

**S E R M O N VII.\***

**OYPANΩN OYPANIA.**

**THE**

**SHAKING AND TRANSLATING**

**OF**

**HEAVEN AND EARTH.**

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\* This sermon was preached to the Honourable House of Commons in Parliament assembled, on April 19, 1649; a day set apart for extraordinary humiliation.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
THE  
COMMONS OF ENGLAND,  
ASSEMBLED IN PARLIAMENT.

SIRS,

ALL that I shall preface to the ensuing discourse is, that seeing the nation's welfare and your own actings are therein concerned (the welfare of the nation, and your own prosperity in your present actings, being so nearly related as they are to the things of the ensuing discourse), I should be bold to press you to a serious consideration of them as now presented unto you, were I not assured by your ready attention unto, and favourable acceptation of, their delivery, that being now published by your command, such a request would be altogether needless. The subject matter of this sermon being of so great weight and importance as it is, it had been very desirable, that it had fallen on an abler hand; as also that more space and leisure had been allotted to the preparing of it, first for so great, judicious, and honourable an audience, and secondly for public view, than possibly I could beg from my daily troubles, pressures, and temptations, in the midst of a poor, numerous, provoking people. As the Lord hath brought it forth, that it may be useful to your Honourable Assembly, and the residue of men that wait for the appearance of the Lord Jesus, shall be the sincere endeavour at the throne of grace of

Your most unworthy servant,

In the work of the Lord,

J. OWEN.

## SÉRMON VII.

*And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.—Heb. xii. 27.*

THE main design of the apostle in this Scripture to the Hebrews, is to prevail with his countrymen, who had undertaken the profession of the gospel, to abide constant and faithful therein, without any apostacy unto, or mixture with, Judaism, which God and themselves had forsaken; fully manifesting, that in such ‘backsliders the soul of the Lord hath no pleasure;’ chap. x. 38.

A task which whoso undertaketh in any age, shall find exceeding weighty and difficult, even to persuade professors to hold out, and continue in the glory of their profession unto the end, that ‘with patience doing the will of God, they might receive the promise;’<sup>a</sup> especially if there be ‘lions in the way;’<sup>b</sup> if opposition or persecution do attend them in their professed subjection to the Lord Jesus. Of all that deformity and dissimilitude to the divine nature which is come upon us by the fall, there is no one part more eminent, or rather no one defect more evident, than inconstancy and unstableness of mind, in embracing that which is spiritually good. Man being turned from his unchangeable rest,<sup>c</sup> seeks to quiet and satiate his soul with restless movings towards changeable things. Now he who ‘worketh all our works for us, and in us;’ Isa. xxvi. 12. worketh them also by us;<sup>d</sup> and therefore that which he will give, he persuades us to have, that at once his bounty, and our duty, may receive a manifestation in the same thing. Of this nature is perseverance in the faith of Christ, which as by him it is promised, and therefore is a grace; so to us it is prescribed, and thereby is a duty. ‘Petamus ut det, quod ut habeamus jubet. August.’ ‘Let us ask him to bestow, what he requires us to enjoy.’ Yea, ‘Da, Domine, quod jubes, et jube quod vis:’ ‘Give what thou commandest, and command what thou pleaseth.’

<sup>a</sup> Chap. x. 36.

<sup>b</sup> Prov. xxii. 13. xxvi. 13.

<sup>c</sup> Psal. cxvi. 7.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Thess. i. 3. 2 Thess. i. 11. Deut. x. 16. xxx. 6. Ezek. xviii. 31. xxxvi. 26. Acts xi. 18.

As a duty it is by the apostle here considered, and therefore pressed on them, who by nature were capable, and by grace enabled for the performance thereof. Pathetical exhortations then unto perseverance in the possession of the gospel, bottomed on prevalent scriptural arguments, and holy reasonings, are the sum of this epistle.

The arguments the apostle handleth unto the end proposed are of two sorts.

First, Principal.

Secondly, Deductive, or emergencies from the first.

First, His principal arguments are drawn from two chief fountains.

1. The author: and

2. The nature and end of the gospel.

1. The author of the gospel is either,

(1.) Principal and immediate, which is God the Father, 'Who having at sundry times and in divers manners formerly spoken by the prophets, herein speaketh by his Son;' chap. i. 1.

(2.) Concurrent and immediate, Jesus Christ, this 'great salvation being begun to be spoken to us by the Lord;' chap. ii. 3. This latter he chiefly considereth, as in and by whom the gospel is differenced from all other dispensations of the mind of God. Concerning him to the end intended he proposeth,

[1.] His person.

[2.] His employment.

[1.] For his person, that thence he may argue to the thing aimed at, he holdeth out,

1st. The infinite glory of his Deity: being the 'brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person;' chap. i. 3.

2dly. The infinite condescension of his love, in assuming humanity, for because 'the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same;' chap. ii. 14.

And from the consideration of both these, he presseth the main exhortation which he hath in hand, as you may see, chap. ii. 1, 2. iii. 12, 13, &c.

[2.] The employment of Christ he describeth in his offices, which he handleth,

1st. Positively, and very briefly, chap. i. ii. iii.

2dly. Comparatively, insisting chiefly on his priesthood, exalting it in sundry weighty particulars above that of Aaron, which yet was the glory of the Jewish worship, and this at large, chap. vi. vii. viii. ix. x. And this being variously advanced and asserted, he layeth as the main foundation, upon which he placeth the weight and stress of the main end pursued, as in the whole epistle is every where obvious.

2. The second head of principal arguments he taketh from the gospel itself, which considering as a covenant he holdeth out two ways :

(1.) Absolutely, in its efficacy in respect of

[1.] Justification. In it ‘God is merciful to unrighteousness and sins, and iniquities he remembers no more ;’ chap. viii. 12. ‘Bringing in perfect remission, that there shall need no more offering for sin ;’ chap. x. 17.

[2.] Sanctification. ‘He puts his laws in our hearts, and writes them in our minds ;’ chap. x. 16. in it, ‘Purging our consciences by the blood of Christ ;’ chap. ix. 14.

[3.] Perseverance. ‘I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people ;’ chap. viii. 10.

All three are also held out in sundry other places.

(2.) Respectively to the covenant of works, and in this regard assigns unto it principal qualifications, with many peculiar eminencies them attending, too many now to be named. Now these are,

[1.] That it is new. He saith a ‘new covenant, and hath made the first old ;’ chap. viii. 13.

[2.] Better. It is a ‘better covenant, and built upon better promises ;’ chap. viii. 6. vii. 22.

[3.] Surer, the priest thereof being ordained, ‘not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life ;’ chap. vii. 16.

[4.] Unalterable. So in all the places before named, and sundry others.

All which are made eminent in its peculiar mediator Jesus Christ, which is the sum of chap. vii.

And still in the holding out of these things, that they might not forget the end for which they were now drawn forth, and so exactly handled, he interweaves many pa-

thetical entreaties, and pressing arguments by way of application, for the confirming and establishing his countrymen in the faith of this glorious gospel, as you may see almost in every chapter.

Secondly, His arguments less principal, deduced from the former, being very many, may be referred to these three heads :

1. The benefits by them enjoyed under the gospel.

2. The example of others, who by faith and patience obtained the promises ; chap. xi.

3. From the dangerous and pernicious consequence of backsliding, of which only I shall speak. Now this he setteth out three ways.

(1.) From the nature of that sin. It is a ‘ crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh, and putting him to open shame ;’ chap. vi. 6. a ‘ treading under foot the Son of God, counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and doing despite to the spirit of grace ;’ chap. x. 29.

(2.) The irremediless punishment which attends that sin. ‘ There remains no more sacrifice for it, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation that shall consume the adversaries ;’ chap. x. 26, 27.

(3.) The person against whom peculiarly it is committed, and that is he who is the author, subject, and Mediator of the gospel, the Lord Jesus Christ : concerning whom for the aggravation of this sin, he proposeth two things.

[1.] His goodness and love, and that in his great undertaking to be a Saviour, being ‘ made like unto his brethren in all things, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people ;’ chap. ii. 17. And of this there is a sweet and choice line running through the whole discourse, making the sin of backsliding against so much love and condescension appear exceeding sinful.

[2.] His greatness or power, which he sets out two ways,

1st. Absolutely, as he is God to be ‘ blessed for ever ;’ chap. i. and ‘ it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God ;’ chap. x. 31.

2dly. Comparatively, as he is the Mediator of the new covenant in reference to Moses. And this he setteth forth,

as by many and sundry reasonings in other places of the epistle, so by a double testimony in this twelfth chapter, making that inference from them both, which you have ver. 25. 'See that you refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him who spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him who speaketh from heaven.'

Now the first testimony of his power is taken from a record of what he did heretofore; the other from a prediction of what he will do hereafter.

The first you have, ver. 26. in the first part of it: 'His voice then shook the earth:' then, that is, when the law was delivered by him, as it is described, ver. 18—20. foregoing. When the mountain upon which it was delivered, the mediator Moses, into whose hand it was delivered, and the people for whose use it was delivered, did all shake and tremble at the voice, power, and presence of Christ;<sup>e</sup> who, as it hence appears, is that Jehovah who gave the law; Exod. xx. 2.

The other in the same verse is taken from a prediction out of Haggai ii. 16. of what he will do hereafter; even demonstrate and make evident his power, beyond whatever he before effected: 'He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also the heavens.'

And if any one shall ask, wherein this effect of the mighty power of the Lord Jesus consisteth, and how from thence professors may be prevailed upon to keep close to the obedience of him in his kingdom? The apostle answers, ver. 27. 'And this word yet once more, signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.'

And thus am I stepped down upon the words of my text, finding them in the close of the arguments drawn from the power of Christ, to persuade professors to constancy in the paths of the gospel: and having passed through their coherence, and held out their aim and tendance, their opening and application comes now to be considered.

And herein these three things:

<sup>e</sup> Exod. xix 18, 19. xx. 18.

I. The apostle's assertion : 'The things that are shaken shall be removed, as things that are made.'

II. The proof of this assertion : 'This word, once more, signifieth no less.'

III. His inference from this assertion thus proved : 'The things that cannot be shaken must remain.'

I. In the first I shall consider,

1. What are the things that are shaken.

2. What is their shaking.

3. What their removal being shaken.

1. For the first, there is a great variety of judgment amongst interpreters.<sup>f</sup> The foregoing verse tells us it is 'not only the earth, but the heaven also : ' but now what heaven and earth this should be is dubious, is not apparent. So many different apprehensions of the mind of God in these words, as have any likeness of truth, I must needs recount and remove, that no prejudice may remain from other conceptions, against that which from them we shall assert.

(1.) The earth, say some, is the men of the earth, living thereon ; and the heavens are the angels, their blessed inhabitants : both shaken, or stricken with amazement upon the nativity of Christ, and preaching of the gospel. The heavens were shaken, when so great things were accomplished, as that 'the angels themselves desired to look into them ;' 1 Pet. i. 12. And the earth was filled with amazement when the Holy Ghost being poured out upon the apostles for the preaching of the gospel, men of every nation under heaven were amazed, and marvelled at it. Acts ii. 5—7. Thus Rollocus, Piscator, and sundry other famous divines. But,

[1.] The shaking here intimated by the apostle, was then when he wrote under the promise, not actually accomplished, as were the things by them recounted : for he holds it forth as an issue of that great power of Christ, which he would one day exercise for the farther establishment of his kingdom.

[2.] This that now is to be done must excel that which formerly was done at the giving of the law, as is clearly intimated in the inference : 'Then he shook the earth, but

<sup>f</sup> Nescio an facilius hic locus fuisset, si nemo eum opposuisset. Maid. ad Luc. ii. 34.

now the heavens also.' It is a gradation to a higher demonstration of the power of Christ, which that the things of this interpretation are, is not apparent.

[3.] It is marvellous these learned men observed not, that the 'heavens and the earth shaken,' ver. 26. are 'the things to be removed;' ver. 27. Now how are angels and men removed by Christ? Are they not rather gathered up into one spiritual body and communion?<sup>ε</sup> Hence, ver. 27. they interpret the shaken things to be Judaical ceremonies, which, ver. 26. they had said to be men and angels.

(2.) Others by heaven and earth understand the material parts of the world's fabric, commonly so called: and by their shaking, those portentous signs and prodigies, with earthquakes, which appeared in them at the birth and death of the Lord Jesus. A new star, preternatural darkness, shaking of the earth, opening of graves, renting of rocks, and the like, are to them this shaking of heaven and earth.<sup>h</sup> So Junius, and after him most of ours. But this interpretation is obnoxious to the same exceptions with the former, and also others: For,

[1.] These things being past before, how can they be held out under a promise?<sup>i</sup>

[2.] How are these shaken things removed, which with their shaking they must certainly be, as in my text?

[3.] This shaking of heaven and earth is ascribed to the power of Christ as mediator, whereunto these signs and prodigies cannot rationally be assigned; but rather to the sovereignty of the Father, bearing witness to the nativity and death of his Son: so that neither can this conception be fastened on the words.

(3.) The fabric of heaven and earth is by others also intended, not in respect of the signs and prodigies formerly wrought in them; but of that dissolution, or as they suppose alteration, which they shall receive at the last day. So Paræus, Grotius, and many more. Now though these avoid the rock of holding out as accomplished what is only promised, yet this gloss also is a dress disfiguring the mind of God in the text. For,

<sup>ε</sup> Ephes. i. 10. Ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι, i. e. μίαν κεφαλὴν παρασχεῖν ἀγγέλοις καὶ ἀνθρώποις τὸν Χριστὸν ἀπεσπισμένοι γὰρ ἦσαν οἱ ἀγγέλοι καὶ ἄνθρωποι. Ecumen. in Loc.

<sup>h</sup> Matt. ii. 2. xxvii. 45. Luke xxiii. 44, 45. Matt. xxvii. 51, 52.

<sup>i</sup> Ὁ γὰρ βλέπει τις, τί καὶ ἐλπίζει, Rom. viii. 24.

[1.] The things here said to be shaken, do stand in a plain opposition to the things that cannot be shaken nor removed; and therefore they are to be removed, that these may be brought in. Now the things to be brought in, are the things of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. What opposition, I pray, do the material fabric of heaven and earth stand in to the kingdom of the Lord Jesus? doubtless none at all, being the proper seat of that kingdom.

[2.] There will on this ground be no bringing in of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, until indeed that kingdom in the sense here insisted on is to cease; that is, after the day of judgment, when the kingdom of grace shall have place no more.

Those are the most material and likely mistakes about the words. I could easily give out, and pluck in again three or four other warping senses, but I hope few in these days of accomplishing will once stumble at them.

(4.) The true mind of the spirit, by the help of that spirit of truth, comes next to be unfolded. And first, what are the things that are shaken?

[1.] As the apostle here applies a part of the prophecy of Haggai, so that prophecy even in the next words gives light into the meaning of the apostle. Look what heaven and earth the prophet speaks of, of those and no other speaks the apostle. The Spirit of God in the Scripture is his own best interpreter.<sup>k</sup> See then the order of the words as they lie in the prophet: Hag. ii. 6, 7. 'I will shake heaven and earth: I will shake all nations.' God then shakes heaven and earth, when he shakes all nations; that is, he shakes the heaven and earth of the nations. 'I will shake heaven and earth, and I will shake all nations,' is a pleonasm, for 'I will shake the heaven and earth of all nations.' These are the things shaken in my text.

The heavens of the nations, what are they? even their political heights and glory, those forms of government which they have framed for themselves and their own interest, with the grandeur and lustre of their dominions. The nations' earth is the multitudes of their people, their strength and

<sup>k</sup> Nunquam Pauli sensum ingredieris, nisi Pauli Spiritum imbiberis. Ber. Ser. de Monte. τὸ αὐτὸ χεῖμα δίδασκει ἡμᾶς περὶ πάντων. 1 John ii. 27. Ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ νοούμεναι καὶ ἀνοιγόμεναι αἱ γραφαὶ δεικνύουσιν ἡμῖν τὸν Χριστὸν, εἰκότως θυγατρὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον. Theophylact. in John x.

power, whereby their heavens, or political heights, are supported. It is then neither the material heavens and earth, nor yet Mosaical ordinances; but the political heights and splendour, the popular multitudes and strength of the nations of the earth, that are thus to be shaken, as shall be proved.

That the earth in prophetical descriptions or predictions of things is frequently, yea almost always, taken for the people and multitudes of the earth, needs not much proving.<sup>1</sup> One or two instances shall suffice. Rev. xii. 16. 'The earth helped the woman against the flood of the dragon,' which that it was the multitudes of earthly people, none doubts. That an earthquake, or shaking of the earth, are popular commotions, is no less evident from Rev. xi. 13. where by an earthquake great Babylon receives a fatal blow. And for the heavens, whether they be the political heights of the nations, or the grandeur of potentates, let the Scripture be judge; I mean, when used in this sense of shaking, or establishment. Isa. li. 15, 16. 'I am the Lord thy God who divided the sea, whose waves roared: the Lord of hosts is his name. And I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.' By a repetition of what he hath done, he establisheth his people in expectation of what he will do. And,

1st. He minds them of that wonderful deliverance from an army behind them, and an ocean before them, by his miraculous preparing dry paths for them in the deep: 'I am the Lord who divided the sea, whose waves roared.'

2dly. Of his gracious acquainting them with his mind, his law, and ordinances at Horeb. 'I have put,' saith he, 'my words in thy mouth.'

3dly. Of that favourable and singular protection afforded them in the wilderness, when they were encompassed with enemies round about: 'I covered thee in the shadow of mine hand.'

Now to what end was all this? Why, saith he, that 'I might plant the heavens, and lay the foundation of the earth.' What, of these material visible heavens and earth? Two thousand four hundred and sixty years before at least

<sup>1</sup> Psal. lxxviii. 8. Hab. ii. 20. Matt. xxiv. 7. 1 Sam. xiv. 25.

were they planted and established. It is all but making of 'Zion a people,' which before was scattered in distinct families. And how is this done? Why the heavens are planted, or a glorious frame of government and polity is erected amongst them, and the multitudes of their people are disposed into an orderly commonwealth, to be a firm foundation and bottom for the government amongst them. This is the heavens and earth of the nations which is to be shaken in my text.

Isa. xxxiv. 4. 'All the hosts of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all their hosts shall fall down as the leaf falleth from the vine.' Now these dissolved, rolled heavens are no other but the power and heights of the opposing nations, their government and tyranny, especially that of Idumea, as both the foregoing and following verses do declare. 'The indignation of the Lord,' saith he, 'is upon the nations, and his fury upon their armies, he hath delivered them to the slaughter, their slain,' &c. Jer. iv. 23—25. 'I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void: and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly.' Here's heaven and earth shaken, and all in the raising of the political state and commonwealth of the Jews by the Babylonians, as is at large described in the verses following. Ezek. xxxii. 7. 'I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark. I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. And all the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God.' Behold heaven and earth, sun, moon, and stars, all shaken and confounded, in the destruction of Egypt, the thing the prophet treats of, their kingdom and nation being to be ruined.

Not to hold you too long upon what is so plain and evident, you may take it for a rule, that in the denunciations of the judgments of God, through all the prophets, heavens, sun, moon, stars, and the like appearing beauties and glories of aspectable heavens, are taken for governments, governors, dominions in political states, as Isa. xiv. 12—15. Jer. xv. 9. li. 25.<sup>m</sup>

<sup>m</sup> Isa. xiii. 13. Psal. lxxviii. 8. Joel ii. 10. Rev. viii. 12. Matt. xxiv. 29. Luke xxi. 25. Isa. lx. 20. Obad. 4. Rev. viii. 13. xi. 12. xx. 11.

Furthermore, to confirm this exposition, St. John in the Revelation holds constantly to the same manner of expression. Heaven and earth in that book are commonly those which we have described. In particular, this is eminently apparent; chap. vi. 12—15. ‘And I beheld, and when he had opened the sixth seal, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth: And the heaven departed, as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places,’ &c. The destruction and wasting of the pagan Romish state, the plagues and commotions of her people, the dethroning her idol worship, and destruction of persecuting emperors and captains, with the transition of power and sovereignty from one sort to another, is here held out under this grandeur of words,<sup>n</sup> being part of the shaking of heaven and earth in my text.

Add lastly hereunto, that the promises of the restoration of God’s people, into a glorious condition after all their sufferings, is perpetually in the Scripture held out under the same terms, and you have a plentiful demonstration of this point. Isa. lxxv. 17, 18. ‘Behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into my mind. Be you glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create,’ &c.<sup>o</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 13. ‘Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.’ Rev. xxi. 1. ‘I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.’ The heaven and earth is restored, but the sea that shall be no more. Those gatherings together of many waters, rivers from all places,<sup>p</sup> or pretended clergymen from all nations, into general councils, which were the sea or many waters on which the whore sat,<sup>q</sup> shall have no place at all in the church’s restored condition.

I hope it is now fully cleared, what is meant by the things that are shaken: even the political heights, the splendour and strength of the nations of the earth, the foundation of the whole is laid, and our heap (or building if your favour

<sup>n</sup> Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. 9. cap. 8. 10. lib. 8. cap. 27. De vita Constant. lib. 1. cap. 50—52.

<sup>o</sup> Isa. lxxvi. 22—24.

<sup>p</sup> Gen. i. 10.

<sup>q</sup> Rev. xvii. 1.

so accept it) will go on apace; for to the analogy hereof shall the residue of the words be interpreted.

2. The second thing considerable is, What is the shaking of these things?

To this the answer is now made brief and facile. Such as are the things shaken, such must their shaking be: spiritual, if spiritual; natural, if natural; civil, if civil. Now they being declared and proved to be civil things, such also is their shaking.<sup>r</sup> Now what is a civil shaking of civil constitutions? how are such things done in the world? what are these earthquakes? Truly the accomplishment hereof is in all nations so under our eyes, as that I need not speak one word thereunto.

Neither shall I insist upon the inquiry, when this shaking shall be.

The text is plain, that it must be previous to the bringing in of those things that cannot be moved, that is, the prosperous estate of the kingdom of Christ.<sup>s</sup> Only we may observe, that besides other shakings in particular nations of less general concernment and importance,<sup>t</sup> this prophecy hath and shall receive a twofold eminent accomplishment, with reference unto a twofold eminent opposition, which the kingdom of Christ hath met withal in the world.

(1.) From the pagan Roman state, which at the gospel's first entrance held in subjection most of the chief provinces of the then known world.<sup>v</sup> What were the bloody endeavours of the heaven and earth of that state for the suppression thereof is known to our children. The issue of the whole in the accomplishment of this promise, shaking those heavens and earth to pieces, I before pointed at from Rev. vi. 12—15. beginning in the plagues of the persecuting emperors, and ending in the ruin of the empire itself. But,

(2.) The immoveable things were not yet in their glory to be brought in. More seed of blood must be sown, that the end of the gospel's year may yield a plentiful harvest. That shaking was only for vengeance upon an old, cursed, and not for the bringing in of a new, blessed state. The

<sup>r</sup> Matt. xxiv. 6, 7. Jer. iv. 19. Isa. ix. 5.

<sup>s</sup> Χρόνους ἢ καιρῶν, ὅς ὁ πατὴρ ἔδειξε ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ. Acts i. 7.

<sup>t</sup> Σεισμοὶ κατὰ τόπους. Matt. xxiv. 7.

<sup>v</sup> Ἐξῆλθε δόγμα παρὰ Καίσαρος Ἀυγούστου, ἀπογραφέσθαι πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην. Luke ii. 1.

vials of God's wrath having crumbled the heavens and earth of pagan Rome into several pieces,<sup>w</sup> and that empire being removed as to its old form, by the craft of Satan it became moulded up again into a papal sovereignty, to exercise all the power of the first beast, in persecution of the saints; Rev. xiii. 12. This second pressure though long and sore must have an end; the new moulded heaven and earth of papal antichristian Rome, running by a mysterious thread through all the nations of the west, must be shaken also: which when it is accomplished there shall be no more sea. There is not another beast to arise, nor another state to be formed; let endeavours be what they will, the Lord Jesus shall reign.<sup>x</sup>

3. What is the 'removal of heaven and earth, being shaken?'

The word here translated 'removal,' is *μετάθεσις*: whence that is come to pass, I dare not positively say. This doubtless is a common fault amongst translators, that they will accommodate the words of a text to their own apprehension of the sense and matter thereof. 'Understanding, as I suppose, that the things here said to be shaken were the Jewish ordinances, they translated their disposition, a 'removal;'<sup>y</sup> as the truth is they were removed. But the word signifies no such thing. As its natural importance from its rise and composition is otherwise, so neither in the Scripture, or any profane author, doth it ever signify properly a 'removal.' Translation, or changing, is the only native, genuine import of it:<sup>z</sup> and why it should in this place be haled out of its own sphere, and tortured into a new signification, I know not. Removal is of the matter, translation of the form only. It is not then a destruction, and total amotion of the great things of the nations; but a change, translation, and a new moulding of them, that is here intimated. They shall be shuffled together almost into their primitive confusion, and come out new moulded for the interest of the Lord Jesus. All the present states of the world are cemented together by antichristian lime, as I shall shew afterward: unless they be so shaken as to have every cranny searched and brushed,

<sup>w</sup> τὸ κατέχον. 2 Ephes. ii. 6.

<sup>x</sup> Rev. xviii. 2. Isa. lx. 12. Psal. ii. 6.

<sup>y</sup> Heb. xi. 5. Jude 4. Gal. i. 6. Heb. vi. 18. Heb. vii. 12.

<sup>z</sup> Mutationem, Trem. Translationem. Erasm. Ar. Mont.

they will be no quiet habitation for the Lord Christ, and his people. This then is the *μετάθεσις* of the 'heaven and earth' of the nations. 1

Now this is evident, from that full prediction which you have of the accomplishment hereof, Rev. xvii. 12. the kingdoms of the west 'receive power at one hour with the beast.' Ver. 13. in their constitution and government at first received, 'they give their power to the beast,' and fight against the Lamb. Ver. 14. 'the Lamb with his faithful and chosen ones overcomes them.' There their heaven and earth is shaken. Ver. 16. their power is translated, new moulded, and becomes a power against the beast, in the hand of Jesus Christ.

This then is the shaking and removal in my text, which is said to be, 'as of things that are made:' that is, by men, through the concurrence of divine providence for a season; (which making you have, Rev. xvii. 12. 17.) not like the kingdom of Christ, which being of a purely divine constitution, shall by no human power receive an end.

The other parts of the text follow briefly.

II. The next thing is the apostle's proof of this assertion. And he tells you, 'This word, once more,' the beginning of this sentence he urged from the prophet, 'signifies no less.'

The words in the prophet are, *עוד אהת מעט היא*, 'yet once, it is a little,' *מעט היא* 'it is a little,' is left out by the apostle, as not conducing to the business in hand. *Ετι ἄπαξ*, as he rendereth *עוד אהת*, are a sufficient demonstration of the assertion. In themselves they hold out a commutation of things, and as they stand in conjunction in that place of the prophet, declaring that, that shaking and commutation must be for the bringing in of the kingdom of the Lord Christ. In brief, being interpreted by the same spirit whereby they were indited, we know the exposition is true.

III. The last head remaineth under two particulars.

1. What are the things that cannot be shaken.

2. What is their remaining.

1. For the first, 'the things that cannot be shaken,' ver. 24. are called a 'kingdom that cannot be removed,' ver. 28. a kingdom subject to none of those shakings and

alterations, which other dominions have been tossed to and fro withal. <sup>a</sup> Daniel calls it, a not giving of the kingdom to another people; Dan. ii. 44. Not that œcumenical kingdom which he hath with his Father, as king of nations; but that œconomical kingdom which he hath by dispensation from his Father as king of saints. Now this may be considered two ways.

(1.) As purely internal and spiritual, which is the rule of his spirit in the hearts of all his saints. <sup>b</sup> This cometh not with observation, it is within us; Luke xvii. 20, 21. consisting in 'righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;' Rom. xiv. 17.

(2.) As external, and appearing in gospel administrations. <sup>c</sup> So is Christ described as a king in the midst of their kingdom; Rev. i. 14—17. as also chap. iv. and chap. xi. 15. And both these may be again considered two ways.

[1.] In respect of their essence and being: and so they have been, are, and shall be continued in all ages. 'He hath built his church upon a rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it;' Matt. xvi. 18.

[2.] In reference to their extent in respect of subjects, with their visible glorious appearance, which is under innumerable promises to be very great in the latter days. 'For it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it;' Isa. ii. 4.<sup>d</sup>

These then are the things which cannot be shaken, which we may reduce to three heads.

1st. The growth of righteousness, peace, and joy in the saints, being filled with light and love from the special presence of Christ, with a wonderful increase of the number of them, multitudes of the elect being to be born in those days, the residue of the Jews and fulness of the Gentiles meeting in one fold, and there 'dwelleth righteousness;' 2 Pet. iii. 13.\*

<sup>a</sup> Psal. ii. 6. cx. 2. Acts ii. 36. Rev. i. 18. 1 Cor. xv. 24—27.

<sup>b</sup> Luke vi. 20. Mark xii. 34, &c.

<sup>c</sup> Psal. xlv. 6. cxlv. 13. Isa. ix. 7. Obad. 21.

<sup>d</sup> Isa. xi. 5—10, xviii. 18, 19. xxx. 18, 19. Micah iv. 1.

<sup>e</sup> Isa. xlix. 18—22. liv. 1—3, &c. lv. 11, 12. lx. 16, 17. Ezek. xlviii. 35. Amos ix. 11. Rom. ix. 15, &c. Isa. xlix. 22, 23. lxvi. 21. Mal. iii. 3. Ezek. xliii. 10, 11. Rev. xxi. 3. liv. 11—13, &c. Zech. xiv. 9—11.

2dly. The administration of gospel ordinances, in power and purity, according to the appointment, and unto the acceptance of the Lord Jesus. 'The temple of God and the altar being measured anew, the outward court defiled with Gentile-worship is left out;' Rev. xi. 1, 2.

3dly. The glorious and visible manifestation of those administrations, in the eyes of all the world, in peace and quietness, 'none making afraid, or hurting in the whole mountain of the Lord;' Isa. lxxv. 25.

For the personal reign of the Lord Jesus on earth, I leave it to them, with whose discoveries I am not, and curiosities I would not be acquainted.<sup>f</sup>

But as for such, who from hence do, or for sinister ends pretend to fancy to themselves a terrene kingly state unto each private particular saint, so making it a bottom 'viviendi ut velis,' for every one to do that which is good in his own eyes, to the disturbance of all order and authority, civil and spiritual, as they expressly clash against innumerable promises, so they directly introduce such confusion and disorder, as the soul of the Lord Jesus doth exceedingly abhor.

It is only the three things named, with their necessary dependencies, that I do assert.

2. And lastly, of these it is said they must remain: that is, continue, and be firmly established, as the word is often used; Rom. ix. 11.

The words of the text, being unfolded, and the mind of the Holy Ghost in them discovered, I shall from them commend to your Christian consideration this following position.

*Observation.* The Lord Jesus Christ by his mighty power, in these latter days, as antichristian tyranny draws to its period, will so far shake and translate the political heights, governments, and strength of the nations, as shall serve for the full bringing in of his own peaceable kingdom; the nations so shaken, becoming thereby a quiet habitation for the people of the Most High.

Though the doctrine be clear from the text, yet it shall receive farther scriptural confirmation, being of great weight and concernment. Dan. ii. 44. 'And in the days of these

<sup>f</sup> Acts iii. 21.

kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.' That this is affirmed of the kingdom of Christ under the gospel, none ever doubted.

Three things are here remarkably intimated of it.

1. The time wherein it shall most eminently be established; and that is, 'in the days of these kings,' of which Daniel was speaking.

2. The efficacy of its being set up: 'It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms.'

3. Its own stability: 'It shall never be destroyed.'

1. For the first, there is great debate about the principal season of the accomplishing of this prediction: much hesitation who those kings are, in whose days the kingdom of Christ is eminently to be established. In the days when the two legs of the Roman empire shall be divided into ten kingdoms, and those kingdoms have opposed themselves to the power of Christ, that is, in the days wherein we live, say some. Yea, most of the ancients took this for the Roman empire, and to these the bringing in of the kingdom of Christ is the establishment of it in these days: others understand the Syrian and Egyptian branches of the Grecian monarchy, and the bringing in of Christ's kingdom to be in his birth, death, and preaching of the gospel, wherein certainly the foundations of it were laid. I will not contend with any mortal hereabouts. Only I shall oppose one or two things to this latter interpretation. As,

(1.) The kingdom of Syria was totally destroyed and reduced into a Roman province sixty years before the nativity of Christ; and the Egyptian thirty. So that it is impossible that the kingdom of Christ by his birth should be set up in their days.

(2.) It is ascribed to the efficacy of this kingdom, that being established it shall break in pieces all those kingdoms: which how can it be, when at the first setting of it up, they had neither place, nor name, nor scarce remembrance?

So that it must needs be the declining, divided Roman empire, shared among sundry nations, that is here intimated:

and so consequently the kingdom of Christ to be established, is that glorious administration thereof, which in these days, he will bring in.

2. Be it so or otherwise, this from hence cannot be denied, that the kingdom of Christ will assuredly shake and translate all opposing dominions, until itself be established in and over them all, ὅπερ ἔδει δεῖξαι, which is all I intend to prove from this place. The ten-partite empire of the west must give place to the stone cut out of the mountains without hands.

Dan. vii. 27. 'The kingdom, and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.' Hitherto is the end of the matter. Either antichrist is described in the close of this chapter, or one very like him, St. John painting him in the revelation with all this man's colours, plainly intimating, that though in the first place that mad, raging tyrant, Antiochus the illustrious, was pointed at, yet that another was to rise in his likeness, with his craft and cruelty, that with the assistance of the ten horns should plague the saints of the Christians, no less than the other had done those of the Jews. Now what shall be the issue thereof? 'His dominion with his adherents shall be taken away, and consumed;' ver. 26. And then shall it be given to the people of the Most High, as before. Or they shall enjoy the kingdom of Christ in a peaceable manner, their officers being made peace, and their exactors righteousness.

3. It is clearly evident from these and other places in that prophecy, that he who is the only potentate will sooner or later shake all the monarchies of the earth, where he will have his name known, that all nations may be suited to the interest of his kingdom which alone is to endure.

Isa. lx. in many places, indeed throughout, holds out the same; ver. 12. 'The nation and kingdom which will not serve thee, shall be broken to pieces:' that is, all the nations of the earth, not a known nation, but the blood of the saints of Christ is found in the skirts thereof. Now what shall be the issue when they are so broken?

Ver. 17, 18. 'I will make thine officers peace, and thine

exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders, but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.' See at your leisure to this purpose, Amos ix. 11—15. Jer. xxxi. 23—25. Isa. xxxiii. 21—24.

I shall only add that punctual description, which you have of this 'whole matter,' as Daniel calls it, in the Revelation, with respect unto its accomplishment. Chap. xvii. the Roman harlot having procured the ten kings or kingdoms, into which the last head of the Roman empire sprouted about the year four hundred and fifty, by the inundation of the northern nations to join with her, they together make war against the Lamb. Ver. 12. 'The ten horns which thou sawest' (upon the last head of the great beast the Roman monarchy) 'are ten kings, which have received no kingdoms as yet' (to wit, when John saw the vision), 'but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.' About four hundred years after this, the pope ascended to his sovereignty, and these western nations grew into distinct dominions about the same time. Ver. 13. 'These have one mind' (that is, as to the business in hand, for otherwise they did and do vex one another with perpetual broils and wars) 'and shall give their power and strength to the beast,' or swear to defend the rights of holy church, which is no other than Babylon, and act accordingly. Ver. 14. 'These make war with the Lamb' (having sworn and undertaken the defence of holy church, or Babylon, they persecuted the poor heretics with fire and sword, that is, the witnesses of the Lamb, and in them the Lamb himself, striving to keep his kingdom out of the world) 'and the Lamb shall overcome them' (shaking and translating them into a new mould and frame): 'for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with him' (whose help and endeavours he will use) 'are called, and chosen, and faithful.' Ver. 16. 'The ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast' (being now shaken, changed, and translated in mind, interest, and perhaps government) 'these hate the whore, and shall make her desolate' (are instrumental in the hand of Christ for the ruin of that anti-christian state, which before they served) 'and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.'

Hence chap. xviii. 2. Babylon, and that whole anti-

christian state, which was supported upon their power and greatness, having lost its props comes toppling down to the ground: 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen.' And the saints take vengeance on the whore for all her former rage and cruelty: 'Double unto her double according to her works;' ver. 6. And ver. 9. 'And the kings of the earth' (being some of them shaken out of their dominion for refusing to close with the Lamb) 'who have committed fornication, and lived deliciously with her' (learning and practising false worship of her institution), 'shall bewail her, and lament for her' (as having received succour from her, her monasteries and shavelings, in their distress, whereunto indeed they were brought for her sake), 'when they shall see the smoke of her burning,' beholding her darkness, stink, and confusion, in her final desolation.

Now all this shall be transacted with so much obscurity and darkness, Christ not openly appearing unto carnal eyes, that though 'many shall be purified and made white, yet the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand;' Dan. xii. 10. There shall be no such demonstration of the presence of Christ, as to open the eyes of hardened men: but at length having suffered the poor deceived wretches to drink of the cup prepared for them, he appears himself gloriously, chap. xix. 13. in a more eminent manner than ever before, to the total destruction of the residue of opposers. And that this will be the utmost close of that dispensation wherein now he walketh, I no way doubt.

The assertion being cleared and proved, the reasons of it come next to be considered. And,

(1.) It shall be done by the way of recompense and vengeance. 'It is the great day of the wrath of the Lamb;' Rev. vi. 17. 'The land shall be soaked with blood, and the dust made fat with fatness. For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompense for the controversy of Zion;' Isa. xxxiv. 7, 8. 'The day of vengeance is in his heart, when the year of his redeemed is come;' Isa. lxiii. 4.<sup>s</sup>

The kings of the earth have given their power to anti-

<sup>f</sup> Psal. ii. 4, 5. cxxxvii. 8, 9. Isa. xlvii. 1—3. xlix. 26. Jer. l. 33, 34. li. 24, 25. 31, 35. Zech. xiii. 2—4. xiv. 12. Rev. xviii. 6, &c.

christ, endeavouring to the utmost to keep the kingdom of Christ out of the world. What, I pray, hath been their main business for seven hundred years and upwards, even almost ever since the man of sin was enthroned? how have they earned the titles, Eldest Son of the Church, the Catholic and most Christian King, Defender of the Faith, and the like? Hath it not been by the blood of saints? Is there not in every one of these kingdoms the slain, and the banished ones of Christ to answer for? In particular,

Hath not the blood of the saints of Jesus<sup>h</sup> (eclipsed by antichrist and his adherents), Wickliffes and Lollards, cried from the ground for vengeance upon the English 'heaven and earth' for a long season? Did not their bodies lie in the streets of France, under the names of Waldenses, Albigenses, and poor men of Lyons? Hath not Germany, and the annexed territories, her Huss and Hussile, Jerome, and Subtraguians to answer for? Is not Spain's inquisition enough to ruin a world, much more a kingdom? Have not all these, and all the kingdoms round about, washed their hands and garments in the blood of thousands of Protestants? And do not the kings of all these nations as yet stand up in the room of their progenitors with the same implacable enmity to the power of the gospel? Shew me seven kings that ever yet laboured sincerely to enhance the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, and I dare boldly say, 'Octavus quis fuerit nondum constat.' And is there not a cry for all this, 'How long, Lord, holy and true, dost thou avenge our blood on them that live on the earth?' Rev. vi. 10. Doth not Zion cry, 'The violence done to me and my flesh be upon Babylon; and my blood upon those heavens of the nations? And will not the Lord avenge his elect, that cry unto him day and night; will he not do it speedily? Will he not call the fowls of heaven to eat the flesh of kings, and captains, and great men of the earth?' Rev. xix. 18. Will he not make these heavens like the wood of the vine, not a pin to be taken off them to hang a garment on, in his whole tabernacle? The time shall come, wherein the earth shall disclose her slain, and not the simplest heretic (as they were counted) shall have his blood unrevenged: neither shall

<sup>h</sup> Acts and Mon. Histor. Pap.

any atonement be made for this blood, or expiation be allowed, whilst a toe of the image, or a bone of the beast is left unbroken.

(2.) A second reason is, That by his own wisdom he may frame such a power, as may best conduce to the carrying on of his own kingdom among the sons of men.<sup>1</sup>

He hath promised his church, that he will give unto it holy priests and Levites, Isa. lxvi. 20, 21. which shall serve at the great feast of tabernacles; Zech. xiv. 16. (a sufficient demonstration that he will dwell still in his churches by his ordinances whatsoever some conceive) so also, 'That he will make her civil officers peace, and her exactors righteousness;' Isa. lx. 17, 18. They shall be so established, that the nations, as nations, may serve it, and the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord; Rev. ix. 15.

For the present, the government of the nations (as many of them as are concerned therein) is purely framed for the interest of antichrist. No kind of government in Europe, or line of governors so ancient, but that the beast is as old as they, and had a great influence into their constitution or establishment, to provide that it might be for his own interest. I believe it will be found a difficult task, to name any of the kingdoms of Europe (excepting only that remotest northward) in the setting up and establishment whereof, either as to persons or government, the pope hath not expressly bargained for his own interest, and provided that should have the chiefest place in all the oaths and bonds that were between princes and people. Bellarmine, to prove that the pope hath a temporal power indirectly over all kings and nations (if he mean by indirectly, gotten by indirect means, it is actually true as to too many of them<sup>k</sup>), gives sundry instances in most of the most eminent nations in Europe, how he hath actually exercised such a power for his own interest.<sup>1</sup>

There have been two most famous and remarkable changes of the government of these nations, and into both of them what an influence the pope had, is easily discernable.

<sup>1</sup> Psal. ii. 9—12. Rev. xvii. 14. Matt. xxviii. 20. 1 Cor. xi. 26. Ephes. iv. 11—13. 1 Tim. vi. 13, 14. Psal. xlv. 16. Isa. xlii. 7. 25.

<sup>k</sup> Rev. xviii. 3. Οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς μετ' αὐτῆς ἐπόρευσαν.

<sup>1</sup> Bell. de Rom. Pon. lib. 5. cap. 3.

The first was between the years four and five hundred after Christ, when the Roman empire of the west, that which withheld the man of sin from acting his part to the life,<sup>m</sup> was shivered to pieces by many barbarous nations,<sup>n</sup> who settling themselves in the fruitful soils of Europe, began to plant their heavens, and lay the foundations of their earth, growing up into civil states, for the most part appointing them to be their kings in peace, who had been their leaders in war. This furious inundation settled the Frankes in Gaul, the Saxons in England, the west Goths in Spain, the east Goths and Longobards into Italy, and set up the Allemans in Germany; from some whereof, though for divers years the papal world was exceedingly tormented, and Rome itself sacked, yet in the close and making up of their governments, their manners and religion, they all submitted to the usurpation of the man of sin, so that in all their windings up, there was a salve for him and his authority.<sup>c</sup>

The second great alteration took up a long space, and was in action about three hundred years, reckoning it from the translation of the French crown from Childeric the Fourth, unto Pepin and his son Charles by papal authority, unto the conquest of England by the Normans, in which space the line of Charles in France was again, by the same authority, and the power of Hugh Capet cut off. No state in Europe, the choice patrimony of the beast, that did not receive a signal alteration in this space; nor was there any alteration, but that the pope had a hand in every one of them, and either by pretended collations of right, to pacify the consciences of blood-thirsty potentates in the undertaking and pursuing their unjust conquests, or foolish mitred confirmations of sword purchases, he got them all framed to his own end and purpose, which was to bring all these nations into subjection to his Babylonish usurpations, which their kings finding no way inconsistent with their own designs did willingly promote, labouring to enforce all consciences into subjection to the Roman see.

Hence it is, as I observed before, that such an interposition was made of the rites of holy church, that is Babylon

<sup>m</sup> 2 Thess. ii. 6, 7.

<sup>n</sup> Dan. ii. 41.

<sup>c</sup> Οὗτοι μίαν γνώμην ἔχουσι καὶ τὴν δύναμιν, καὶ τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἑαυτῶν τῷ Θεῷ διαδιδάσκουσιν. Rev. xvii. 13.

the mother of fornications, in all the ties, oaths, and bonds between princes and people.<sup>p</sup> And for the advancement of the righteous judgments of God, that the sons of men may learn to fear and tremble before him, it may be observed, that that which doth, and shall stick upon potentates to their ruin, is not so much their own or any other interest, as the very dregs of this papal antichristian interest thrust into their oaths and obligations for no end in the world, but to keep the Lord Jesus out of his throne.<sup>q</sup>

This is a second reason, why the Lord Jesus, by his mighty power at the bringing in of his immoveable kingdom, 'will shake the heavens and the earth of the nations;' even because in their present constitution they are directly framed to the interest of antichrist, which by notable advantages at their first moulding, and continued insinuations ever since, hath so rivetted itself into the very fundamentals of them, that no digging, or mining, with an earthquake, will cast up the foundation stones thereof.<sup>r</sup> The Lord Jesus then, having promised the service of the nations to his church, will so far open their whole frame to the roots, as to pluck out all the cursed seeds of the mystery of iniquity, which by the craft of Satan, and exigencies of state, or methods of advancing the pride and power of some sons of blood, have been sown amongst them.

(3.) A third reason is, because as is their interest, so is their acting. The present power of the nations stands in direct opposition to the bringing in of the kingdom of Christ. Two things there are which confessedly are incumbent on him in this day of his advancement.

[1.] The bringing home of his ancient people to be one fold with the fulness of the Gentiles, raising up the tabernacle of David, and building it as in days of old, in the accomplishment of innumerable promises,<sup>s</sup> and in answer to millions of prayers, put up at the throne of grace, for this very glory in all generations. Now there be two main hin-

<sup>p</sup> Rev. xiii. 15, 16.

<sup>q</sup> Πέμψει αὐτοῖς ὁ Θεὸς ἐνέργειαν πλάνης. 2 Thess. ii. 11.

<sup>r</sup> Roma sedes Petri, quæ Pastoralis honoris,  
Facta caput mundo quicquid non possidet armis,  
Relligione tenet. Prosp. de Ingrat.

<sup>s</sup> John. x. 16. Isa. xxxvii. 31. Jer. xxx. 9. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. xxxvii. 24, 25. Hos. iii. 5. Amos ix. 11.

derances of this work that must be removed. The first whereof is,

1st. Real: the great river Euphrates, the strength and fulness of whose streams doth yet rage so high, that there is no passage for the kings of the east to come over. Wherefore this must be dried up, as other waters were for their forefathers in the days of old; Rev. xvi. 12. 'Doubtless this is spoken in allusion to Abraham's coming over that river into Canaan, when the church of God in his family was there to be erected, whence he was called the Hebrew, that is, the passenger, to wit, over that river, Gen. xiv. 13. and then it may well enough denote the Turkish power, which, proud as it is at this day, possessing in peace all those regions of the east, yet God can quickly make it wither, and be dried up: or the deliverance of the Jews from Babylon, when it was taken and destroyed by the drying up of the streams of that river, and so the yoke of her tyranny broken from the church's neck,' and so it can be no other but the power of the Romish Babylon, supported by the kings of the nations, which must therefore be shaken and dried up.

2dly. Moral, or the idolatry of the Gentile worshippers.<sup>w</sup> The Jews stick hard as yet at this, that God should abolish any kind of worship, which himself had once instituted: but that he should ever accept any false worship, which he had once strictly prohibited, and nowhere to this day appointed, to this they will never be reconciled. Now such is all the invented idolatrous worship, which the kings of the earth have sucked in from the cup of fornication held out to them in the hand, and by the authority of the Roman whore; this still they cleave close unto, and will not hearken 'to the angel preaching the everlasting gospel, that men should worship him who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters;' Rev. xiii. 6, 7. that is, the God of heaven in Jesus Christ, in opposition to all their iconolatry, artolatry, hagiolatry, staurolatry, and mass-abominations. This then must also be removed; and because as you saw before it is so rivetted and cemented into, and with all the orbs of the nations, heaven and earth, they

<sup>t</sup> Exod. xiv. 21, 22. Josh. iii. 15, 16. Hab. iii. 8.

<sup>v</sup> Jer. li. 31, 32.

<sup>w</sup> Rev. xi. 2.

must be shaken, and brought εἰς μετάθεσιν, before it can be effected.

[2.] The second thing he hath to accomplish is the tremendous, total destruction of Babylon,<sup>x</sup> the man of sin, and all his adherents, that are not obedient to the heavenly call; Rev. xviii. 4.<sup>y</sup> Now as Samson, intending the destruction of the princes, lords, and residue of the Philistines, who were gathered together in their idol temple, effected it by pulling away the pillars whereby the building was supported, whereupon the whole frame toppled to the ground;<sup>z</sup> so the Lord, intending the ruin of that mighty power, whose top seems to reach to heaven, will do it by pulling away the pillars and supporters of it, after which it cannot stand one moment. Now what are the pillars of that fatal building? Are they not the powers of the world, as presently stated and framed? Pull them away, and, alas, what is antichrist? It is the glory of the kings put upon her, that makes men's eyes so dazzle on the Roman harlot. Otherwise she is but like the Egyptian deities, whose silly worshippers through many glorious portals and frontispieces were led to adore the image of an ugly ape.

Add hereunto, that in this mighty work the Lord Jesus Christ will make use of the power of the nations, the horns of them, that is their strength; Rev. xvii. 16. They must hate the whore, and make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. Now whether this can be accomplished or no in their present posture, is easily discernable. Doth not the papal interest lie at the bottom of all, or the most ruling lines of Christendom?<sup>a</sup> Can that be ejected without unbottoming their own dominion? Do they not use the efficacy of the Roman jurisdiction to balance the powers of their adversaries abroad, and to awe their subjects at home? Hath not the pope a considerable strength in every one of their own bosoms? Are not the locusts of their religious orders all sworn slaves to him, for number, sufficient to make an army to fight the greatest emperor in the world? Are not most potentates tried by oath, or other compact, to maintain either the whole, or some part

<sup>x</sup> Psal. cxxxvii. 8, 9. Isa. xlvi. 7—9.

<sup>y</sup> Jer. li. 25, 26. Rev. xvii. 1, 2. Zech. ii. 7. Jer. li. 6.

<sup>z</sup> Judges xvi. 28, 29.

<sup>a</sup> Petra dedit Petro, Petrus diadema Rodulfo.

of the old tower, under the name of rites of holy church, prelates, and the like? And can any expect that such as these should take up the despised quarrel of the saints against that flourishing queen? Doubtless no such fruit will grow on these trees, before they are thoroughly shaken.

(4.) A fourth reason is, that his own people seeing all earthly things shaken, and removing, may be raised up to the laying hold of that durable kingdom that shall not be removed.<sup>b</sup> All carnal interests will doubtless be shaken with that of Babylon. Many of God's people are not yet weaned from the things that are seen:<sup>c</sup> no sooner is one carnal form shaken out, but they are ready to cleave to another, yea, to warm themselves in the feathered nests of unclean birds. All fleshly dominion within doors, and all civil dominion that opposeth without doors, shall be shaken. Now these things are so glewed also to men's earthly possessions, the talons of the birds of prey having firmly seized on them, that they also must be shaken with them; and therefore from them also will he have us to be loosed; 2 Pet. iii. 12, 13.

And these are some of the reasons of the position laid down, which is so bottomed, so proved, as you have heard. Of the speedy accomplishment of all this I no way doubt. 'I believe, and therefore I have spoken.' Whether I shall see any farther perfection of this work, whilst I am here below, I am no way solicitous; being assured that if I fail of it here, I shall, through the grace of him who loved us, and gave himself for us, meet with the treasures of it elsewhere.

Come we to the uses.

*Use 1.* The rise of our first use I shall take from that of the prophet: 'Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein;' Hos. xiv. 9. Labour for this heavenly wisdom and prudence, that we may know these things, and be acquainted with the mind and will of God, in the season and generation wherein we live. His way is not so in the dark, nor his footsteps in the deep, but that we may perceive what he is about.

Luke xii. 54—56. our Saviour gives it in as a sure tes-

<sup>b</sup> Heb. xii. 28.

<sup>c</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 18.

timony of the Pharisees' hypocrisy, notwithstanding all their pretences, and possession of Moses' chair, that they were wise in earthly things, and had drawn out experiences by long observation of what was like to come to pass as to the weather, by considering the ordinary signs of the alterations thereof; but notwithstanding that mighty effectual concurrence of signs in heaven and earth, with the accomplishment of prophecies, all pointing to the instant establishment of the kingdom of God in the coming of the Messiah, not discerning them at all, they come and cry, 'If thou be the Christ, give us a sign;' when, without satisfying their sinful curiosity, heaven and earth was full of signs round about them. Men, who will not receive God's signs, suppose they should be wonderful proficient in credulity, might they have signs of their own fancying. The rich glutton thought, that if his way of teaching might have been set up, by men rising from the dead, there would have been a world of converts, more than were made by preaching the word of God.<sup>d</sup> Men suppose, that if God from heaven should give in some discriminating prodigy, oh, how abundantly should they be satisfied! The truth is, the same lust and corruption that makes them disbelieve God's signs, moves them to look after signs of their own. For this very thing then were the Pharisees branded as hypocrites, that having wisdom in natural things, to calculate and prognosticate from necessary signs; yet in the works of the Lord, though the signs which in his wisdom he was pleased to give, were plentiful round about them, they must have some of their own choosing. I pray God none such be found in our day.

1 Chron. xii. 32. it is said of the men of Issachar, that they 'had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do.'<sup>e</sup> Israel is in the dark, and knows not what to do, if the times and seasons be not discovered to them. If the mind and will of the Lord in their generation be not made out unto a people, it will be their ruin. Hence it is, that the Lord encourageth us to make inquiry after these things, to find out the seasons wherein he will do any great work for his people, knowing that without this, we shall be altogether useless in the generation wherein we live. Isa.

<sup>d</sup> Ἐχουσι Μωσεία καὶ τοὺς προφῆτας, οὐχὶ πᾶτερ Ἀβραάμ; ἀλλ' εἴαν τις ἀπὸ νεκρῶν  
 πορευθῆν; Luke xvi. 29, 30.

<sup>e</sup> Esther i. 13.

xliv. 11. 'Ask of me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the works of my hands command you me.' And what is this, that the Lord will have his people to inquire of him about? Even the great work of the ruin of Babylon, and restoration of his church, which yet was not to be accomplished for two hundred and forty years. And this he tells you plainly in the following verses. 'I have raised him up' (Cyrus) 'in righteousness, I will direct his ways, he shall build my cities, and he shall let go my captives, not for price, nor for reward, saith the Lord of hosts;' ver. 13. The Lord is earnest with his people to inquire into the season of the accomplishment of his great intendments for the good of his church, when as yet they are afar off; how much more when they are nigh at hand, even at the doors? 'Whoso is wise, and will ponder these things, they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord;' Psal. cvii. 43. Dan. ix. 2. The prophet tells you, that this was his great study, and at length he understood by books the approach of the time, wherein God would deliver his church from Babylonish captivity and pollution. Now this discovery hath two or three notable products.

(1.) It puts him upon earnest supplications for the accomplishment of their promised deliverance in the appointed season. Wide from that atheistical frame of spirit, which would have a predetermination of events and successes to eradicate all care and endeavour to serve that providence, which will produce their accomplishment. A discovery of the approach of any promised, and before-fixed work of God, should settle our minds to the utmost endeavour of helping the decree to bring forth.

(2.) He finds great acceptance in this his address to the Lord by supplications, for the establishing of that work which he had discovered was nigh at hand. For,

[1.] An answer is returned him fully to his whole desire in the midst of his supplications, ver. 21. 'Whilst I was praying the man Gabriel came,' &c.

[2.] The work which he had discovered to be approaching, was instantly hastened and gone in hand withal, ver. 23. 'At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth.' Oh, that God would stir up his saints, in the spirit of Daniel, to consider, and understand by books, the

time that he hath appointed for the deliverance of his people, that fixing their supplications for the speeding thereof, the commandment may come forth for its full accomplishment.

[3.] Having attained this, the Lord gives him fresh discoveries, new light of the time for the birth of the Messiah, which he thought not of, prayed not for. ‘Seventy weeks are determined,’ &c. ver. 24. So delighted is the Lord with his people’s diligent inquiry into his ways, and walkings towards them, that thereupon he appears unto them in the revelation of his mind, beyond all that they did expect or desire.

Now all this have I spoken to stir you up unto that, whereunto at the entrance of this use you were exhorted: that you would labour for that spiritual wisdom and prudence, which may acquaint your hearts, at least in some measure, with the mind and will of God, concerning his work in the generation wherein you live. And farther to provoke you hereunto, know that you cannot but wander, as in many other, so especially in four sinful things: 1st. Sinful cares; 2dly. Sinful fears; 3dly. Sinful follies; 4thly. Sinful negligence.

1st. Sinful cares. Anxious and dubious thoughts about such things, as perhaps the Lord intends utterly to destroy, or at least render useless. Had it not been the greatest folly in the world for Noah and his sons, when the flood was approaching to sweep away the creatures from the face of the earth, to have been solicitous about flocks and herds, that were speedily to be destroyed?<sup>f</sup> Many men’s thoughts at this day do even devour them about such things, as, if they knew the season, would be contemptible unto them. Wouldst thou labour for honour, if thou knewest that God at this time were labouring to lay all the ‘honour of the earth in the dust?’<sup>g</sup> Couldst thou set thy heart upon the increase of riches, wert thou acquainted that God intends instantly to make ‘silver as stones, and cedars as sycamores,’<sup>h</sup> though not for plenty, yet for value? Would men be so exceedingly solicitous about this or that form of religion, this or that power to suppress such or such a persuasion; if they knew that the Lord would suddenly ‘fill the earth with his

<sup>f</sup> Gen. vi. 13.<sup>g</sup> Isa. xxiii. 9.<sup>h</sup> 1 Kings x. 27.

knowledge as the waters cover the sea?<sup>i</sup> Should our spirits sink for fear of this or that persecutor or oppressor, were it discovered unto us that in a short time 'nothing shall hurt or destroy in the whole mountain of the Lord?'<sup>k</sup> Should we tremble at the force and power of this or that growing monarchy, giving its power to the beast, had God revealed unto us, that he is going to shake it until it be translated? Certain it is, that the root of all the sinful cares, which sometimes are ready to devour the hearts of God's people, is this unacquaintedness with the work and mind of the Lord.

2dly. Sinful fears. Luke xxi. 28. our Saviour having told his disciples of wars, tumults, seditions, famines, earthquakes, &c. which were to come upon the earth, bids them, when they see these things, to 'lift up their heads for joy.' But how should this be? rejoice in the midst of so many evils and troubles, in the most whereof they were to have a Benjamin's mess, a double portion? Yea, saith our Saviour, rejoice, for I have told you before, that then it is that your deliverance and redemption draweth nigh. It is for them to shake and tremble who are in the dark, who know not what the Lord is doing. They may be at their wits' end, who know no other end of these things; but for you, who know the mind of the Lord, what he intendeth, and will effect by these things, cast off all sinful fears, and rejoice in him who cometh.

Amongst us in these days new troubles arise, wars, and rumours of wars, appearances of famine, invasions, conspiracies, revolts, treacheries, sword, blood. Oh, how do men's faces wax pale, and their hearts die within them! Sometimes with David they could fly to the Philistines and wind up their interest with them, whom God will destroy. Every new appearance of danger shuffles them off from all their comforts, all their confidence. Hence poor souls are put upon doubling and shifting in the ways of God, in such a frame as God exceedingly abhors. They know not why any mercy is given, nor to what end, and therefore are afraid to own it, lest some sudden alteration should follow, and make it too hot for them to hold it; and all this because they know not the mind of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God; were they but acquainted with it, so far as it is evi-

<sup>i</sup> Hab. ii. 14.

<sup>k</sup> Isa. lxx. 25

dently revealed, they would quickly see all things working together to the appointed end.

3dly. Sinful follies. Toil and labour in vain is of all follies the greatest folly : like the Jews under Julian, building of their temple in the day, God casting it to the ground in the night. When a man labours, toils, wearies, and spends himself, for the accomplishing of that which shall never come to pass, and that which, if he would but inquire, he might know shall never come to pass, he cannot well want the livery of a brutish man. How many poor creatures, that think themselves wiser than those of Teman, and Dedan, and all the children of the east, do spend and consume their days and time in such ways as this, labouring night and day to set up what God will pull down, and what he hath said shall fall. 'Come on, let us deal wisely,' saith Pharaoh to his Egyptians, Exod. i. 10. to root out and destroy these Israelites. Poor fool! is there any wisdom or counsel against the Most High? I could give instances plenty in these days, of men labouring in the dark, not knowing what they are doing, endeavouring with all their strength to accomplish that, whereof the Lord hath said, 'It shall not prosper:' and all because they discern not the season.

4thly. Sinful negligence. You are no way able to do the work of God in your generation. It is the commendation of many saints of God, that they were 'upright, and served the will of God in their generation.' Besides the general duties of the covenant, incumbent on all the saints at all seasons, there are special works of providence, which in sundry generations the Lord effecteth, concerning which he expects his people should know his mind, and serve him in them. Now can a servant do his master's work, if he know not his will? The Lord requireth that in the great things which he hath to accomplish in this generation, all his should close with him. What is the reason that some stand in the market-place idle all the day? some work for a season, and then give over, they know not how to go a step farther, but after a day, a week, a month, or year, are at a stand? worse than all this, some counterwork the Lord with all their strength? the most neglect the duty which of them is required? What is the reason of all this? They know in no measure what the Lord is doing, and what he would have

them apply themselves unto. The best almost live from hand to mouth, following present appearances, to the great neglect of the work, which the Lord would have hastened amongst us. All this comes from the same root.

But now, if all these sad and sinful consequences attend this nescience of the mind of God, as to the things which he is doing, in the days wherein we live, so far as he hath revealed himself, and requires us to observe his walkings; by what ways and means may we come to the knowledge thereof, that we be not sinfully bewildered in our own cares, fears, and follies, but that we may follow hard after God, and be upright in our generation?

There be four things, whereby we may come to have an insight into the work which the Lord will do, and accomplish in our days.

(1st.) The light which he gives.

(2dly.) The previous works which he doth.

(3dly.) The expectation of his saints.

(4thly.) The fear of his adversaries.

(1st.) The light which he gives. God doth not use to set his people to work in the dark. They are the 'children of light,' and they are no 'deeds of darkness' which they have to do. However others are blinded, they shall see. Yea, he always suits their light to their labour, and gives them a clear discerning of what he is about. The Lord God doth nothing, but he reveals his secrets to his servants. The light of every age is the forerunner of the work of every age.

When Christ was to come in the flesh, John Baptist comes a little before, a new light, a new preacher. And what doth he discover and reveal? Why he calls them off from resting on legal ceremonies to the doctrine of faith, repentance, and gospel ordinances; tells them 'the kingdom of God is at hand;' instructs them in the knowledge of him who was coming. To what end was all this? Only that the minds of men being enlightened by his preaching, who was a 'burning and a shining lamp,' they might see what the Lord was doing.

Every age hath its peculiar work, hath its peculiar light. Now what is the light which God manifestly gives in, in our days? Surely not new doctrines (as some pretend), indeed

old errors, and long since exploded fancies. Plainly the peculiar light of this generation is that discovery, which the Lord hath made to his people of the mystery of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny. The opening, unravelling, and revealing the antichristian interest, interwoven and coupled together in civil and spiritual things, into a state opposite to the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, is the great discovery of these days. Who almost is there amongst us now, who doth not evidently see, that for many generations the western nations have been juggled into spiritual and civil slavery, by the legerdemain of the whore, and the potentates of the earth made drunk with the cup of her abominations? how the whole earth hath been rolled in confusion, and the saints hurried out of the world, to give way to their combined interest? Hath not God unveiled that harlot, made her naked, and discovered her abominable filthiness? Is it not evident to him that hath but half an eye, that the whole present constitution of the government of the nations, is so cemented with antichristian mortar, from the very top to the bottom, that without a thorough shaking they cannot be cleansed? This then plainly discovers, that the work which the Lord is doing, relates to the untwining of this close combination against himself, and the kingdom of his dear Son; and he will not leave until he have done it. To what degree in the several nations this shaking shall proceed, I have nothing to determine in particular, the Scripture having not expressed it. This only is certain, it shall not stop, nor receive its period, before the interest of antichristianity be wholly separated from the power of those nations.

(2dly.) The previous works he doth. How many of these doth our Saviour give, as signs of the destruction of Jerusalem, and so consequently of propagating the gospel more and more to the nations? Matt. xxiv. Luke xxi. How fearful and dreadful they were in their accomplishment, Josephus the Jewish historian relateth; and how by them the Christians were fore-warned, and did by them understand what the Lord was doing, Eusebius and others declare. 'When,' saith he, 'you shall see the abomination of desolation' (the Roman eagles and ensigns) standing in the holy place,' Matt. xxiv. 15. or, 'Jerusalem compassed with ar-

mies,' as Luke xxi. 20. then know by that, that 'the end thereof is come, and your deliverance at hand.'

The works of God are to be sought out of them that have pleasure in them. They are vocal speaking works, the mind of God is in them. They may be heard, read, and understood: the 'rod may be heard, and who hath appointed it.' Now generally he begins with lesser works, to point out to the sons of men what he is about to accomplish. By these may his will be known, that he may be met in righteousness.

Now what, I pray, are the works that the Lord is bringing forth upon the earth? what is he doing in our own and the neighbouring nations? Shew me the potentate upon the earth, that hath a peaceable molehill, to build himself a habitation upon? Are not all the controversies, or the most of them, that at this day are disputed in letters of blood among the nations, somewhat of a distinct constitution from those formerly under debate, those tending merely to the power and splendour of single persons, these to the interest of the many? Is not the hand of the Lord in all this? Are not the shaking of these heavens of the nations from him? Is not the voice of Christ in the midst of all this tumult? And is not the genuine tendence of these things open and visible unto all? What speedy issue all this will be driven to, I know not: so much is to be done, as requires a long space. Though a tower may be pulled down faster than it was set up, yet that which hath been building a thousand years is not like to go down in a thousand days.

(3dly.) The expectation of the saints is another thing, from whence a discovery of the will of God and the work of our generation may be concluded. The secret ways of God's communicating his mind unto his saints, by a fresh favour of accomplishing prophecies, and strong workings of the spirit of supplications, I cannot now insist upon. This I know, they shall not be 'led into temptation,' but kept from the hour thereof, when it comes upon the whole earth. When God raiseth up the expectation of his people to any thing, he is not unto them as waters that fail. Nay he will assuredly fulfil the desires of the poor.

Just about the time that our Saviour Christ was to be

born of a woman, how were all that waited for salvation in Israel raised up to a high expectation of the kingdom of God; such as that people never had before, and assuredly shall never have again?<sup>1</sup> Yea, famous was the waiting of that season through the whole Roman empire. And the Lord, whom they sought, came to his temple. Eminent was their hope, and excellent was the accomplishment.

Whether this will be made a rule to others or no, I know not: this I am assured, that, being bottomed on promises, and built up with supplications, it is a ground for them to rest upon. And here I dare appeal to all, who with any diligence have inquired into the things of the kingdom of Christ, that have any savour upon their spirits of the accomplishment of prophecies and promises in the latter days, who count themselves concerned in the glory of the gospel; whether this thing of consuming the mystery of iniquity, and vindicating the churches of Christ, into the liberties purchased for them by the Lord Jesus, by the shaking and translating all opposing heights and heavens, be not fully in their expectations. Only the time is in the hand of God, and the rule of our actings with him is his revealed will.

(4thly.) Whether the fears of his adversaries have not their lines meeting in the same point, themselves can best determine. The whole world was more or less dreaded at the coming of Christ in the flesh. When also the signs of his vengeance did first appear to the pagan world, in calling to an account for the blood of his saints, the kings and captains present cry out, 'The great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?' Rev. vi. 17.

I am not of counsel to any of the adherents to the man of sin, or any of those who have given their power unto the beast; I have not a key to the bosoms of the enemies of Christ; I am neither their interpreter, nor do they allow me to speak in their behalf; yet truly upon very many probable grounds I am fully persuaded, that were the thoughts of their hearts disclosed, notwithstanding all their glittering shows, dreadful words, threatening expressions, you shall see them tremble, and dread this very thing, that the whole world as now established will be wrapped up in darkness, at least until that cursed interest, which is set up against the Lord Jesus,

<sup>1</sup> Luke iii. 15.

be fully and wholly shaken out from the heavens and earth of the nations.

And thus without leading you about by chronologies and computations, which yet have their use (well to count a number being wisdom indeed), I have a little discovered unto you some rules, whereby you may come to be acquainted with the work of God in the days wherein we live, and also what that work is, which is our first use. The next shall be for direction, to guide you what you ought to do, when you know what is the work of your generation.

*Use 2.* Be exhorted to prepare to meet the Lord, to make his way straight: and this I would press distinctly.

(1.) As to your persons.

(2.) As to your employments.

(1.) As to your persons. Give the Lord Jesus a throne in your hearts, or it will not be at all to your advantage, that he hath a throne and kingdom in the world. Perhaps you will see the plenty of it, but not taste one morsel. Take first that which comes not by observation, that which is within you which is 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' Take it in its power, and you will be the better enabled to observe it coming in its glory. 'Seek first this kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added unto you.' Oh that it were the will of God to put an end to all that pretended holiness, hypocritical humiliation, self-interested religion, that have been among us, whereby we have flattered God with our lips, whilst our hearts have been far from him! Oh that it might be the glory of this assembly, above all the assemblies of the world, that every ruler in it might be a sincere subject in the kingdom of the Lord Jesus! Oh that it might suffice that we have had in our parliament, and among our ministers, so much of the form, and so little of the power of godliness: that we have called the world Christ, and lusts Christ, and self Christ, working indeed for them, when we pretended all for Christ! Oh that I could nourish this one contention in your honourable assembly, that you might strive who should excel in setting up the Lord Jesus in your hearts!

You may be apt to think, that if you can carry on, and compass your purposes, then all your enemies will be as-

surely disappointed. Do but embrace the Lord Jesus in his kingly power in your bosoms, and 'ipso facto' all your enemies are everlastingly disappointed; you are the grains, which in the sifting of the nation have been kept from falling to the ground. Are you not the residue of all the chariots of England? Oh that in you might appear the reality of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, which hath been so long pretended by others! that sound righteousness, not a pharisaical, rigid, supercilious affectation, not a careless belief and comportment, the issue of novel fancies, might be found upon your spirits; that you may be thought meet to rejoice with the Lord in his kingdom! otherwise this day of the Lord which we have described, however desired and longed after, will be 'darkness to you, and not light.'

(2.) In reference to your great employments, whereunto the Lord hath called you. And here I shall briefly hold out unto you one or two things.

[1.] That you would seriously consider, why it is that the Lord shakes the heavens and the earth of the nations, to what end this tendeth, and what is the cause thereof. Is it not from hence, that he may revenge their opposition to the kingdom of his dear Son? that he may shake out of the midst of them all that antichristian mortar, wherewith from their first chaos they have been cemented; that so the kingdoms of the earth may become the kingdoms of the Lord Jesus? Is not the controversy of Zion pleaded with them? Are not they called to an account for the transgression of that charge given to all potentates, 'Touch not mine anointed?' And what is the aim of the Lord Jesus herein, whose mighty voice shakes them? Is it not to frame and form them for the interest of his own kingdom? that he may fulfil the word he hath spoken to Zion, 'I will make thine officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness?'

Consider then, I pray, what you have in hand. Wait upon your King, the Lord Christ, to know his mind. If you lay any stone in the whole building, that advanceth itself against his sceptre, he will shake all again. Dig you never so deep, build you never so high, it shall be shaken. Nay, that there be no opposition will not suffice: he hath given light enough to have all things framed for his own advan-

tage. The time is come, yea, the full time is come, that it should be so, and he expects it from you. Say not, in the first place, this, or that, suits the interest of England, but look what suits the interest of Christ; and assure yourselves, that the true interest of any nation is wrapped up therein. More of this in the treatise annexed to my sermon of Jan. 31.

[2.] Be encouraged under all those perplexities and troubles, which you are, or may be wrapped in. Lift up the hands that hang down, and let the feeble knees be strengthened: 'It is but yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.' The more you are for Christ, the more enemies you shall be sure to have; but the Lamb shall overcome. He is come to revenge the blood of his slain upon this generation, and to free the residue from the jaws of the terrible. He is our rock, and his work is perfect: what he hath begun, faster or slower, he will surely accomplish. It is a thing of the most imaginable indifference, whether any of our particular persons behold these things here below or not. If otherwise, we shall for the present have 'rest with him, and stand in our lot at the end of the days:' but for the work itself, 'the decree is gone forth,' and it shall not be recalled: receive strength and refreshment in the Lord.

*Use 3.* Wonder not when the heaven is shaken, if you see the stars fall to the ground. We had some, who pretended to be church stars, that were merely fixed to all men's view, and by their own confession in the political heavens. The first shaking of this nation shook them utterly to the ground. If others also tremble like an aspen leaf, and know not which wind to yield unto, or sail backwards and forwards by the same gale, wonder not at that neither; when men lay any other foundation than the immoveable corner stone, at one time or other, sooner or later, assuredly they will be shaken.

*Use 4.* Let the professing people that is amongst us look well to themselves: 'The day is coming that will burn like an oven.' Dross will not endure this day; we have many a hypocrite as yet to be uncased. Take heed you that act high, if a false heart, a defiled heart be amongst you, there shall be no place for it in the mountain of the Lord's house.

‘The inhabitants of Zion shall be all righteous;’ Isa. lx. 21. Many that make a great shew now upon the stage, shall be turned off with shame enough; try and search your hearts, force not the Lord to lay you open to all. The spirit of judgment and burning will try you. Tremble, I pray, for you are entering the most purging, trying furnace, that ever the Lord set up on the earth.

*Use 5.* Be loose from all shaken things: you see the clouds return after the rain, one storm in the neck of another. Thus it must be, until Christ hath finished his whole work. ‘Seeing that all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all manner of holy conversation.’ Let your eyes be upwards, and your hearts be upwards, and your hands be upwards, that you be not moved at the passing away of shaken things. I could here encourage you by the glorious issue of all these shakings, whose foretaste might be as marrow to your bones, though they should be appointed to consumption before the accomplishment of it: but I must close.

*Use 6.* See the vanity, folly, madness of such as labour to oppose the bringing in the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. Canst thou hinder the rain from descending upon the earth, when it is falling? Canst thou stop the sun from rising at its appointed hour? Will the conception for thee dwell quietly in the womb beyond its month? Surely thou mayest with far more ease turn and stop the current and course of nature, than obstruct the bringing in of the kingdom of Christ in righteousness and peace. Whence comes it to pass, that so many nations are wasted, destroyed, spoiled, in the days wherein we live? that God hath taken quietness and peace from the earth? Doubtless from hence, that they will smite themselves against the ‘stone cut out of the mountain without hands.’ Shall not ‘the decree bring forth?’ Is it not in vain to fight against the Lord? Some are angry, some troubled, some in the dark, some full of revenge; but the truth is, whether they will hear or forbear, Babylon shall fall, and all the glory of the earth be stained, and the kingdoms become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ.