest were disposed of, all the kingdom over, to preside in the country congregations, in this good work; for though the sacrifices instituted by the hand of Moses, might be offered but at one place, the psalms penned by David, might be sung every where, *1 Tim. 2. 8*.

8. And they cast lots, ward against ward, as well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar. 9. Now, the first lot came forth for Asaph to Joseph; the second to Gedaliah, who with his brethren and sons were twelve: 10. The third to Zaccur, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 11. The fourth to Izri, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 12. The fifth to Nethaniah, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 13. The sixth to Bukkiah, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 14. The seventh to Jesharelah, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 15. The eighth to Jeshaiiah, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 16. The ninth to Mattaniah, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 17. The tenth to Shimei, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 18. The eleventh to Azareel, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 19. The twelfth to Hashabiah, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 20. The thirteenth to Shubael, *he*,

his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 21. The fourteenth to Mattithiah, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 22. The fifteenth to Jeremoth, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 23. The sixteenth to Hananiah, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 24. The seventeenth to Joshbekashah, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 25. The eighteenth to Hanani, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 26. The nineteenth to Mallothi, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 27. The twentieth to Eliathah, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 28. The one and twentieth to Hothir, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 29. The two and twentieth to Giddalti, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 30. The three and twentieth to Mahazioth, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve: 31. The four and twentieth to Romanti-ezer, *he*, his sons and his brethren, were twelve.

Twenty-four persons are named in the beginning of this chapter, as sons of those three great men, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun. Ethan was the third, *ch. 6. 44*. but probably, he was dead before the establishment was perfected, and Jeduthun came in his room.* Of these three providence so ordered it, that Asaph had 4 sons, Jeduthun 6, † and Heman 14, in all 24, who were named, *v. 2-4*, who were all qualified for the service, and called to it. But the question was, In what order must they serve? This was determined by lot, to prevent strife for precedency, a sin which most easily besets many that are otherwise good people.

1. The lot was thrown impartially. They were placed in 24 companies, 12 in a company, in two rows, 12 companies in a row, and so they cast lots, ward against ward, putting them all upon a level, small and great, teacher and scholar; they did not go according to their age, or according to their standing, or the degrees they had taken in the music-schools; but it was referred to God, *v. 8*. Small and great teachers and scholars stand alike before God, who goes not according to our rules of distinction and precedency. See *Matth. 20. 23*.

2. God determined it as he pleased, taking account, it is probable, of the personal merits of the persons, which are much more considerable than seniority of age, or priority of birth. Let us compare them with the preceding catalogue, and we shall find that, (1.) Joseph was the second son of Asaph. (2.) Gedaliah, the eldest son of Jeduthun. (3.) Zaccur, the eldest of Asaph. (4.) Izri, the second of Jeduthun. (5.) Nethaniah, the third of Asaph. (6.) Bukkiah, the eldest of Heman. (7.) Jesharelah, the youngest of Asaph. (8.) Jeshaiiah, the third of Jeduthun. (9.) Mattaniah, the second of Heman. (10.) Shimei, the youngest of Jeduthun. (11.) Azareel, the third of Heman. (12.) Hashabiah, the fourth of Jeduthun. (13.) Shubael, the fourth of Heman. (14.) Mattithiah, the fifth of Jeduthun. (15.) Jeremoth, the fifth of Heman. (16.) Hananiah, the sixth. (17.) Joshbekashah, the eleventh. (18.) Hanani, the seventh. (19.) Mallothi, the twelfth. (20.) Eliathah, the eighth. (21.)

* Or, perhaps, Ethan and Jeduthun were two names for the same.—Ed.

† Only 5 are mentioned, *v. 3*. Shimei, mentioned *v. 17* is supposed to have been the sixth.—Ed.

Hothir, the thirteenth. (22.) Giddalti, the ninth. (23.) Mebazioth, the fourteenth. And, *lastly*, Romanti-ezer, the tenth. See how God increased some, and preferred the younger before the elder.

3. Each of these had in his chorus the number of 12, called, *their sons and their brethren*; because they observed them as sons, and concurred with them as brethren. Probably, twelve, some for the voice, and others for the instrument, made up the concert. Let us learn with one mind, and one mouth, to glorify God; and that will be the best concert.

CHAP. XXVI.

We have here an account of the business of the Levites. That tribe had made but a very small figure, all the time of the judges, till Eli and Samuel appeared. But when David revived religion, the Levites were, of all men, in the greatest reputation. And happy it was, that they had Levites who were men of sense, fit to support the honour of their tribe. We have here an account, I. Of the Levites that were appointed to be porters, v. 1. . 19. II. Of those that were appointed to be treasurers and store-keepers, v. 20. . 28. III. Of those that were officers and judges in the country, and were intrusted with the administration of public affairs, v. 29. . 32.

I. **C**ONCERNING the divisions of the porters: of the Korhites *was* Meshlemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph. 2. And the sons of Meshelemiah *were* Zechariah the first-born, Jediel the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth, 3. Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Elioenai the seventh. 4. Moreover, the sons of Obed-edom *were* Shemaiah the first-born, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethaneel the fifth. 5. Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth; for God blessed him. 6. Also unto Shemaiah his son *were* sons born, that ruled throughout the house of their father: for they *were* mighty men of valour. 7. The sons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad, whose brethren *were* strong men; Elihu, and Semachiah. 8. All these of the sons of Obed-edom; they, and their sons, and their brethren, able men for strength for the service, *were* threescore and two of Obed-edom. 9. And Meshlemiah had sons and brethren, strong men, eighteen. 10. Also Hosah, of the children of Merari, had sons; Simri the chief, (for *though* he was not the first-born, yet his father made him the chief,) 11. Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brethren of Hosah *were* thirteen. 12. Among these *were* the divisions of the porters, *even* among the chief men, *having* wards one against another, to minister in the house of the LORD. 13. And they cast lots, as well the small as the great, according to the house of their fathers, for every gate. 14. And the lot eastward fell to Shel-emiah. Then for Zechariah his son (a wise counsellor) they cast lots, and his lot came

out northward. 15. To Obed-edom southward; and to his sons the house of Asup-pim. 16. To Shuppim and Hosah *the lot came forth* westward, with the gate Shal-lecheth, by the causeway of the going up, ward against ward. 17. Eastward *were* six Levites, northward four a day, southward four a day, and toward Asuppim two and two. 18. At Parbar westward, four at the causeway, *and* two at Parbar. 19. These *are* the divisions of the porters among the sons of Kore, and among the sons of Merari.

Observe, 1. There were porters appointed to attend the temple, who guarded all the avenues that led to it, opened and shut all the outer gates, and attended at them, not only for state, but for service, to direct and instruct those who were going to worship in the courts of the sanctuary, in the conduct they were to observe, to encourage those that were timorous, to send back the strangers and unclean, and to guard against thieves, and others that were enemies to the house of God. In allusion to this office, ministers are said to have *the keys of the kingdom of heaven* committed to them, Matth. 16. 19. that they may admit, and exclude, according to the law of Christ.

2. Of several of those that were called to this service, it is taken notice of, that they were *mighty men of valour*, v. 6. *strong men*, v. 7. *able men*, v. 8. and of one of them, that he was a *wise counsellor*, v. 14. who, probably, when he had *used this office of a deacon well*, and given proofs of more than ordinary wisdom, *purchased to himself a good degree*, and was preferred from the gate to the council-board, 1 Tim. 3. 13. As for those that excelled in strength of body, and courage and resolution of mind, they were thereby qualified for the post assigned them; for whatever service God calls men to, he either finds them fit, or makes them so.

3. The sons of Obed-edom were employed in this office, 62 of that family. This was he that entertained the ark with reverence and cheerfulness; and see how he was rewarded for it: (1.) He had 8 sons, v. 5, for God blessed him. The increase and building up of families, are owing to the divine blessing; and a great blessing it is to a family to have many children, when they are, as those here, able for, and eminent in, the service of God. (2.) His sons were preferred to places of trust in the sanctuary. They had faithfully attended the ark in their own house, and now were called to attend it in God's house. He that is trusty in little, shall be trusted with more. He that keeps God's ordinances in his own tent, is fit to have the custody of them in God's tabernacle, 1 Tim. 3. 4, 5. *I have kept thy law*, says David, and *this I had, because I kept thy precepts*, Ps. 119. 55, 56.

4. It is said of one here, that *though he was not the first-born, his father made him the chief*, v. 10. either because he was very excellent, or because the elder son was very weak. He was made chief, perhaps not in inheriting the estate, (for that was forbidden by the law, Deut. 21. 16, 17.) but in this service, which required personal qualifications.

5. The porters, as the singers, had their post assigned them by lot; so many at such a gate, and so many at such a one, that every one might know his post, and make it good, v. 13. It is not said that they were cast into 24 courses, as before; but here are the names of about 24, v. 1. . 11. and the posts assigned are 24, v. 17, 18. We have there-

fore reason to think they were distributed into as many companies. Happy they who dwell in God's house; for, as they are well-fed, well-taught, and well-employed, so they are well-guarded. *Men* attended at the gates of the temple, but *angels* at the gates of the new Jerusalem, Rev. 21. 12.

20. And of the Levites, Ahijah *was* over the treasures of the house of God, and over the treasures of the dedicated things. 21. *As concerning* the sons of Laadan: the sons of the Gershonite Laadan, chief fathers, *even* of Laadan the Gershonite, *were* Jehieli. 22. The sons of Jehieli; Zetham, and Joel his brother, *which were* over the treasures of the house of the LORD. 23. Of the Amramites, *and* the Izharites, the Hebronites, *and* the Uzzielites: 24. And Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, *was* ruler of the treasures. 25. And his brethren by Eliezer; Rehabiah his son, and Jeshaiiah his son, and Joram his son, and Zichri his son, and Shelomith his son. 26. Which Shelomith and his brethren *were* over all the treasures of the dedicated things, which David the king, and the chief fathers, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the captains of the host, had dedicated. 27. Out of the spoils won in battles did they dedicate to maintain the house of the LORD. 28. And all that Samuel the seer, and Saul the son of Kish, and Abner the son of Ner, and Joab the son of Zeruiah, had dedicated; *and* whosoever had dedicated *any thing, it was* under the hand of Shelomith, and of his brethren.

Observe, 1. There were *treasures of the house of God*. A great house cannot be well kept without stores of all manner of provisions. Much was expended daily upon the altar; flour, wine, oil, salt, fuel, beside the lamps; quantities of these were to be kept beforehand, beside the sacred vestments and utensils. These were the *treasures of the house of God*. And because money answers all things, doubtless they had an abundance of it, which was received from the people's offerings, wherewith they bought in what they had occasion for. And, perhaps much was laid up for an exigence. These treasures typified the plenty there is in our Heavenly Father's house, enough and to spare. In Christ, the true Temple, are hid *treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and unsearchable riches*.

2. There were *treasures of dedicated things*; dedicated mostly *out of the spoils won in battle*, v. 27. as a grateful acknowledgment of the divine protection. Abraham gave Melchisedec the *tenth of the spoils*, Heb. 7. 4. In Moses's time, the officers of the army, when they returned victorious, brought, of their spoils, an *oblation to the Lord*, Numb. 31. 50. Of late, this pious custom had been revived; and not only Samuel and David, but Saul and Abner and Joab, had dedicated of their spoils to the honour and support of the house of God, v. 28. Note, The more God bestows upon us, the more he expects from us in works of piety and charity. Great successes call for proportionable returns. When we look over our estates, we should consider, "Here are convenient things, rich

things, it may be, and fine things; but where are the dedicated things?" Men of war must honour God with their spoils.

3. These treasures had treasurers, those that were over them, v. 20. 26. whose business it was to keep them, that neither *moth nor rust* might corrupt them, nor *thieves break through and steal*; to give out as there was occasion, and to see they were not wasted, embezzled, or alienated to any common use; and it is probable that they kept accounts of all that was brought in, and how it was laid out.

29. Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons *were* for the outward business over Israel, for officers and judges. 30. *And* of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valour, a thousand and seven hundred, *were* officers among them of Israel on this side Jordan westward, in all business of the LORD, and in the service of the king. 31. Among the Hebronites *was* Jerijah the chief, *even* among the Hebronites, according to the generations of his fathers. In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valour at Jazer of Gilead. 32. And his brethren, men of valour, *were* two thousand and seven hundred chief fathers, whom king David made rulers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God, and affairs of the king.

All the offices of the house of God being well provided with Levites, we have here an account of those that were employed as officers and judges, in the outward business, which must not be neglected, no, not for the temple itself. The magistracy is an ordinance of God for the good of the church, as truly as the ministry is. And here we are told,

1. That the Levites were employed in the administration of justice, in concurrence with the princes and elders of the several tribes, who could not be supposed to understand the law so well as the Levites, who made it their business to study it. None of those Levites who were employed in the service of the sanctuary, none of the singers or porters, were concerned in this outward business; either one was enough to engage the whole man, or it was presumption to undertake both.

2. Their charge was both *in all business of the Lord, and in the service of the king*, v. 30. and again, v. 32. They managed the affairs of the country, as well ecclesiastical as civil, took care both of God's tithes and the king's taxes; punished offences committed immediately against God and his honour, and those against the government and the public peace; guarded both against idolatry and against injustice; and took care to put the laws in execution against both. Some, it is likely, applied themselves to the affairs of religion, others to secular affairs; and so between both, God and the king were well served. It is happy with a kingdom, when its civil and sacred interests are thus interwoven, and jointly minded and advanced.

3. There were more Levites employed as judges with the two tribes and a half on the other side Jordan, than with all the rest of the tribes; there were two thousand seven hundred; whereas on the west side of Jordan, there were but one thousand

seven hundred, *v.* 30, 32. Either those remote tribes were not so well furnished as the rest with judges of their own; or because they lying furthest from Jerusalem, and on the borders of the neighbouring nations, were most in danger of being infected with idolatry, and most needed the help of Levites to prevent it. The frontiers must be well guarded.

4. This is said to be done (as were all the foregoing settlements) in the fortieth year of the reign of David, *v.* 31. that was the last year of his reign. We should be so much the more industrious to do good, *as we see the day approaching.* If we live not to enjoy the fruit of our labours, grudge it not to those that shall come after us.

CHAP. XXVII.

In this chapter, we have the civil list, including the military.

I. The twelve captains for every several month of the year, *v.* 1. . 15. II. The princes of the several tribes, *v.* 16. . 24. III. The officers of the court, *v.* 25. 34.

1. **N**OW the children of Israel after their number, *to wit*, the chief fathers and captains of thousands and hundreds, and their officers that served the king in any matter of the courses, which came in and went out month by month, throughout all the months of the year, of every course *were* twenty and four thousand. 2. Over the first course, for the first month, *was* Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand. 3. Of the children of Perez *was* the chief of all the captains of the host for the first month. 4. And over the course of the second month *was* Dodai an Ahohite, and of his course *was* Mikloth also the ruler: in his course likewise *were* twenty and four thousand. 5. The third captain of the host, for the third month, *was* Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand. 6. *This is that* Benaiah *who was* mighty *among* the thirty, and above the thirty: and in his course *was* Ammizabad his son. 7. The fourth *captain*, for the fourth month, *was* Asabel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his son after him: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand. 8. The fifth *captain*, for the fifth month, *was* Shambhuth the Izrahite: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand. 9. The sixth *captain*, for the sixth month, *was* Ira the son of Ikkes the Tekoite: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand. 10. The seventh *captain*, for the seventh month, *was* Helez the Pelonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand. 11. The eighth *captain*, for the eighth month, *was* Sibbecai the Hushathite, of the Zarhites: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand. 12. The ninth *captain*, for the ninth month, *was* Abiezer the Anetothite, of the Benjamites: and in his course *were* twenty and four

thousand. 13. The tenth *captain*, for the tenth month, *was* Maharai the Netophathite, of the Zarhites: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand. 14. The eleventh *captain*, for the eleventh month, *was* Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand. 15. The twelfth *captain*, for the twelfth month, *was* Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel: and in his course *were* twenty and four thousand.

We have here an account of the militia of the kingdom, and the regulation of that. David was himself a man of war, and had done great things with the sword; he had brought into the field great armies: now here we are told how he marshalled them, when God had given him rest from all his enemies. He did not keep them all together; for that would have been a hardship on them and the country; yet he did not disband and disperse them all; then he had left his kingdom naked, and his people would have forgotten the arts of war, wherein they had been instructed. He therefore contrives to keep up a constant force, and yet not a standing army. The model is very prudent.

1. He kept up 24,000 constantly in arms, I suppose, in a body, and disciplined, in one part or other of the kingdom; the freeholders carrying their own arms, and bearing their own charges, while they were up. This was a sufficient strength for the securing of the public peace and safety. Those that are Israelites indeed, must learn war; for we have enemies to grapple with, whom we are concerned constantly to stand upon our guard against.

2. He changed them every month; so that the whole number of militia amounted to 288,000; perhaps about a fifth part of the able men of the kingdom. By being thus distributed into twelve courses, they were all instructed in, and accustomed to, military exercises; and yet none were compelled to be in service, and at expenses, above one month in the year, which they might very well afford, unless upon extraordinary occasions, and then they might all be got together quickly. It is the wisdom of governors, and much their praise, while they provide for the public safety, to contrive how to make it effectual, and yet easy, and as little as possible burthensome, to the people.

3. Every course had a commander-in-chief over it, beside the subaltern officers that were rulers over thousands, and hundreds, and fifties; there was one general officer to each course or legion. All these 12 great commanders are mentioned among David's worthies and champions, 2 Sam. 23. and 1 Chron. 11. They had first signalized themselves by their great actions, and then they were advanced to those great preferments. It is well with a kingdom, when honour thus attends merit. Benaiah is here called a *chief priest*, *v.* 5. But *cohen* signifying both a *priest* and a *prince*, it might better be translated here, a *chief ruler*, or, (as in the margin) a *principal officer*. Doda had Mikloth, (*v.* 4.) either for his substitute when he was absent or infirm, or for his successor when he was dead. Benaiah had his son under him, *v.* 6. Asahel had his son after him, *v.* 7. and by that, it seems that this plan of the militia was laid in the beginning of David's reign; for Asahel was killed by Abner, while David reigned in Hebron. When his wars were over, he revived this method, and left the military affairs in this posture, for the peaceable reign of his son Solomon. When we think ourselves most safe, yet, while we are here in the body, we must keep in a

readiness for spiritual conflicts: *Let not him that girdeth on the harness, boast as he that puts it off.*

16. Furthermore, over the tribes of Israel; the ruler of the Reubenites was Eliezer the son of Zichri: of the Simeonites, Shephatiah the son of Maachah: 17. Of the Levites, Hashabiah the son of Kemuel: of the Aaronites, Zadok: 18. Of Judah, Elihu, *one of the brethren of David*: of Issachar, Omri the son of Michael. 19. Of Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah: of Naphtali, Jerimoth the son of Azriel: 20. Of the children of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Azaziah: of the half tribe of Manasseh, Joel the son of Pedaiiah: 21. Of the half *tribe* of Manasseh in Gilead, Iddo the son of Zechariah: of Benjamin, Jaasiel the son of Abner: 22. Of Dan, Azareel the son of Jeroham. *These were the princes of the tribes of Israel.* 23. But David took not the number of them from twenty years old and under: because the LORD had said he would increase Israel like to the stars of the heavens. 24. Joab the son of Zeruiah began to number, but he finished not, because there fell wrath for it against Israel: neither was the number put in the account of the Chronicles of king David. 25. And over the king's treasures was Azmaveth the son of Adiel: and over the store-houses in the fields, in the cities, and in the villages, and in the castles, was Jehonathan the son of Uzziah: 26. And over them that did the work of the field, for tillage of the ground, was Ezri the son of Chelub: 27. And over the vineyards was Shimei the Ramathite: over the increase of the vineyards for the wine-cellars was Zabdi the Shiphmite: 28. And over the olive-trees, and the sycamore-trees that were in the low plains, was Baalhanan the Gederite: and over the cellars of oil was Joash: 29. And over the herds that fed in Sharon was Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the herds that were in the valleys was Shaphat the son of Adlai: 30. Over the camels also was Obil the Ishmaelite: and over the asses was Jehdeiah the Meronothite: 31. And over the flocks was Jaziz the Hagarite. All these were the rulers of the substance which was king David's. 32. Also Jonathan, David's uncle, was a counsellor, a wise man, and a scribe: and Jehiel the son of Hachmoni was with the king's sons. 33. And Ahithophel was the king's counsellor: and Hushai the Archite was the king's companion: 34. And after Ahithophel was Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar: and the general of the king's army was Joab.

We have here an account,

I. Of the princes of the tribes: something of the ancient order instituted by Moses in the wilderness, was still kept up, that every tribe should have its prince or chief. It is probable that it was kept up all along, either by election or by succession, in the same family; and those are here named, who were found in that office when this account was taken. Elihu, or Eliab, who was prince of Judah, was the eldest son of Jesse, and descended in a right line from Nahshon and Salmon, the princes of this tribe in Moses's time. Whether these princes were of the nature of lord-lieutenants that guided them in their military affairs, or chief-justices that presided in their courts of judgment, does not appear. Their power, we may suppose, was much less now than it had been, when, for the most part, they acted separately. Our religion obliges us to be subject, not only to the king as supreme, but unto governors under him, 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14. the princes that decree justice. Of Benjamin, was Jaasiel the son of Abner, v. 21. Though Abner was David's enemy, and opposed his coming to the throne, yet, David would not oppose the preferment of his son, but, perhaps, nominated him to this post of honour; which teaches us to render good for evil.

II. Of the numbering of the people, v. 23, 24. It is here said, 1. That when David ordered the people to be numbered, he forbade the numbering of those under 20 years old, thinking thereby to save the reflection which what he did might otherwise cast upon the promise, that they should be innumerable; yet it was but a poor salvo; for it had never been customary to number these under 20, and the promise of their numbers chiefly respected the effective men. 2. That that account which David took of the people, in the pride of his heart, turned to no good account; for it was never perfected, nor done with exactness, nor was it ever recorded as an authentic account: Joab was disgusted with it, and did it by halves; David was ashamed of it, and willing it should be forgotten, because there fell wrath for it against Israel. A good man cannot, in the reflection, please himself with that which he knows God is displeased with; cannot make use of that, nor take comfort in that, which is obtained by sin.

III. Of the officers of the court.

1. The rulers of the king's substance, as they are called, v. 31. such as had the oversight and charge of the king's tillage, his vineyards, his olive-yards, his herds, his camels, his asses, his flocks. Here are no officers for state, none for sport, no master of the wardrobe, no master of the ceremonies, no master of the horse, no master of the hounds, but all for substance, agreeable to the simplicity and plainness of those times. David was a great soldier, a great scholar, and a great prince, and yet a great husband of his estate, kept a great deal of his ground in his own hand, and stocked it, not for pleasure, but for profit; for the king himself is served of the field, Eccl. 5. 9. Those magistrates that would have their subjects industrious, must be themselves examples of industry, and application to business. We find, however, that, afterward, the poor of the land were thought good enough to be vine-dressers and husbandmen, 2 Kings 25. 12. Now David put his great men to preside in these employments.

2. The attendants on the king's person. They were such as were eminent for wisdom, being designed for conversation. His uncle, who was a wise man, and a scribe, not only well-skilled in politics, but well-read in the scriptures, was his counsellor, v. 32. Another, who, no doubt, excelled in learning and prudence, was tutor to his children. Ahithophel, a very cunning man, was

his counsellor: but Hushai, an honest man, was his companion and confidant. It does not appear that he had many counsellors; but those he had, were men of great abilities. Much of the wisdom of princes is seen in the choice of their ministry. But David, though he had all these trusty counsellors about him, preferred his Bible before them all: Ps. 119. 24, *Thy testimonies are my delight and my counsellors.*

CHAP. XXVIII.

The account we have of David's exit, in the beginning of the first book of Kings, does not make his sun near so bright as that given in this and the following chapter, where we have his solemn farewell both to his son and his subjects, and must own that he finished well. In this chapter, we have, I. A general convention of the states summoned to meet, v. 1. II. A solemn declaration of the divine entail both of the crown, and of the honour of building the temple, upon Solomon, v. 2..7. III. An exhortation both to the people, and to Solomon, to make religion their business, v. 8..10. IV. The model and materials delivered to Solomon for the building of the temple, v. 11..19. V. Encouragement given him to undertake it, and proceed in it, v. 20, 21.

1. **A**ND David assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Jerusalem. 2. Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people: *As for me, I had in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building:* 3. But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build a house for my name; because thou *hast been* a man of war, and hast shed blood. 4. Howbeit the LORD God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever: for he hath chosen Judah to be the ruler; and of the house of Judah, the house of my father; and among the sons of my father he liked me, to make *me* king over all Israel: 5. And of all my sons (for the LORD hath given me many sons) he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. 6. And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. 7. Moreover, I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be constant to do my commandments and my judgments, as at this day. 8. Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the LORD, and in the audience of our God, keep and seek for all the commandments of the LORD your God, that ye may possess this good

land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever. 9. And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever. 10. Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build a house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it.

A great deal of service David had done in his day, had *served his generation according to the will of God*, Acts 13. 36. But now the time draws nigh, that he must die, and, as a type of the Son of David, the nearer he comes to his end, the more busy he is, and does his work with all his might. He is now a little recovered from the bad indisposition mentioned, 1 Kings 1. 1. when they covered him with clothes, and he got no heat: but what cure is there for old age? He therefore improves his recovery, as giving him an opportunity of doing God and his country a little more service.

I. He summons all the great men to attend him, that he might take leave of them altogether, v. 1. Thus Moses did, Deut. 31. 28. and Joshua ch. 23. 2.—24. 1. David would not declare the settlement of the crown, but in the presence, and to the satisfaction, of those that were the representatives of the people.

II He addresses them with a great deal of respect and tenderness. He not only by an effort quitted his bed, to give them the meeting, (the occasion putting new spirits into him,) but he rose out of his chair, and *stood upon his feet*, v. 2. in reverence to God, whose will he was to declare, and in reverence to this solemn assembly of the Israel of God, as if he looked upon himself, though *major singulis—greater than any individual among them, yet minor universis—less than the whole of them altogether*. His age and infirmities, as well as his dignity, might well have allowed him to keep his seat; but he would show that he was indeed humbled for the pride of his heart, both in the number of his people, and his dominion over them. Then, it was too much his pleasure, that they were all his *servants*, ch. 21. 3. now he calls them his *brethren*, whom he loved, his people whom he took care of, not his servants whom he had the command of. *Hear me, my brethren and my people*. It becomes superiors thus to speak with affection and condescension, even to their inferiors; they will not be the less honoured for it, but the more loved. Thus he engages their attention to what he was about to say.

III. He declares the purpose he had formed to build a temple for God, and God's disallowing of that purpose, v. 2, 3. This he had signified to Solomon before, ch. 22. 7, 8. *A house of rest for the ark* is here said to be a *house of rest for the footstool of our God*: for heaven is his throne of glory; the earth, and the most magnificent temples that can be built upon it, are but his footstool. So much difference is there between the manifestations of the divine glory in the upper, and the lower world. Angels surround his throne, Isa. 6. 1. We, poor worms, do but *worship at his footstool*, Ps. 99. 5.—132. 7. As an evidence of the sincerity of his purpose to build the temple, he tells them that he had made ready for it, but that God would not suffer them to proceed, because he had appointed other work for him to do, which was enough for one man, namely, the managing of the wars of Is

rael; he must serve the public with the sword, another must do it with the line and plummet. Times of rest are building times, Acts 9. 31.

IV. He produces his own title first, and then Solomon's, to the crown; both were, undoubtedly, *jure divino—divine*. They could make out such a title as no monarch on earth can; the Lord God of Israel chose them both immediately by prophecy, not providence, *v. 4, 5*. No right of primogeniture is pretended; *Detur digniori, not seniori—It went by worth, not by age*. 1. Judah was not the eldest son of Jacob, yet God chose that tribe to be the ruling tribe; Jacob entailed the sceptre upon it, Gen. 49. 10. 2. It does not appear that the family of Jesse was the senior house of that tribe; from Judah, it is certain that it was not, for Shelah was before Pharez; whether from Nahshon and Salmon, is not certain. Ram, the father of Nahshon, had an elder brother, 1 Chron. 2. 9. perhaps so had Boaz, Obed, Jesse; yet, "*God chose the house of my father*." 3. David was the youngest son of Jesse, yet God liked him to make him king; so it seemed good unto him. God takes whom he likes, and likes whom he makes like himself, as he did David, a man after his own heart. 4. Solomon was one of the youngest sons of David, and yet God chose him to sit upon the throne, because he was the likeliest of them all to build the temple, the wisest and best inclined.

5. He opens to them God's gracious purposes concerning Solomon, *v. 6, 7*, *I have chosen him to be my son*. Thus he declares the decree, that the Lord had said to Solomon, as a type of Christ, *Thou art my son*, Ps. 2. 7. the son of my love; for he was called *Jedidiah*, because the Lord loved him, and Christ is his beloved Son. Of him, God said, as a figure of him that was to come, 1. *He shall build my house*; Christ is both the Founder, and the Foundation, of the gospel-temple. 2. *I will establish his kingdom for ever*. This must have its accomplishment in the kingdom of the Messiah, which shall continue in his hands through all the ages of time, Isa. 9. 7. Luke 1. 33. and shall then be delivered up to God, even the Father, yet, perhaps, to be delivered back to the Redeemer for ever. As to Solomon, this promise of the establishment of his kingdom is here made conditional, *If he be constant to do my commandments, as at this day*. Solomon was now very towardsly and good; "If he continue so, his kingdom shall continue, otherwise not." Note, If we be constant to our duty, then, and not otherwise, we may expect the continuance of God's favour. Let those that are well taught, and begin well, take notice of this—if they be constant, they are happy; perseverance wears the crown, though it wins it not.

VI. He charges them to adhere steadfastly to God and their duty, *v. 8*. Observe, 1. The matter of this charge: *Keep, and seek for, all the commandments of the Lord your God*. The Lord was their God, his commandments must be their rule, they must have respect to them all, must make conscience of keeping them, and, in order thereunto, must seek for them, that is, must be inquisitive concerning their duty, search the scriptures, take advice, seek the law at their mouth whose lips were to keep this knowledge, and pray to God to teach and direct them. God's commandments will not be kept without great care. 2. The solemnity of it. He charges them in the sight of all Israel, who would all have notice of this public charge, and in the audience of their God. God is witness, and this congregation is witness, that they have good counsel given them, and fair warning; if they do not take it, it is their fault, and God and man will be witnesses against them. See 1 Tim. 5. 21. 2 Tim. 4. 1. Those that profess religion, as they tender

the favour of God, and their reputation with men, must be faithful to their profession. 3. The motive to observe this charge; it was the way to be happy, to have the peaceable possession of this good land themselves, and to preserve the entail of it upon their children.

VII. He concludes with a charge to Solomon himself, *v. 9, 10*. He is much concerned that he should be religious. He was to be a great man, but he must not think religion below him; a wise man, and this will be his wisdom. Observe, 1. The charge he gives him. He must look upon God as the God of his father, his good father, who had devoted him to God, and educated him for God. He was born in God's house, and therefore bound in duty to be his; brought up in his house, and therefore bound in gratitude. *Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not*. He must know God, and serve him; we cannot serve God aright, if we do not know him; and in vain do we know him, if we do not serve him; serve him with heart and mind. We make nothing of religion, if we do not mind it, and make heart-work of it; serve him with a perfect, that is, an upright, heart; for sincerity is our gospel-perfection; and with a willing mind, from a principle of love, and as a willing people, cheerfully, and with pleasure. 2. The arguments to enforce this charge. Two arguments of general inducement. (1.) That the secrets of our souls are open before God; he searches all hearts, even the hearts of kings, which to men are unsearchable, Prov. 25. 3. We must therefore be sincere, because if we deal deceitfully, God sees it, and cannot be imposed upon; we must therefore employ our thoughts, and engage them in God's service, because he fully understands all the imaginations of them, both good and bad. (2.) That we are happy or miserable here, and for ever, according as we do, or do not, serve God. *If we seek him diligently, he will be found of us*, and that is enough to make us happy, Heb. 11. 6. If we forsake him, desert his service, and turn from following him, he will cast us off for ever, and that is enough to make us miserable. Note, God never casts any off, till they have first cast him off. Here is one argument peculiar to Solomon: *v. 10*, "*Thou art to build a house for the sanctuary*"; therefore seek and serve God, that that work may be done from a good principle, in a right manner, and may be accepted." 3. The means prescribed in order hereunto, and they are prescribed to us all. (1.) Caution. *Take heed*; beware of every thing that looks like, or leads to, that which is evil. (2.) Courage. *Be strong, and do it*. We cannot do our work as we should, unless we put on resolution, and fetch in strength from divine grace.

11. Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasures thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, 12. And the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasures of the house of God, and of the treasures of the dedicated things: 13. Also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the LORD. 14. *He gave of gold by weight for things of gold, for all*

instruments of all manner of service; *silver also* for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments of every kind of service: 15. Even the weight for the candlesticks of gold, and for their lamps of gold, by weight for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof; and for the candlesticks of silver by weight, *both* for the candlestick, and *also* for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick. 16. And by weight *he gave* gold for the tables of show-bread, for every table; and *likewise* silver for the tables of silver: 17. Also pure gold for the flesh-hooks, and the bowls, and the cups: and for the golden basons *he gave gold* by weight for every bason; and *likewise silver* by weight for every bason of silver: 18. And for the altar of incense refined gold by weight; and gold for the pattern of the chariot of the cherubims, that spread out *their wings*, and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD. 19. All this, *said David*, the LORD made me understand in writing by *his hand* upon me, *even* all the works of this pattern. 20. And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong, and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed; for the LORD God, *even my God, will be with thee*; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD. 21. And, behold, the courses of the priests and the Levites, *even they shall be with thee* for all the service of the house of God: and *there shall be with thee*, for all manner of workmanship, every willing skilful man, for any manner of service; also the princes and all the people *will be wholly* at thy commandment.

As for the general charge that David gave his son to seek God and serve him, the book of the law was, in that his only rule, and there needed no other; but, in building the temple, David was now to give him three things.

1. A model of the building, because it was to be such a building as neither he nor his architects ever saw. Moses had a pattern of the tabernacle showed him in the mount, Heb. 8. 5. so had David of the temple, by the immediate hand of God upon him, v. 19. It was given him in writing, probably, by the ministry of an angel, or as clearly and exactly represented to his mind, as if it had been in writing. But it is said, v. 12, *He had the pattern by the Spirit*. The contrivance either of David's devotion, or of Solomon's wisdom, must not be trusted to in an affair of this nature. The temple must be a sacred thing, and a type of Christ; there must be in it, not only convenience, but significance: it was a kind of sacrament, and therefore it must not be left to man's art or invention to contrive it; but it must be framed by divine institution. Christ, the true Temple, the church, the gospel-temple, and heaven, the everlasting temple, all are framed according to the divine councils, and the plan laid in the divine wisdom, ordained before the world for God's glory and our's. This pattern David gave to Solomon, that he might know what to provide, and

might go by a certain rule. When Christ left with his disciples a charge to build his gospel-church, he gave them an exact model of it, ordering them to observe that, and that only, which he commanded. The particular models are here mentioned; of the porch, which was higher than the rest, like a steeple; then the houses, both the holy place, and the most holy, with the rooms adjoining, which were for treasures, chambers, and parlours, especially *the place of the mercy seat*, v. 11. of the courts likewise, and the chambers about them, in which the dedicated things were laid up. Bishop Patrick supposes that among other things, the tabernacle which Moses reared, and all the utensils of it, which there was now no further occasion for, were laid up here; signifying that in the fulness of time, all the Mosaic economy, all the rites and ceremonies of that dispensation, should be respectfully laid aside, and something better come in their room. He gave him a table of the courses of the priests, patterns of the vessels of service, v. 13, and a pattern of the chariot of the cherubims, v. 18. Besides the two cherubims over the mercy-seat, there were two much larger, whose wings reached from wall to wall, 1 Kings 6. 23, &c. and of these David here gave Solomon the pattern, called a *chariot*; for the angels are the chariots of God, Ps. 68. 17.

2. Materials for the most costly of the utensils of the temple. That they might not be made any less than the patterns, he weighed out the exact quantity for each vessel, both of gold and silver, v. 14. In the tabernacle there was but one golden candlestick, in the temple ten, 1 Kings 7. 49. beside silver ones, which, it is supposed, were hand candlesticks, v. 15. In the tabernacle there was but one table; but in the temple, beside that on which the show-bread was set, there were ten others, for other uses, 2 Chron. 4. 8. beside silver tables. For, this house being much larger than that, it would look bare if it had not furniture proportionable. The gold for the altar of incense, is particularly said to be *refined gold*, v. 18. purer than any of the rest; for that was typical of the intercession of Christ, than which nothing is more pure and perfect.

3. Directions which way to look for help in this great undertaking. "Fear not opposition, fear not the charge, care, and trouble, fear not miscarrying in it, as in the case of Uzza; fear not the reproach of the foolish builder, that began to build, and was not able to finish. Be not dismayed, (1.) God will help thee, and thou must look up to him in the first place, v. 20, *The Lord God, even my God*, whom I have chosen and served, who has all along been present with me, and prospered me, and to whom, from my own experience of his power and goodness, I recommend thee; he will be with thee, to direct, strengthen, and prosper thee; he will not fail thee nor forsake thee." Note, We may be sure that God, who owned our fathers, and carried them through the services of their day, will, in like manner, if we be faithful to him, go along with us in our day, and will never leave us, while he has any work to do in us, or by us. The same that was Joshua's encouragement, Josh. 1. 5, and Solomon's here, is given to all believers, Heb. 13. 5, *He will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*. God never leaves any, unless they first leave him. (2.) "Good men will help thee, v. 21. The priests and Levites will advise thee, and thou mayest consult with them. Thou hast good workmen, who are both willing and skilful;" and those are two very good properties in a workman, especially in those that work at the temple. And *lastly*, "The princes and the people will be so far from opposing, or retarding the work, that they will be wholly at thy command, every one in his place ready to further

it." Then good work is likely to go on, when all parties concerned, are hearty in it, and none secretly clog it, but all drive on heartily in it.

CHAP. XXIX.

David had said what he had to say to *Solomon*. But he had something more to say to the congregation before he parts with them. I. He presses them to contribute according to their ability, toward the building and furnishing of the temple, v. 1..5. II. They made their presents accordingly with great generosity, v. 6..9. III. David offered up solemn prayers and praises to God, upon that occasion, v. 10..20. with sacrifices, v. 21. IV. Solomon was, hereupon, enthroned, with great joy and magnificence, v. 22..25. V. David, soon after this, finished his course, v. 26..30. And it is hard to say which shines brighter here, the setting sun, or the rising sun.

1. **F**URTHERMORE, David the king said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, *is yet young and tender, and the work is great: for the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God.* 2. Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for *things to be made of* gold, and the silver for *things of* silver, and the brass for *things of* brass, the iron for *things of* wood; onyx-stones, and *stones to be set*, glistering stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance. 3. Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have, of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, *which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house,* 4. *Even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses withal:* 5. The gold for *things of* gold, and the silver for *things of* silver, and for all manner of work *to be made by the hands of artificers.* And who *then* is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD? 6. Then the chief of the fathers, and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers over the king's work, offered willingly, 7. And gave, for the service of the house of God, of gold, five thousand talents and ten thousand drams; and of silver, ten thousand talents; and of brass, eighteen thousand talents; and one hundred thousand talents of iron. 8. And they with whom *precious stones* were found gave *them to the treasure of the house of the LORD, by the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite.* 9. Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the LORD: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.

We may here observe,

I. How handsomely David accosted the great men of Israel, to engage them to contribute toward

the building of the temple. It is our duty to *provoke one another to love, and to do good works*; not only to do good ourselves, but to draw in others to do good too, as much as we can. There were many very rich men in Israel, they were all to share in the benefit of the temple, and of those peaceable days which were to befriend the building of it: and therefore, though he would not impose on them, as a tax, what they should give toward it, he would recommend the present as a fair occasion for a free-will offering: because what is done in works of piety and charity, should be done willingly, and not by constraint; for God loves a cheerful giver.

1. He would have them consider that Solomon was young and tender, and needed help; that he was the person whom God had chosen to do this work, and therefore was well worthy their assistance. It is good service to encourage those in the work of God, that are as yet young and tender.

2. That the work was great, and all hands should contribute to the carrying of it on. The palace to be built, was not for man, but for the Lord God; and the more was contributed toward the building, the more magnificent it would be, and therefore the better would it answer the intention.

3. He tells them what great preparations had been made for this work. He did not intend to throw all the burthen upon them, nor that it should be built wholly by contributions; but that they should show their good will, by adding to what was done, v. 2, *I have prepared with all my might*, that is, "I have made it my business." Work for God must be done with all our might, or we shall bring nothing to pass in it.

4. He sets them a good example. Beside what was dedicated to this service out of the spoils and presents of the neighbouring nations, which was for the building of the house: of which before, *ch. 22.* 14. he had, out of his own share, offered largely for the beautifying and enriching of it, 3000 talents of gold, and 7000 talents of silver, v. 4, 5. and this because he had set his affection to the house of his God. He gave all this, not as Papists build churches, in commutation of penance, or to make atonement for sin: nor as Pharisees give alms, to be seen of men; but purely because he loved the habitation of God's house; so he professed, Ps. 26. 8. and here he proved it. Those who set their affection upon the service of God, will think no pains or cost too much to bestow upon it. And then our offerings are pleasing to God, when they come from love. They that set their affection on things above, will set their affection on the house of God, through which our way to heaven lies. Now this he gives them an account of, to stir them up to do likewise. Note, Those who would draw others to that which is good, must lead themselves. Those especially who are advanced above others, in place and dignity, should particularly contrive how to make their light shine before men, because the influence of their example is more powerful and extensive than that of other people.

5. He stirs them up to do as he had done, v. 5, *And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?* (1.) We must, each of us, in our several places, serve the Lord, and consecrate our service to him, separate it from other things that are foreign, and interfere with it, and direct and design it for the honour and glory of God. (2.) We must make the service of God our business; must *fill our hands to the Lord*, so the Hebrew phrase is. They who engage themselves in the service of God, will have their hands full; there is work enough for the whole man in that service. The filling of our hands with the service of God, intimates that we must serve him only, serve him liberally, and serve him in the strength of grace

derived from him. (3.) We must be free herein, do it willingly and speedily, do it this day, when we are in a good mind. Who is willing? Now let him show it.

II. How handsomely they all contributed toward the building of the temple, when they were thus stirred up to it. Though they were persuaded to it; yet it is said, *They offered willingly*, v. 6. So he said, who knew their hearts. Nay, they offered with a perfect heart, from a good principle, and with a sincere respect to the glory of God, v. 9. How generous they were appears by the sum total of the contributions, v. 7, 8. They gave like themselves, like princes, like princes of Israel. And a pleasant day's work it was: for, 1. The people rejoiced; which may be meant of the people themselves that offered; they were glad of the opportunity of honouring God thus with their substance, and glad of the prospect of bringing this good work to perfection. Or, the common people rejoiced in the generosity of their princes, that they had such rulers over them, as were forward to this good work. Every Israelite is glad to see temple-work carried on with vigour. 2. David rejoiced with great joy, to see the good effect of his psalms, and the other helps of devotion he had furnished them with; rejoiced that his son and successor would have those about him that were so well affected to the house of God, and that this work, which his heart was so much set upon, was likely to go on. Note, It is a great reviving to good men, when they are leaving the world, to see those they leave behind, zealous for religion, and likely to keep it up, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace*.

10. Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our Father, for ever and ever. 11. Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth *is thine*; thine *is* the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. 12. Both riches and honour *come* of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thy hand *is* power and might, and in thy hand *it is* to make great, and to give strength unto all. 13. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. 14. But who *am* I, and what *is* my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things *come* of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. 15. For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as *were* all our fathers: our days on the earth *are* as a shadow, and *there is* none abiding. 16. O LORD our God, all this store that we have prepared, to build thee a house for thy holy name, *cometh* of thy hand, and *is* all thine own. 17. I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of my heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee. 18. O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination

of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee: 19. And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all *these things*, and to build the palace *for* the which I have made provision. 20. And David said to all the congregation, Now bless the LORD your God. And all the congregation blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the LORD and the king. 21. And they sacrificed sacrifices unto the LORD, and offered burnt-offerings unto the LORD, on the morrow after that day, *even* a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, *and* a thousand lambs, with their drink-offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel: 22. And did eat and drink before the LORD on that day with great gladness: and they made Solomon, the son of David, king the second time, and anointed *him* unto the Lord *to be* the chief governor, and Zadok *to be* priest.

We have here,

I. The solemn address which David made to God, upon occasion of the noble subscriptions of the princes, toward the building of the temple, v. 10, *Wherefore David blessed the Lord*, not only alone in his closet, but *before all the congregation*. This I expected when we read, v. 9, that *David rejoiced with great joy*; for such a devout man as he, would, no doubt, make that the matter of his thanksgiving, which was so much the matter of his rejoicing. He that looked round with comfort, would certainly look up with praise. David was now old, and looked upon himself as near his end; and it well becomes aged saints, and dying saints, to have their hearts much enlarged in praise and thanksgiving. This will silence their complaints of their bodily infirmities, and help to make the prospects of death itself less. David's psalms, toward the latter end of the book, are most of them psalms of praise. The nearer we come to the world of everlasting praise, the more we should speak the language, and do the work, of that world. In this address,

1. He adores God, and ascribes glory to him, as the God of Israel, *blessed for ever and ever*. Our Lord's prayer ends with a doxology, much like this which David here begins with; *for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory*. This is properly praising God, with holy awe and reverence, and agreeable affection, acknowledging, (1.) His infinite perfections; not only that he is great, powerful, glorious, &c. but that his is the greatness, power, and glory, that is, he has them in, and of, himself; he is the Fountain and Centre of every thing that is bright and blessed. All that we can, in our most exalted praises attribute to him, he has an unquestionable title to. His is the *greatness*, his greatness is immense, and incomprehensible; and all others are little, are nothing, in comparison of him. His is the *power*, and it is almighty and irresistible; power belongs to him, and all the power of all the creatures is derived from him, and depends upon him. His is the *glory*; for his glory is his own end, and the end of the whole creation. All the glory we can give him with our hearts, lips, and lives, comes infinitely short of what is his due. His is the *victory*; he transcends and surpasses all, and is able to conquer and subdue all things to himself;

and his victories are incontestable, uncontrollable. And his is the *majesty*, real and personal; with him is terrible majesty, inexpressible and inconceivable. (2.) His sovereign dominion: a rightful Owner and Possessor of all; "*All that is in the heaven, and in the earth, is thine*, and at thy disposal, by the indisputable right of creation; and as supreme Ruler and Commander of all: *thine is the kingdom*, and all kings are thy subjects; for thou art Head, and art to be exalted and worshipped as Head above all. (3.) His universal influence and agency. All that are rich and honourable among the children of men, have their riches and honours from God. This acknowledgment he would have the princes take notice of, and join in, that they might not think they had merited any thing of God by their generosity; for from God they had their riches and honour; and what they had returned to him, was but a small part of what they had received from him. Whoever are great among men, it is God's hand that makes them so; and whatever strength we have, it is God that gives it us, as the *God of Israel our father*, v. 10. Ps. 68. 35.

2. He acknowledges with thankfulness the grace of God enabling them to contribute so cheerfully toward the building of the temple; v. 13, 14, *Now therefore, our God, we thank thee*. Note, The more we do for God, the more we are indebted to him for the honour of being employed in his service, and for grace enabling us, in any measure, to serve him. *Does he therefore thank that servant?* Luke 17. 9. No; but that servant has a great deal of reason to thank him. He thanks God that they were *able to offer so willingly*. Note, (1.) It is a great instance of God's grace in us, to be able to do the work of God willingly. He works *both to will and to do*; and it is in the day of his power, that his people are made willing, Ps. 110. 3. (2.) We must give God all the glory of all the good that is at any time done by ourselves or others. Our own good works must not be the matter of our pride, nor the good works of others the matter of our flattery, but both the matter of our praise: for certainly it is the greatest honour and pleasure in the world, faithfully to serve God.

3 He speaks very humbly of himself, and his people, and the offerings they had now presented to God.

(1.) For himself, and those that joined with him, though they were princes, he wondered that God should take such notice of them, and do so much for them: v. 14, *Who am I, and what is my people?* David was the most honourable person, and Israel the most honourable people, then in the world; yet thus does he speak of himself and them as unworthy the divine cognizance and favour. David now looks very great, presiding in an august assembly, appointing his successor, and making a noble present to the honour of God; and yet he is little and low in his own eyes: *Who am I, O Lord?* for v. 15, *We are strangers before thee, and sojourners*, poor despicable creatures. Angels in heaven are at home there, saints on earth are but strangers here: *our days on the earth are as a shadow*. David's days had as much of substance in them as most men's; for he was a great man, a good man, a useful man, and now, an old man; one that lived long, and lived to good purpose: and yet he puts himself not only into the number, but in the front, of those who must acknowledge that their *days on the earth are as a shadow*; which intimates that our life is a vain life, a dark life, a transient life, and a life that will have its period in perfect light, or perfect darkness. The next words explain it, *there is no abiding*, Heb. *no expectation*. We cannot expect any great matters from it, nor can we expect any

long continuance of it. This is mentioned here, as that which forbids us to boast of the service we do to God: alas! it is confined to a scantling of time, it is the service of a frail and short life, and therefore what can we pretend to merit by it!

(2.) As to their offerings, *Lord*, says he, *of thine own have we given thee*, v. 14. and again, v. 16, *It cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own*. "We have it from thee, as a free gift, and therefore are bound to use it for thee; and what we present to thee, is but rent or interest from thine own." "In like manner" (says Bishop Patrick) "we ought to acknowledge God in all spiritual things, referring every good thought, good purpose, good work, to his grace, from whom we receive it." *Let him that glories therefore, glory in the Lord*.

(3.) He appeals to God concerning his own sincerity in what he did, v. 17. It is a great satisfaction to a good man, to think that *God tries the heart, and has pleasure in uprightness*; that whoever misinterpret or condemn it, he is acquainted with, and approves the *way of the righteous*. It was David's comfort that God knew with what pleasure he both offered his own, and saw the people's offering. He was neither proud of his own good work, nor envious of the good work of others.

(4.) He prays to God both for the people and for Solomon, that both might hold on as they began. In this prayer, he addresses himself to God, as the *God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, a God in covenant with them, and with us for their sakes. *Lord*, give us grace to make good our part of the covenant, that we may not forfeit the benefit of it. Or thus: they were kept in their integrity by the grace of God establishing their way; let the same grace that was sufficient for them, be so for us. [1.] For the people he prays, v. 18. that what good God had put into their minds, he would always keep there, that they might never be worse than they were now; might never lose the convictions they were now under, nor cool in their affections to the house of God; but always have the same thoughts of things as they now seemed to have. Great consequences depend upon what is innermost, and what uppermost, in the imagination of the thoughts of our heart; what we aim at, and what we love to think of. If any good have got possession of our hearts, or the hearts of our friends, it is good by prayer to commit the custody of it to the grace of God: *Lord*, keep it there, keep it for ever there. David has prepared materials for the temple; but, *Lord*, do thou prepare their hearts for such a privilege; *establish* their hearts, so the margin. "Confirm their resolutions; they are in a good mind, keep them so, when I am gone, them and theirs for ever." [2.] For Solomon he prays, v. 19, *Give him a perfect heart*. He had charged him, ch. 28. 9. to serve *God with a perfect heart*, now here he prays to God to give him such a heart. He does not pray, "*Lord*, make him a rich man, a great man, a learned man;" but, "*Lord*, make him an honest man;" for that is better than all, "*Lord*, *give him a perfect heart*, not only in general, to *keep thy commandments*, but in particular, *to build the palace*, that he may do that service with a single eye." Yet his building the house would not prove him to have a perfect heart, unless he made conscience of keeping God's commandments. It is not helping to build churches, that will save us, if we live in disobedience to God's law.

II. The cheerful concurrence of this great assembly in this great solemnity.

1. They joined with David in the adoration of God. When he had done his prayer, he called to them to testify their concurrence; (*Now bless the Lord your God*, v. 20.) which accordingly they did,

by *bowing down their heads*, a gesture of adoration. Whoever is the mouth of the congregation, those only have the benefit, who join with him, not by *bowing down the head*, so much as by *lifting up the soul*.

2. They paid their respects to the king, looking upon him as an instrument in God's hand of much good to them; and in honouring him, they honoured God.

3. The next day, they offered abundance of sacrifices to God, *v. 21*. both burnt-offerings, which were wholly consumed, and peace-offerings, which the offerer had the greatest part of to himself. Hereby they testified a generous gratitude to God for the good posture their public affairs were in, though David was going the way of all the earth.

4. They feasted and rejoiced, before God, *v. 22*. In token of their joy in God, and communion with him, they feasted upon their peace-offerings, in a religious manner, before the Lord. What had been offered to God, they feasted upon; by which was intimated to them, that they should be never the poorer for their late liberal contributions to the service of the temple; they themselves should feast on the comforts of it.

5. They made Solomon king, the second time. He having been before anointed, in haste, upon occasion of Adonijah's rebellion, it was thought fit to repeat it, for the greater satisfaction of the people. *They anointed him to the Lord*. Magistrates must look upon themselves as set apart for God, to be his ministers, and must rule accordingly in the fear of God. Zadok also was anointed to be priest, in the room of Abiathar, who had lately forfeited his honour. Happy art thou, O Israel, under such a prince, and such a pontiff.

23. Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him. 24. And all the princes, and the mighty men, and all the sons likewise of king David, submitted themselves unto Solomon the king. 25. And the Lord magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him *such* royal majesty, as had not been on any king before him in Israel. 26. Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel. 27. And the time that he reigned over Israel *was* forty years; seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three *years* reigned he in Jerusalem. 28. And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead. 29. Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they *are* written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer. 30. With all his reign and his might, and the times that went over him, and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries.

These verses bring king Solomon to his throne, and king David to his grave. Thus the rising generation thrusts out that which went before, and says, "Make room for us." Every one has his day.

I. Here is Solomon rising, *v. 23*, *Solomon sat on*

the throne of the Lord. Not his throne which he prepared in the heavens, but the throne of Israel is called *the throne of the Lord*, because he is not only King of all nations, and all kings rule under him, but he was, in a peculiar manner, King of Israel, 1 Sam. 12. 12. He had the founding, he had the filling, of their throne, by immediate direction. The municipal laws of their kingdom were divine! Urim and prophets were the privy-counsellors of their princes, therefore is their throne called *the throne of the Lord*. Solomon's kingdom typified the kingdom of the Messiah, and his is indeed *the throne of the Lord*; for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to him; hence he calls him *his King*, Ps. 2. 6. Being set on the *throne of the Lord*, the throne to which God called him, he prospered. They that follow the divine guidance, may expect success by the divine blessing. Solomon prospered; for,

1. His people *paid honour to him*, as one to whom honour is due. *All Israel obeyed him*, that is, were ready to swear allegiance to him, *v. 23*. the *princes and mighty men*, and even the *sons of David*, though, by seniority, their title to the crown was prior to his, and they might think themselves wronged by his advancement; God thought fit to make him king, and made him fit to be so, and therefore they all *submitted themselves to him*. God inclined their hearts to do so, that his reign might, from the first, be peaceable. His father was a better man than he, and yet came to the crown with much difficulty; after long delay, and by many and slow steps. David had more faith, and therefore had it more tried. They *submitted themselves*, Heb. *They gave the hand under Solomon*, that is, bound themselves by oath to be true to him. Putting the hand under the thigh, was a ceremony anciently used in swearing; or they were so entirely devoted, that they would put their hand under his feet to serve him.

2. God put honour upon him; for those that honour him, he will honour: *The Lord magnified Solomon exceedingly*, *v. 25*. His very countenance and presence, I am apt to think, had something in them very great and awful: all he said, and all he did, commanded respect. None of all the judges or kings of Israel, his predecessors, made such a figure as he did, nor lived in such splendor.

II. Here is David's setting; that great man going off the stage. The historian here brings him to the end of his days, leaves him asleep, and draws the curtain about him.

1. He gives a summary account of the years of his reign, *v. 26, 27*. He reigned forty years as Moses did, Othniel, Deborah, Gideon, Eli, Samuel, and Saul, who were before him, and Solomon after him.

2. He gives a short account of his death, *v. 28*. that he died *full of days, riches, and honour*; that is, (1.) Loaded with them. He was very old and very rich, and very much honoured both of God and man. He had been a man of war from his youth, and, as such, had his soul continually in his hand; yet he was not cut off in the midst of his days, but was preserved through all the dangers of a military life, lived to a good old age, and died in peace, died in his bed, and yet in the bed of honour. (2.) Satiated with them. He was *full of days, riches and honour*, that is, he had enough of this world, and of the riches and honours of it, and knew when he had enough, for he was very willing to die and leave it, having said, Ps. 49. 15, *God shall receive me*, and Ps. 23. 4, *Thou art with me*. A good man will soon be full of days, riches, and honour; but will never be satisfied with them; no satisfaction but in God's loving kindness.

3. For a fuller account of David's life and reign, he refers his reader to the histories or records of those times, which were written by Samuel while he lived, and continued, after his death, by Nathan and Gad, *v.* 29. *There* was related what was observable in his government at home, and his wars abroad, *the times*, that is, the events *of the times, that went over him*, *v.* 29, 30. These registers were then in being, but now are lost. Note, Good use may be made of those histories of the church, which are authentic, though not sacred, or of divine inspiration.