

# CHAPTER 10

## INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW 10

**Ver. 1.** *And when he had called to him his twelve disciples*, etc.] These persons had been for some time called by the grace of God, and were already the disciples of Christ, and such as were more familiar and intimate with him, than others, that went by that name. They had sat down at his feet, and had received of his words; they had heard his doctrines, and had seen his miracles, and had been by him training up for public work; but as yet had not been called and sent forth to enter on such service: but now all things being ready, they being properly instructed, and the time for the conversion of a large number of souls being up, he called them together privately; and gave them a commission to preach the Gospel, ordained them ministers of the word, and installed them into the office of apostleship. The number “twelve”, is either in allusion to the twelve spies that were sent by Moses into the land of Canaan, or to the twelve stones in Aaron’s breast plate; or to the twelve fountains the Israelites found in the wilderness; or to the twelve oxen on which the molten sea stood in Solomon’s temple; or to the twelve gates in Ezekiel’s temple; or rather, to the twelve patriarchs, and the tribes which sprung from them; that as they were the fathers of the Jewish nation, which was typical of God’s chosen people; so these were to be the instruments of spreading the Gospel, not only Judea, but in all the world, and of planting Christian churches there. And that they might appear to come forth with authority, and that their doctrine might be confirmed,

*he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out*; or “over all devils”, as (<sup><AM></sup>Luke 9:1). It was usual with the Jews to call a demon or devil **hamwj j wr**, “an unclean spirit”; especially such as frequented burying places: so in one place<sup>f593</sup>, an unclean spirit is interpreted by the gloss, **pydç j wr**, “the spirit of the demons”, or devils; and in another<sup>f594</sup> place, **twrbqh tyb dç**, “the demon of the graves”; where necromancers sought to be, that these spirits might be their familiars, and assist them in their enchantments: accordingly the devils are here called, “unclean spirits”; being in themselves, in their own nature, unclean, and being the cause and

means of defiling others, and delighting in impure persons, places, and things. There were many of these spirits, who, because of the great impiety of the Jews, the prevalence of magic arts among them, and by divine permission, had at this time taken possession of great numbers of persons; whereby Christ had an opportunity of giving proof of his deity, of his being the Messiah, the seed of the woman, that should bruise the serpent's head, by his ejecting them; and of confirming the mission of his disciples, and establishing the doctrine preached by them, by giving them power and authority over them, to cast them out also: and whereas various diseases frequently followed and attended such possessions; he likewise gave them power

*to heal all manner of sicknesses, and all manner of diseases*, as he himself had done. The expressions are very full and strong, and include all sorts of maladies incident to human bodies, either of men or women; all distempers natural or preternatural, curable or incurable, by human methods: so that at the same time they were sent to preach the Gospel, for the cure of the souls of men, they were empowered to heal the diseases of their bodies; and which, one should think, could not fail of recommending them to men, and of ingratiating them into their affections.

**Ver. 2.** *Now the names of the twelve apostles are these*, etc.] This is the first time these disciples are called “apostles”, they were learners before; now being instructed, they are sent forth to preach publicly, and therefore are called apostles, or messengers, persons that were sent: so the elders of the priesthood are called  $\hat{y}d\ tyb\ yj\ w\l\ \zeta$ , “the apostles”, or messengers “of the sanhedrim”<sup>f595</sup>, to whom the high priest was delivered, before the day of atonement. So six months in the year,  $\mu yj\ w\l\ \zeta$ , “apostles”, or messengers, were sent by the<sup>f596</sup> sanhedrim, throughout all the land of Israel, and to the captive Jews in other parts, to give notice of the new moon; in allusion to which, the disciples might be so called. It was proper to give the names of them, for the truth of the history, and confirmation of it; for the sake of the persons themselves, and the honour done them; and for the exclusion and detection of false apostles.

*The first, Simon, who is called Peter*; his pure Hebrew name was  $\hat{w}[m\zeta$ , Simeon, as he is called, (~~41514~~ Acts 15:14) but in the then Jerusalem dialect, and in Rabbinical language, this name is frequently read and pronounced  $\hat{w}mys$ , “Simon”, as here: we often read of R. Simon, and of R. Juda bar

Simon, in both Talmuds <sup>f597</sup>. This apostle is also called Peter, to distinguish him from Simon the Canaanite, and which signifies a stone, or rock, in allusion to the object of his faith, and the steadiness of it. He is said to be the “first”; not that he was the head of the rest of the apostles, or had any primacy, dominion, and authority over them; but because he was first called, and was the first that was to open the door of faith to the Gentiles: but chiefly he is said to be so for order’s sake; for, some one in the account must be named first, and he as proper as any:

*and Andrew his brother*; who was called at the same time with him, and therefore are put together. This name is also to be met with in the Talmudic writings; *see Gill* “<sup><40B></sup>*Matthew 4:18*”.

*James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother*; these two were called next and together, and therefore are placed in this order: the former is so called, to distinguish him from another James, the son of Alphaeus, after mentioned; and the latter is the beloved disciple; these were surnamed “Boanerges”, that is, “sons of thunder”.

**Ver. 3.** *Philip and Bartholomew*, etc.] The first of these was called next; his name is a Greek one, which his parents, though Jews, might take from the Greeks that dwelt among them, (see <sup><B121></sup>John 12:20,21) mention is made of one R. Phelipi, and Phulipa, in the Jewish writings <sup>f598</sup>. The latter of these, Bartholomew, is conjectured, by Dr. Lightfoot, to be the same with Nathanael, he being called next in order after Philip; and that his name was Nathanael, *yml t rb*, “Bar Talmai”, or “the son of Talmai”, or “Ptolomy”: a name once common to the kings of Egypt: so Talmai, king of Geshur, is by the Septuagint, in (<sup><10B></sup>2 Samuel 3:3) (<sup><1037></sup>2 Samuel 13:37) called Tholmi, and in (<sup><13RD></sup>1 Chronicles 3:2) Tholmai: hence it appears, that Bartholomew is no other than Bartholmi, or the son of Tholmi. We read of one R. Jonathan, *swml wj ba ^b*, “ben Abtolemus”, in the Talmud <sup>f599</sup>, whether the same name with this, may be considered.

*Thomas, and Matthew the publican*: by the other evangelists Matthew is mentioned first; but he being the writer of this Gospel, puts Thomas first, which is an instance of his modesty; and also calls himself the “publican”, which the other do not: this he mentions, to magnify the grace of God in his vocation. The Jews <sup>f600</sup> speak of *yatm*, “Matthai”, or “Matthew”, as a disciple of Jesus. Thomas was sometimes called Didymus; the one was his Hebrew, the other his Greek name, and both signify a “twin”, as it is very

likely he was: mention is made of R. Thoma, or Thomas bar Papias, in a Jewish writer <sup>f601</sup>. Next follow,

*James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus*: the former of these is so called, to distinguish him from James, the son of Zebedee. This is the James, who was the brother of our Lord, (<sup><4019></sup>Galatians 1:19) and is called “James the less”, (<sup><4150></sup>Mark 15:40). Alphaeus his father, is the same with Cleopas, (<sup><4248></sup>Luke 24:18) or Cleophas, (<sup><3125></sup>John 19:25). The Hebrew name, **ypl j**, which often occurs among the Jews <sup>f602</sup>, may be pronounced either Chlophi, or Alphi, or with the Greek termination Cleopas, or Alphaeus. The latter of this pair of apostles is the same person with Jude, the writer of the epistle, which bears that name, and was the brother of James, with whom he is coupled: he was called Lebbaeus, either from the town of Lebba, a sea coast town of Galilee, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks; or from the Hebrew word **ybl**, “my heart”, as others, either for his prudence, or through the affections of his parents to him; as the Latins call one they love, “meum corculum”, “my little heart”; or from **aybl**, “a lion”, that being the motto of the tribe of Judah. His surname Thaddaeus, is thought by some to be a deflexion of Jude; or Judas, and as coming from the same root, **hdy**, which signifies “to praise”, or “give thanks”; or from the Syriac word, **dt**, “a breast”, and may be so called for the same reason as he was Lebbaeus. Frequent mention is made of this name, **aydt**, “Thaddai”, or “Thaddaeus”, among the Talmudic <sup>f603</sup> doctors. The Jews themselves speak <sup>f604</sup> of one **hdwt**, “Thodah”, as a disciple of Jesus, by whom no doubt they mean this same disciple. Eusebius <sup>f605</sup> mentions one Thaddaeus, as one of the seventy disciples, who was sent to Agbarus, king of Edessa, who was healed and converted by him. This Agbarus is reported to have wrote a letter to Jesus Christ, desiring him to come and cure him of his disease; to which Christ is said to return an answer, promising to send one of his disciples, who should do it; and that accordingly, after Christ’s death, Thomas sent this Thaddaeus to him.

**Ver. 4.** *Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot*, etc.] This is the last couple, for they are all mentioned by pairs, because they were sent forth “by two and two”, as the Evangelist Mark says, (<sup><4067></sup>Mark 6:7). The former of these is called Simon the Canaanite, to distinguish him from Simon Peter, before mentioned; not that he was a Canaanite, that is, an inhabitant

of the land of Canaan, a man of Canaan, as a certain woman is called a woman of Canaan, (<sup><4152></sup>Matthew 15:22) for all the disciples of Christ were Jews; though in Munster's Hebrew Gospel he is called *yn[nkh w[mç*, "Simeon the Canaanite", or of Canaan, as if he belonged to that country; nor is he so called from Cana of Galilee, as Jerorm and others have thought; but he was one of the *μυανq*, "Kanaim", or "Zealots"; and therefore Luke styles him, "Simon called Zelotes", (<sup><4185></sup>Luke 6:15 <sup><4013></sup>Acts 1:13). The Kanaites, or Zelotes, were a set of men, who, in imitation of Phinehas, who slew Zimri and Cozbi in the very act of uncleanness, when they found any persons in the act of adultery, idolatry, blasphemy, or theft, would immediately kill them without any more ado: this they did, from a pretended zeal for the honour and glory of God: nor were they accountable to any court of judicature for it; yea, such an action was highly applauded, as a very laudable one <sup>f606</sup>: under this specious name of Zealots, innumerable murders, and most horrible wickedness were committed, both before, and during the siege of Jerusalem, as Josephus <sup>f607</sup> relates. Now Simon was one of this sect before his conversion, and still retained the name afterwards. Judas, the last of the twelve, is called Iscariot; concerning which name, the notation of it, and the reason of his being so called, many are the conjectures of learned men: some think that he belonged to the tribe of Issachar, and that he is called from thence, *rkççy çya*, "a man of Issachar", as a certain man is, in (<sup><0700></sup>Judges 10:1) others, that he takes his name from the place he belonged to, and that he was called *twyrq çya*, "a man of Kerioth". A place of this name is mentioned, (<sup><0652></sup>Joshua 15:25) and some manuscripts and copies in some places read Judas *απο Καρυωτου*, of "Caryot". Caryota is said <sup>f608</sup> to be a plain of the city of Jericho, about eighteen miles from Jerusalem, which abounded in palm trees, called *yj yyrwq*, "Caryotae", of which mention is made in the <sup>f609</sup> Talmud, and other writers <sup>f610</sup>. Others think he is so called, from the Syriac word, *aj wyrks*, "secariota", which signifies a "purse", or bag, because he carried the bag. Some copies read it, *σκαριωτες*, "scariotes": others are of opinion, that he is so called, from the manner of death he died, which was strangling: for *arksa*, "ascara", a word often used in the <sup>f611</sup> Talmudic writings, signifies "strangling"; and is accounted by the Jews the hardest of deaths, and an evil one; and which seems to bid fair for the true reason of his name: however, it is mentioned here, as elsewhere, to distinguish him from Jude, or Judas, the true and faithful apostle of Christ; for this was he,

*who also betrayed him*; that is, Christ, as the Persic version reads it; and which is mentioned, not only for further distinction's sake, but to his great reproach. We learn from hence, that in the purest society on earth there has been an impure person; nor can it therefore be expected it should be otherwise in the best of churches, in the present state of imperfection; yea, that a man may have the highest gifts and attainments, as Judas had, ministerial gifts, and power of performing miracles, and yet be a vile person.

**Ver. 5.** *These twelve Jesus sent forth*, etc.] And no other but them, under the character of apostles. These had been with him a considerable time, to whom he had been gradually communicating spiritual knowledge; and by the benefit of private conference with him, and the observation they had made upon his doctrine and conduct, were greatly qualified for public usefulness: wherefore he gives them a commission, furnishes them with power and authority; and sends them forth from him by pairs, that they might be assisting to one another, and bear a joint testimony to the Gospel they preached; but before he sent them forth from his presence, he gave them some directions where they should go, and to whom they should minister, and where not:

*and he commanded them*, as their Lord and Master; he gave them strict orders, which he expected them to comply with, and closely enjoined them, as they must answer it to him again,

*saying, go not into the way of the Gentiles*; meaning, not the customs' and manners of the Heathens, they were to avoid; but that they were not to steer their course, or take their journey towards them: they were not, as yet, to go among them, and preach the Gospel to them; the calling of the Gentiles was not a matter, as yet, so clearly revealed and known, nor was the time of their calling come: besides it was the will of God, that the Gospel should be first preached to the Jews, to take off all excuse from them, and that their obstinacy and perverseness in rejecting Jesus as the Messiah, might manifestly appear; and since Christ himself was the minister of the circumcision, he would have his apostles, for the present, whilst he was on earth, act agreeably to the character he bore, that there might be an entire harmony in their conduct.

*And into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not*: the word "any" is supplied, and that very rightly; for, not the city of Samaria, the metropolis of that country, as the Arabic version reads it, is only meant, but any, and

every city of the Samaritans: not that it was strictly unlawful and criminal to go thither; for he himself went into one of their cities, and so did his apostles, (~~400~~ John 4:4,5,8) (~~400~~ Luke 9:52) and after his death preached the Gospel there; but he judged it not proper and expedient at this time, and as yet, to do it; that is, not before their preaching it to the Jews; for there was a very great hatred subsisting between the Jews, and the Samaritans, insomuch that they had no conversation with each other in things civil or religious. The Samaritans, though they boasted of their descent from Jacob, were a mongrel sort of people, partly Jews, and partly Gentiles, a mixture of both; and therefore are distinguished from both and though they had, and held the law, and five books of Moses, yet corrupted them in many places, to serve their purpose, and countenance their religion, particularly their worshipping at Mount Gerizim; on which account they were looked upon by the Jews as apostates, idolaters, and even as Heathens <sup>f612</sup>, and are therefore here joined with them; and to shun giving offence to the Jews, seems to be the reason of this prohibition; *see Gill* “~~400~~ John 4:20”.

**Ver. 6.** *But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*] To whom he himself was sent, (~~400~~ Matthew 15:24). By “the house of Israel” is meant the whole Jewish nation; for though this phrase, when distinguished from the house of Judah, designs only the ten tribes; yet here it intends all the Jews, then living in the land of Judea, among whom there were some of all the tribes: and by “the lost sheep” of this house, are meant either all the people of the Jews in general, who were wandering, and were lost in error and sin, and to whom the external ministry of the Gospel came; or rather the elect of God among them, for whose sake particularly the apostles were sent unto them. These are called “sheep”, because they were chosen of God, and given to Christ to be redeemed, looked up, sought out, and saved by him; and “lost” ones, not only because lost in Adam, and by their own transgressions, so that neither they themselves, nor any mere creature, could save them from eternal ruin and destruction; but also, because they were made to go astray, and were lost through the negligence and errors of their pastors, the Scribes and Pharisees: and this character is the rather given of them, partly to reflect upon the characters of the shepherds of Israel: and partly to magnify the grace of God, in having regard to such ruined and miserable creatures; and also to excite the compassion and diligence of the apostles, to preach the Gospel to them: respect seems to be had to (~~400~~ Jeremiah 1:16).



**Ver. 7.** *And as ye go*, etc.] Through the cities of Judea, and the streets thereof, from one city to another, from place to place; for these were itinerant preachers, who were not to abide long in any place, but to move about, that the Gospel might be spread all over the land, and the lost sheep in every corner be sought out and found.

*Preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* This was to be the subject matter of their ministry, which they were to proclaim aloud in every place; and which is expressed in the same words with which John the Baptist, and Christ himself, began their ministry, (~~AND~~ Matthew 3:2 4:17) which shows the entire harmony, and strict agreement, there were between them: for the meaning of the phrase; *see Gill* "~~AND~~ Matthew 3:2". The Cambridge copy reads, "repent, for the kingdom", etc.

**Ver. 8.** *Heal the sick*, etc.] For so he had given them power to do, and this both for the confirmation of their doctrine, and the recommendation of them to men; for nothing could more evidently prove their mission to be divine, and their doctrine from heaven, or be more acceptable to men, than to "heal" their "sick" friends and relations, who were given up by physicians, and incurable by the art of man; and to do this without the use of medicines, either by a word speaking, or by laying on of their hands, or by anointing with oil, joined with prayer; and particularly to

*cleanse the lepers*, of which there were many in Israel, who otherwise could not get rid of that disorder, and by the law were deprived of many privileges, and advantages, which others enjoyed: and especially to

*raise the dead*, which had never been done before the times of Christ, since the days of Elijah and Elisha; and which must be allowed by all men to be more than human, and to require the arm of almighty power: and lastly, to

*cast out devils*, the sworn enemies of mankind, and who had taken possession of the bodies, as well as souls of multitudes in the Jewish nation; all which they are ordered to do, without taking any thing of the people, for so doing:

*freely ye have received, freely give*; which refers both to the working of miracles, and preaching of the Gospel. As they had these miraculous gifts freely imparted to them by Christ, they had them not of themselves, nor did they procure them at any charge, or expense of their's, or purchase them with their money, as Simon Magus impiously proposed to the apostles; so they were freely to make use of these wonderful powers, they were





*in your purses*: or, as it may be rendered, “in”, or “within your girdles”; in which travellers, among the Jews, used to carry their money; and who, in their travelling dress, might not go into the temple, and are thus described <sup>f614</sup>;

“a man may not go into the mountain of the house with his staff, or with his shoes on, nor **wtdnwpb**, “with his girdle”.”

The **adnwp** “phunda”, Maimonides says <sup>f615</sup>, is an inner garment, wore to keep off sweat from other garments, to which were sewed hollow things like purses, in which a man put what he pleased; though other <sup>f616</sup> interpreters say it is **tw[m wb ^yntwnç lwl j rwza**, “a hollow girdle, in which they put their money”: and so the Romans <sup>f617</sup> had used to do; and so do the Turks <sup>f618</sup> to this day; to which practice the allusion is here.

**Ver. 10.** *Nor scrip for your journey*, etc.] This the Jews call **lymrt**, “tarmil”: and which their commentators <sup>f619</sup> say, is a large leathern bag, in which shepherds and travellers put their food, and other things, and carried with them, hanging it about their necks; so that the disciples were neither to carry money with them, nor any provisions for their journey:

*neither two coats*; one to travel in, and another to put on, when they came to their quarters: they were not allowed change of raiment; either because superfluous, or too magnificent to appear in, or too troublesome to carry:

*nor shoes*, only sandals, as Mark says; for there was a difference between shoes and sandals, as appears from the case of the plucking off the shoe, when a man refused his brother’s wife <sup>f620</sup>: if the “shoe” was plucked off it was regarded; but if the “sandal”, it was not minded: this was the old tradition, though custom went against it. Sandals were made of harder leather than shoes <sup>f621</sup>, and sometimes of wood covered with leather, and stuck with nails, to make them more durable <sup>f622</sup>; though sometimes of bulrushes, and bark of palm trees, and of cork <sup>f623</sup>, which were light to walk with.

“Says R. Bar bar Chanah <sup>f624</sup>, I saw R. Eleazar of Nineveh go out on a fast day of the congregation, **μ[ç l dnsb**, “with a sandal of cork”.”

Of what sort these were, the disciples were allowed to travel with, is not certain:

*nor yet with staves*: that is, with more than one staff, which was sufficient to assist them, and lean upon in journeying: for, according to Mark, one was allowed; as though they might take a travelling staff, yet not staves for defence, or to fight with; (see ~~1065~~ Matthew 26:55). Now these several things were forbidden them, partly because they would be burdensome to them in travelling; and partly because they were not to be out any long time, but were quickly to return again; and chiefly to teach them to live and depend upon divine providence. Now, since they were to take neither money, nor provisions with them, and were also to preach the Gospel freely, they might reasonably ask how they should be provided for, and supported: when our Lord suggests, that they should not be anxiously concerned about that, he would take care that they had a suitable supply; and would so influence and dispose the minds of such, to whom they should minister, as that they should have all necessary provisions made for them, without any care or expense of their's:

*for the workman is worthy of his meat*; which seems to be a proverbial expression, and by which Christ intimates, that they were workmen, or labourers in his vineyard, and they, discharging their duty aright, were entitled to food and raiment, and all the necessaries of life: this to have, was their due; and it was but a piece of justice to give it to them, and on which they might depend. So that this whole context is so far from militating against a minister's maintenance by the people, that it most strongly establishes it; for if the apostles were not to take any money or provisions with them, to support themselves with, it clearly follows, that it was the will of Christ, that they should live by the Gospel, upon those to whom they preached, as the following words show: and though they were not to make gain of the Gospel, or preach it for filthy lucre's sake; yet they might expect a comfortable subsistence, at the charge of the people, to whom they ministered, and which was their duty to provide for them.

**Ver. 11.** *And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter*, etc.] As Christ had instructed them in what manner they were to travel, so he directs them where to go, and who to ask for, and take up their abode with, in the several towns and villages to which they should come; that as soon as they had entered any town or village, they should, in the first place,

*inquire, who in it is worthy*; not of them, as the Arabic version reads, nor of the Gospel they preached, or of the grace of God, of which no man is worthy: and besides, who could answer to such a question when asked?

Who in any town, or city, could tell who in it were worthy of Christ, of his Gospel, and ministers, to which they were all equally strangers before they came among them? Nor does it mean a man famous for piety and religion, or one that feared God, and was a worshipper of him, but an hospitable man; one that was very liberal; who was willing and ready to entertain strangers; for such a man they would want, having neither money nor food: and so the same word, in the Hebrew language, signifies “to be worthy”, and “to give alms”, because an eleemosynary man, or a man given to alms, was reckoned by the Jews a very worthy man: they thought giving of alms to be a matter of merit. Christ here speaks in the language of the masters of Israel; take an instance or two:

“saith R. Jona, blessed is the man that giveth to the poor; it is not written so, but “blessed is he that considereth the poor”: he looks upon him, how he may **wm [ twkzl** , “give alms to him”.”

And a little after,

““God hath set one against the other”, that when evil comes to thy friend, thou mayest see how **wb twkzl** , “to do thine alms to him”, and nourish him, so that thou mayest receive the gift of its reward.”

Again, so a man says to his neighbour, **yb ykz**, “give alms unto me”: and afterwards, in the same place, it is said, **at tyā ayhnb ykz**, “give alms unto that woman”<sup>f625</sup>. Now, it was such a worthy generous man, that was beneficent to the poor, and kind to strangers, that the apostles were to inquire out, wherever they came; and having found such a person, they were to continue with him:

*and there abide till ye go out*; of that city or town, to another city or town: for to be often changing houses would bring upon them an ill character, as if they were difficult to be pleased, not content with the provision made for them; and would look as if they sought to serve their own bellies, and gratify their appetites, more than to do good to the souls of men; and besides, moving from the house of a bountiful man, might bring some reproach upon his character, as if he had not used them well, and therefore left him. In short, Christ’s meaning is, that he would not have his disciples be difficult, and dainty, or fickle, and inconstant, but be content with such things they should have provided for them; and not seek for other, and better quarters, nor fear being troublesome where they were.

**Ver. 12.** *And when ye come into an house*, etc.] Or the “house”; that is, the house of an hospitable man, when, upon inquiry, found out:

*salute it*; meaning the inhabitants of it; or, as the Persic version reads, those of the household, especially the master of the family. Some copies add, saying, peace be to this house, as in (<sup>2015</sup>Luke 10:5) and so read the Vulgate Latin, and Munster’s Hebrew Gospel; and is a very just, and proper explanation of saluting: for the usual form of salutation among the Jews was in such words; of which (see Gill on “<sup>4157</sup>Matthew 5:47”) by which is meant all kind of happiness, and prosperity, temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

**Ver. 13.** *And if the house be worthy*, etc.] If the family, and particularly the master of it, appeared to be civil, courteous, friendly, and hospitable, upon such a salutation, and ready to receive and embrace them, and provide for them,

*let your peace come upon it, or it shall come upon it*; the imperative for the future, which is not unusual; and so read the Syriac and Vulgate Latin. The sense is, the peace the apostles wished for, in their form of salutation, should come, and abide on the family; for not the Gospel of peace, and the preaching of it, are here meant, but the salutation itself, or the things desired in it, which should be granted, and the house be blessed for their sake, and as a reward of their generosity, and hospitality:

*but if it be not worthy*: does not prove to be what it was said to be, and they expected; namely, to be generous, liberal, and beneficent; but, on the contrary, uncivil and churlish, should neglect their salutation, discover an unwillingness to receive them, and turn their backs upon them:

*let your peace return to you*, or “it shall return to you”; the happiness wished for shall not come upon them, and the prayers and good wishes of the apostles shall be void, and of none effect, with respect to that family, but should be made good to themselves; and they should be directed to another house, where they should find persons more generous and free to entertain them.

**Ver. 14.** *And whosoever shall not receive you*, etc.] Into their houses, and refuse to entertain them and provide for them in a friendly manner;

*nor hear your words*, slight their salutations, make no account of, but despise their good wishes for their welfare; and also treat with contempt

the doctrines of the Gospel preached by them; and either would not attend on their ministry, or if they did, give no credit to what they should say, but deride and reject them.

*When ye depart out of that house, or city;* to another house, or to another city, being obliged to remove, through their contemptuous rejection of them:

*shake off the dust of your feet.* So Paul and Barnabas did at Antioch in Pisidia, when the Jews contradicted and blasphemed the Gospel preached by them, raised a persecution against them, and expelled them out of their coasts, (<sup><4151></sup>Acts 13:51) which ceremony was ordered by Christ to be observed even to the cities of Judea, that should despise and reject the ministry of his apostles; and that either to show that they did not come to them with worldly views, with any design to amass riches and wealth to themselves, for they would not so much as carry away with them the dust on their feet, but it was purely with a view to their welfare, both spiritual and temporal; or to testify that they had been among them, and that that very dust they shook off their feet would rise up in judgment against them, and declare that the Gospel had been preached among them, and they had rejected it, which will be an aggravation of their condemnation; or rather to observe to them, that such was their wickedness, that even the dust of their country was infected thereby, and therefore they shook it off, as though it defiled them, as the dust of an Heathen country was thought by the Jews to do; so that by this action they signified that they would have nothing more to do with them, or say to them, and that they looked upon them as impure and unholy, as any Heathen city or country. There seems to be an allusion to some maxims and customs of the Jews, with respect to the dust of Heathen countries.

“On account of six doubts, they say<sup>f626</sup>, they burn the first offering, for a doubt of a field in which a grave might be, and for a doubt pym[ h ðam abh rp[, “of the dust which comes from the land of the Gentiles”, etc.”

On which Bartenora has this note;

“all dust which comes from the land of the Gentiles, is reckoned by us as the rottenness of a dead carcass; and of these two, “the land of the Gentiles”, and a field in which is a grave, it is decreed that they “defile” by touching, and by carrying.”

Again <sup>f627</sup>,

“the dust of a field in which is a grave, and the dust without the land (of Israel) which comes along with an herb, are unclean.”

Upon which Maimonides makes this remark,

“that the dust of a field that has a grave in it, and the dust which is without the land of Israel, defile by touching and carrying; or if, when it hangs at the end of an herb, when they root it out of the dust of such a field, it is unclean.”

Hence they would not suffer herbs to be brought out of an Heathen country into the land of Israel, lest dust should be brought along with them.

“A Misnic doctor teaches <sup>f628</sup>, that they do not bring herbs from without the land (of Israel into it), but our Rabbins permit it; what difference is there between them? Says R. Jeremiah, they take care of their dust; that is the difference between them.”

On that clause, “they take care of their dust”, the gloss is,

“lest there should be brought with it  $\mu\text{ym}[\text{h } \text{Ba } \text{Cwgm}$ , “any of the dust of the land of the Gentiles”, which defiles in the tent, and pollutes the purity of the land of Israel.”

**Ver. 15.** *Verily, I say unto you*, etc.] This was not all the punishment that should be inflicted on such despisers of the Gospel of Christ, and the ministers of it; as not to enjoy that peace and prosperity wished for by the apostles, and to be declared to be on an equal foot with Heathen cities and countries: but they were to suffer everlasting punishment in the world to come; which is here asserted by Christ in the strongest manner, saying:

*it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha, in the day of judgment, than for that city.* The inhabitants of the land of Sodom and Gomorrha are the rather mentioned, because, as they were very notorious and abominable sinners, so their temporal punishment was well known, exemplary and awful, though not that, but their future damnation is here regarded, of which the Jews made no doubt; for they say <sup>f629</sup>,

“the men of Sodom have no part in the world to come; as it is said, (<sup>0133</sup>Genesis 13:13) “the men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners,



before the Lord exceedingly”: they were “wicked” in this world, and “sinners” in the world to come;”

meaning, that by this passage is designed their double punishment in this, and the other world. But though their punishment was very tremendous, and they will suffer also “the vengeance of eternal fire”, as Jude says; yet, their punishment will be milder, and more tolerable, than that of the inhabitants of such a city, that rejects the Gospel of the grace of God: as there are degrees in sinning, for all sins are not alike, as the Stoics say; so there will be degrees in suffering; the sins of those that are favoured with the Gospel, are greater than those who only have had the light of nature, and so their torments will be greater. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha, though they sinned against the light of nature, despised the advice and admonitions of Lot, and ill treated the angels, yet will be more mildly punished than the wicked Jews, who rejected Christ, and his Gospel, and despised his apostles, and ministers; because they sinned not against so much light, and such means of grace, and knowledge, as these did; (see <sup>2306</sup>Lamentations 4:6) which is thus paraphrased by the Targumist, and may be aptly applied to the Jews in Christ’s time:

“the sin of the congregation of my people is greater than the sin of Sodom, which was overturned in a moment; and there dwelt no prophets in it to prophesy, and turn it to repentance.”

The time referred to, signified by “the day of judgment”, respects not the destruction of Jerusalem, which was a very severe judgment on that people, but the general judgment, at the end of the world, which is appointed and fixed by God, though unknown to angels and men. The phrase is Jewish, and often to be met with in their writings, who use it in the same sense; particularly in the book of Zohar <sup>f630</sup>, mention is made of *anydd amwy*, “the day of judgment”, when there will be no pollution in the sanctuary.

**Ver. 16.** *Behold, I send you forth, as sheep among wolves*, etc.] This, and the following verses, chiefly respect the troubles, afflictions, persecutions, and sufferings which should befall the apostles after the death and resurrection of Christ; when their commission was enlarged, and they afresh sent out by Christ to preach his Gospel; of which he gives a faithful account before hand, that they might be prepared for them, and not be surprised when they came upon them. He compares them to “sheep”,

because they were meek and humble in their spirits, harmless, and inoffensive, in their lives and conversations; were weak, and unable to protect themselves, and were sent out by him unarmed and defenceless; and their oppressors and persecutors to “wolves”, because fierce and furious, voracious and ravenous, cruel and hurtful, as these creatures are, especially to sheep; wherefore Christ gives them this wholesome advice,

*be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.* Much such an expression as this God is represented as saying of Israel <sup>f631</sup>:

“Says R. Judah, in the name of R. Simon, the holy blessed God said, concerning Israel, with me they are **μῦνwyk μῦmymt**, “harmless as doves”; but among the nations of the world, they are **μyϙj nk μymwr** [ , “subtle as serpents”.”

The serpent is a very sharp sighted, cunning creature, and uses various arts and stratagems for its own preservation, and especially of its head; and is so far to be imitated by the followers of Christ, as to make use of all proper methods to preserve themselves from the insults and rage of men, and not expose themselves to unnecessary dangers: and, as much as in them lies, they should be careful to give no just occasion of offence, or irritate, and provoke them to use them ill, and to avoid all snares and traps that are laid for them; and, at the same time, maintain the innocence and harmlessness of the dove, being free from all wicked cunning and craftiness, without rancour, malice, and wrath; not meditating and seeking revenge, but meek and humble in their deportment, leading inoffensive lives, and proceeding in the course of their calling, though liable to many insults, and much oppression.

**Ver. 17.** *But beware of men,* etc.] Of these men, comparable to wolves, before spoken of: the phrase is somewhat uncommon and emphatical, and designs not merely wicked men in common, the men of the world, and enemies of the Gospel; but chiefly such of them as were men of note and authority, ecclesiastical and civil governors of the people, the Scribes, Pharisees, elders, and chief priests, and other rulers; and the advice to the apostles is, to take care how they came into their company, and put themselves into their hands; who would seek all opportunities and occasions against them, and use their power and interest to do them hurt:

*for they will deliver you up to the councils,* or sanhedrim, of which there were three sorts; the greater, which consisted of seventy one persons, and

was only held in Jerusalem; the lesser one, which was made up of twenty three members, and was kept in every place where there were an hundred and twenty Israelites; and the third, where there was not that number, and was a triumvirate, or a bench of three judges only <sup>f632</sup>.

*And they will scourge you in their synagogues*; where the triumvirate, or bench of three Judges kept their court; under whose cognizance were pecuniary judgments, and such as related to thefts, damages, restitutions, ravishing, and enticing of virgins, and defamation; also to plucking off of the shoe, and refusing a brother's wife, to the plant of the fourth year, second tithes whose price is unknown, holy things, and the estimations of goods; to these belonged also laying on of hands, the beheading of the heifer, and, among the rest, **hçl çb twkm**, "scourging was by the bench of three" <sup>f633</sup>. The manner of performing it was this <sup>f634</sup>:

"they bind both his hands to a pillar, here and there; and the minister of the synagogue takes hold of his clothes, and if they are rent, they are rent; and if they are ripped in the seam, they are ripped till his breast is uncovered; for he is not to beat him on his clothes, as it is said, "he shall beat him", but not his clothes: and a stone is placed behind him, on which the minister that scourges stands, and a white leather whip in his hand, doubled two and two with four, and two lashes of an ass's hide, going up and down: the breadth of the whip was an hand's breadth, and the length of it, so as to reach to the navel, and the handle of the whip, by which he took hold, was the length of an hand; and he lifts up the whip with both his hands, and strikes with one hand, with all his might; and gives him the third part of his stripes before, upon his breast, between his paps, and two thirds behind him; one third upon this shoulder, and the other upon the other shoulder. He that scourges neither stands, nor sits, but bows; as it is said, "the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face"; for the eyes of the judge shall be upon him, that he do not look upon anything else, and smite him from thence; for no two strokes are as one; the greatest of the judges reads all the time he is scourging, viz. these passages; "if thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law", etc. and "the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful", etc. and he intends to finish the verses with the stripes; but if he does not finish, he returns to the beginning of the Scripture, and reads, and returns, and reads until the whole scourging is over: and the

second of the judges numbers the stripes; and the third says to the minister strike: every time he strikes, it is at his orders he strikes.”

Now, as this punishment was inflicted by the chazan, or minister of the synagogue, who was a sort of sexton, so it was done in the synagogue itself: and according to our Lord’s predictions here, and in (<sup>4134</sup>Matthew 23:34) as the former of these, delivering up to councils, had its accomplishment in part, in the apostles, (<sup>4400</sup>Acts 4:1-5:42) so the latter, scourging in their synagogues, was fulfilled both by Paul, (<sup>4429</sup>Acts 22:19,26:11) and upon him, (<sup>47124</sup>2 Corinthians 11:24). Epiphanius tells <sup>f635</sup> us of one Joseph, a Jew, who was caught by the Jews reading the Gospels in his own house; upon which they dragged him away, and had him to the synagogue, and there “scourged” him. Now as these things did not befall the apostles till after the death of Christ, it is clear that the context refers not to their first, but to an after mission.

**Ver. 18.** *And ye shall be brought before governors*, etc.] Meaning Roman governors; so Paul was had before Gallio, Felix, and Festas; for judgments relating to life and death were to be taken away, and were taken away from the Jewish sanhedrim; and as they themselves say <sup>f636</sup>, forty years before the destruction of the second temple, which was much about the time of Christ’s death: so that what power they had, was only with regard to lesser matters, and to inflict lesser punishments, as beating and scourging: if they sought to take away life, they were obliged to bring the cause before the governors of the Roman provinces, who are here intended:

*and kings for my sake*; as Herod, Agrippa, Nero, Domitian, and others, before whom one or other of the apostles were brought; not as thieves, or murderers, or traitors, and seditious persons, or for having done any wrong or injury to any man’s person or property; but purely for the sake of Christ, for the profession of their faith in him, and for preaching his Gospel; of all which they had no reason to be ashamed, nor were they:

*for a testimony against*, or “to”

*them, and the Gentiles*; that is, that thereby they might have an opportunity of bearing a testimony to the truths of the Gospel, which would be either to the conviction and conversion of many Gentiles, as well as Jews; or would be a testimony which would stand against them another day, both against the Jews, who charged, and accused them, and brought them before the Heathen kings and governors, to punish them with death; and against those

Gentile magistrates, and others, who should join with them in rejecting the Gospel, and putting them to death for preaching it: so that they should have no pretext or excuse; since the Gospel had been faithfully and clearly preached to them, and they had despised it, and evil treated the ministers of it. This confirms what is before observed, that this passage refers to an after mission.

**Ver. 19.** *But when they deliver you up*, etc.] The apostles hearing that they should be delivered up to councils, and brought before governors and kings, might be under some concern how they should behave, and what they should be able to say in vindication of themselves and truth, before such great persons; they not being used to converse with men in such high stations: they were illiterate men, and of no elocution; men of mean birth, low life, most of them poor fishermen; and might fear, on these accounts, that the Gospel would suffer for want of able persons to defend it before the great ones of the earth. Now, in order to remove these their fears and objections, and to strengthen and comfort their minds, our Lord bids them, when this would be their ease, that the Jews would deliver them to the Roman magistrates, to

*take no thought how, or what ye shall speak*; not to be anxiously concerned, neither as to the matter, or manner of what they should say in their defence: they should have no occasion, as orators do, to take pains, and rack their thoughts, to prepare a studied, elaborate oration, dressed with all the flowers of rhetoric, filled with the most moving and powerful arguments, and clothed with diction of the strictest propriety and elegance; for they should want neither words, nor things; they should have arguments put into their mouths, and helped to proper language to express them in:

*for it shall be given you in the same hour, what ye shall speak*; immediate assistance should be afforded them either by his father, or himself; or rather, the blessed Spirit, who would suggest unto them, at once, things, the most proper to be said, and help them to deliver them in the most proper manner: and these are the most convincing arguments, and that the best elocution, which the Spirit of God helps men to; these vastly exceed all the art of men, and strength of nature. This was greatly verified in Peter and John, two poor fishermen, when before the council, and in Stephen the protomartyr.

**Ver. 20.** *For it is not ye that speak*, etc.] Not but that they were to speak the words, and did; but then both the things they spoke, and the very

words in which they spoke them, were not of themselves, but were suggested and dictated by the Spirit of God; for as “the preparation of the heart” in them, so “the answer of the tongue” by them, were both “from the Lord”: the Spirit, he was the efficient cause, they were only instruments; for not they of themselves spoke; or not so much they,

*but the Spirit of your father, which speaketh in you*, or “by you”: what they should say was not to be dictated by their own spirit or natural understanding, nor by an angel, but by the Spirit of God; called the “Spirit of” their “father”, because he proceeds from him, is of the same nature with him, and is the reason of his being given to them: and this character of him might serve to strengthen their faith in the expectation of him, and in the assistance promised, and to be had by him; since he was the spirit of him, who stood in the relation of a father to them, and bore a paternal affection for them.

**Ver. 21.** *And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death*, etc.] Christ having fortified the minds of his disciples by the foregoing promises of divine influence and assistance, proceeds to open more largely and particularly the sorrows, troubles, and afflictions they must expect would attend the faithful ministration of his Gospel; as, that the true followers of Christ should not only be persecuted and betrayed, and delivered up into the hands of the civil magistrate, by persons that were strangers to them; but even by their nearest relations, brethren, whom the nearness of blood, should oblige to the tenderest regards to each other, to the securing of property and preserving of life: these should deliver up those that were so nearly related to them in the bonds of consanguinity, into the hands persecuting men in power, in order to be put to death; than which scarce anything can be more barbarous and unnatural, though the next instances exceed it:

*and the father the child, and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.* The father laying aside his natural affection for his child, whom he has begotten, and brought up, and has took so much care of, and delight in, and perhaps his only one, his son and heir; and yet, professing a faith different from his, such is his blind zeal and bigotry, that, breaking through all the ties of parental relation and affection, he delivers him up into the hands of wicked magistrates, to put him to death: and, on the other hand, children, forgetting the bonds they are in, and the obligations they lie under to their aged parents, rise up

against them, and either with their own hands murder them, or appear as witnesses against them, and give their hearty consent to the taking away of their lives; even of them who have been the means and instruments of bringing them into the world, and of bringing them up in it. This shows the sad corruption of human nature, its enmity to the Gospel of Christ, and the inveterate malice and hatred of Satan against Christ, and his interest. Something like this is said by the Jews themselves, as what shall be in the times of the Messiah; for a little before his coming, or in the age in which the son of David comes, they say,

“the son shall deal basely by his father, the daughter shall rise up against her mother — a man’s enemies shall be of his own household; the face of that generation shall be as the face of a dog; and the son shall not reverence his father<sup>f637</sup>.”

**Ver. 22.** *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake*, etc.]. This is more particularly directed to the apostles themselves, as what is said before regards the followers of Christ in general; for this was to be the lot of the apostles, that they should not only be ill treated in common with others, by their near friends and relations, whose love would be turned into hatred to them, but should be the butt and mark of the malice and wrath of all men; that is, of most men, or of the far greater part of the Jews, even of all wicked men who disbelieved and rejected the Messiah: for that the words are not to be understood in the utmost latitude, without any restriction, is certain; since there would be some who would be converted; and believe in Christ through their ministry, and consequently would love, esteem, and honour them as their spiritual fathers and guides, and as the disciples and apostles of Christ. This hatred they should be exposed to, would not be on account of any ill will to their persons; or because of any evil or immorality committed by them; but purely, and alone, for the name of Christ, in whom they believed, by which they were called, of which they made a profession, and zealously preached: which consideration, as it must needs secure peace and tranquillity in their breasts; so for their further encouragement, it is added,

*but he that endureth to the end, shall be saved*: which words suggest, that the tribulations and persecutions of the disciples of Christ, through the hatred of wicked men against them, shall not last always; there will be an end to them; respecting either the end of time and life, or the destruction of Jerusalem, when these their enemies would be cut off, or removed, and be



capable of giving them no further trouble; and that such persons are happy, who patiently endure the hatred of men, and all manner of persecution, for Christ's sake; who are not moved by the afflictions they suffer, but stand fast in the faith, hold fast the profession of it, go on in their Christian course, and hold out to the end; for such shall be saved, not only with a temporal salvation, as the Christians were at the destruction of Jerusalem, but with an eternal one.

**Ver. 23.** *But when they persecute you in this city*, etc.] Or any city into which they went, and preached the Gospel; and would not suffer them to go on in their work, they were not to desist, but to go elsewhere, where they might hope for a better reception, and a longer continuance, and so of doing more good:

*flee ye into another*; not so much for their own safety, though this, according to the circumstances of things, is lawful, but for the further spreading of the Gospel. The exhortation is not to take methods to avoid persecution, or to make an escape from it, but to perseverance under it: the sense is, they were not to be discouraged, and to leave off, because of persecution in one place, but to persist in the ministration of the Gospel, by carrying it to other cities; and it seems to be a spur to them to make haste, and fulfil their office of preaching the Gospel, in the land of Judea: nor need they fear going on too fast, lest they should have no places to preach in;

*for verily I say unto you*, this is a certain and indisputable truth not to be called in question, being strongly affirmed by truth itself,

*ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel*, or “finished” them; that is, their tour through them, and their ministry, or the preaching of the Gospel in them,

*till the son of man be come*; which is not to be understood of his second coming to judgment, but either of his resurrection from the dead, when he was declared to be the Son of God, and when his glorification began; or of the pouring forth of the Spirit at the day of Pentecost, when his kingdom began more visibly to take place, and he was made, or manifested to be the Lord and Christ; or of his coming to take vengeance on his enemies, that would not have him to rule over them, and the persecutors of his ministers, at the destruction of Jerusalem.

**Ver. 24.** *The disciple is not above his master*, etc.] So far from it, that he is inferior to him; as in knowledge, so in reputation and character; and cannot expect the same honour to be given him, and the same respect shown to him, as to his master; and therefore if his master is not used with that decency, and in that becoming manner he ought to be, he must not think it any hardship if he is treated in the same way. Our Lord hereby intends to fortify the minds of his disciples against all the reproach and persecution they were to meet with from the world, by observing to them the treatment he himself met with; wherefore, if he who was their master, a teacher that came from God, and taught as never man did, and was worthy of the utmost deference that could be paid, was maligned and evilly treated by men, it became them who were his disciples, to look for, and patiently bear such indignities; since they could expect no better usage than he himself had: the same doctrine is suggested in the next clause,

*nor the servant above his Lord*; and both seem to be proverbial expressions. The Jews have a saying <sup>f638</sup> much like unto them, **wbrm hktz db[h `ya**, “no servant is worthier than his master”; and Christ might make use of such common, well known expressions, that he might be the more easily understood, and in the most familiar manner convey what he intended, into the minds of his disciples; as, that since he was their Lord, and they were his servants, if his superior character and dignity did not secure him from the obloquy and insults of men, it could not be thought by them, who were inferior to him, that they should escape them.

**Ver. 25.** *It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master*, etc.] A disciple should think himself very well off, be entirely satisfied, yea, abundantly thankful, if he meets with no worse treatment than his master; if he has the same honour done him his master has, this is more than could be expected by him; and if he has the same ill usage with his master, he need not wonder at it, but should solace himself with this consideration, that it is no other, nor worse than his master had before him: and the same is equally true in the other case,

*and the servant as his Lord*: these expressions, as before, were proverbs, or common sayings among the Jews, which our Lord chose to make use of, and adapt to his present purpose; **wbrk twyh l**, “vel” **ahyç db[ l wyd**, “it is enough for the servant, that he be as his master”, is a saying often to be met with in their writings <sup>f639</sup>; which our Lord applies, and reasons upon, in the following manner:

*if they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of the household?* By “the master of the household”; he means himself, who is master of the family both in heaven and in earth; who is son over his own house, the high priest over the house of God, the lord and governor of all the household of faith; who takes care of, provides for, and protects all that are of God’s household: and yet, though in such an high office, and of such great usefulness, he did not escape the severest lashes of the tongues of the wicked Jews; who called him by the most opprobrious names they could think of, and among the rest Beelzebub; (see <sup><1024></sup>Matthew 12:24) (<sup><1115></sup>Luke 11:15). This was the god of the Ekronites, (<sup><1100></sup>2 Kings 1:2). The word signifies “a masterfly” or the “lord of a fly”: and so the Septuagint there call him βααλ μυιαν, “Baal the fly”, the god of the Ekronites. And this idol was so called, either because it was in the form of a fly: or else from the abundance of flies about it, by reason of the sacrifices, which it was not able to drive away; and therefore the Jews contemptuously gave it this name. They observe <sup>f640</sup>, that in the temple, notwithstanding the multitude of sacrifices offered up there, there never was seen a fly in the slaughter house: or else this deity was so called from its being invoked to drive away flies, and the same with Myiodes, the god of flies, mentioned by Pliny <sup>f641</sup>, or Myagros, which the same author <sup>f642</sup> speaks of; so Jupiter was called απομυιος, a driver away of flies; as was also Hercules <sup>f643</sup>; and were worshipped by some nations on this account. In most copies, and so in the Arabic version, it is read Beelzebub; that is, as it is commonly rendered, the “lord of dung”, or a dunghill god; and it is generally thought the Jews called the god of the Ekronites so, by way of contempt; as it was usual with them to call an idol’s temple l w bz, “zebul”, “dung”, and worshipping of idols l bzm, “dunghill” <sup>f644</sup>: but I must own, that I should rather think, that as Beelsamin, the god of the Phoenicians, is the same with Beelzebub, the god of the Ekronites, so it signifies the same thing: now ymç l [ b, “Beelsamin”, is “the lord of the heavens”, and so is Beelzebub; for l w bz, “Zebul”, signifies “heaven”; so the word is used in (<sup><1111></sup>Habakkuk 3:11) “the sun and the moon stood still”, hl bz, “in their habitation”; by which, as a Jewish <sup>f645</sup> writer observes, ymçh wb wxrh, “is meant the heavens”; for they are the habitation of the sun and moon: see also (<sup><2315></sup>Isaiah 63:15) and so among the seven names of the heavens, reckoned up by them, this is accounted one <sup>f646</sup>. Now as the Jews looked upon all the deities of the Gentiles as demons, or devils; and since Beelzebub was the chief of them, they thought they could not fix upon a

more reproachful name, to give to Christ, than this: and our Lord suggests, that since the great master of the family was called in such an abusive manner, it should be no cause of stumbling and offence, if those of a lower class in the family should be so stigmatized; if Christians are called by ever such hard names, even devils, they should not be disturbed at it; since their lord and master was called the prince of them.

**Ver. 26.** *Fear them not, therefore,* etc.] That is, be not afraid of men, and of their reproaches and revilings; which our Lord intimates would do them no more hurt, than they did him, and which in a little while would be all wiped away: time would bring all things to light, when the wickedness of these men would be discovered, their evil designs seen through; which were now covered with the specious pretences of sanctity, and zeal for religion, and the glory of God; and the innocence and integrity of him and his disciples would be made manifest. There is no need to refer this to the great day of account, when every secret thing shall be brought to light; but it chiefly regards the times when the Gospel should be more publicly known, and embraced, and should prevail against all the opposition made unto it; and then all these reproachful names and characters would be seen plainly to arise from spite and malice: to which may be applied those proverbial sayings in common use,

*for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed, and hid, that shall not be known.* Men may cover their malice and wickedness, for a while, under the best of names, but ere long it will all be revealed to their great shame and reproach: the innocence of the followers of Christ may, for some time, lie out of sight, and they may be traduced as the worst of men; but in process of time things take another turn, and their characters appear in quite another light: and so it is with the Gospel preached and professed by them, which, though sometimes it is little known, lies hid, and is covered with disgrace; yet in the Lord's own time its light breaks forth, power attends it, and it is made manifest to the consciences of men.

**Ver. 27.** *What I tell you in darkness,* etc.] Hence Christ proceeds to encourage his disciples to an open, plain, and faithful ministration of the Gospel, not fearing the faces and frowns of men. For with respect to the Gospel, his meaning is, that what was hid and covered should not remain so, but should be revealed, and made known, and they were the persons who were to do it; and it was with that view that he had communicated it to them: and whereas he had told them it "in darkness"; not in a dark and

obscure manner; for though he spoke in parables to others, yet to them he made known the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven: and if at any time he delivered parables, or dark sayings, to them, he would afterwards, or when alone, explain them to them; but his meaning chiefly is, that what he communicated to them in private houses, when they were by themselves, and no one saw, or heard them, and so were in darkness with respect to others,

*that speak ye in light*; openly and publicly in the synagogues and temple, in the high places of the city, streets, or fields, wherever there is a concourse of people; hide and conceal nothing, but speak out all clearly, distinctly, fully, without the least reserve, or throwing any obscurity on it, which may cover the true sense of it from the view of the people.

*And what ye hear in the ear*, or is whispered to you by me, as your master. Christ alludes to the custom of the Jewish doctors, who had each an interpreter, into whose ear he used to whisper his doctrine, and then the interpreter delivered it to the people: so it is said <sup>f647</sup>,

“Rab came to the place of R. Shilla, and he had no speaker to stand by him; wherefore Rab stood by him, and explained.”

The gloss upon it is,

“an interpreter stands before a doctor whilst he is preaching, and the doctor װ ך װ , “whispers to him” in the Hebrew tongue, and he interprets it to the multitude in a tongue they understand.”

Again <sup>f648</sup>,

“they said to Judah bar Nachmani, the interpreter of Resh Lekish, stand for a speaker for him.”

The gloss upon it is,

“to cause his exposition to be heard by the congregation, אׁ ׁ ך װ ׁ ׁ ׁ , “which he shall whisper to thee”.”

Now it was absolutely requisite, that the speaker, or interpreter, should faithfully relate what the doctor said; sometimes, it seems, he did not: it is said <sup>f649</sup> in commendation of the meekness of R. Aba,

“that he delivered one sense, and his speaker said another, and he was not angry.”

The gloss says,

“his speaker was, he that interpreted to the multitude what he **wl** **çj wl** , “whispered to him” in the time of preaching.”

Sometimes one doctor is said to whisper in the ear of another, when he instructed him, or informed him of anything. R. Jochanan <sup>f650</sup> whispered R. Joshua **hyndwab**, “in his ear”. The Jews have a notion that the law was given this way; so they interpret “the eloquent orator” in (<sup><218B></sup>Isaiah 3:3) <sup>f651</sup> this is he to whom it is fit to deliver the words of the law, **çj l b hntynç**, “which was given by whispering”: and so, it seems, the Gospel was in like manner delivered by Christ to his disciples. It was reckoned a very great honour, and a token of magisterial dignity, to have one to whisper in the ear to, and speak for them. So to one that related his dream, that he saw an ass standing at his pillow, and braying, answer is made, thou shalt be a king, that is, the head of a school; and “a speaker” or “an interpreter shall stand by thee” <sup>f652</sup>. Our Lord very justly takes upon him the character of a doctor, master, and dictator, and solemnly charges his disciples, clearly, loudly, and faithfully to declare what he suggested to them.

*That preach ye*, says he,

*upon the housetops*; for the roofs of their houses were not ridged, but plain, and flat, upon which they could stand or walk; and battlements were made about them to prevent their falling off, according to the law in (<sup><628></sup>Deuteronomy 22:8). Here many religious actions were performed: here Peter went up to pray, (<sup><400></sup>Acts 10:9) and here persons sometimes sat and read: hence that passage in the Misna <sup>f653</sup> if any one **ggh çarb arwq**, “was reading on the top of a roof”, and the book is rolled out of his hand, etc. and sometimes they made their proclamations from hence of their festivals and solemn days, and particularly of their sabbath; which was done by the sound of a trumpet, that the people might cease from work in the fields, and shut up their shops in the city, and light up their lamps. This proclamation, by the sound of a trumpet, was made six times by the chazan, or minister of the congregation, from an housetop; and, it is said, that there was, **ry[h hbwgb dj wym gg**, “a peculiar roof in the highest part of the city”, and from the middle of it he blew the trumpet <sup>f654</sup>. In

allusion to this, our Lord orders his disciples to blow the trumpet of the everlasting Gospel; and loudly proclaim to all the truths and mysteries of grace, which he had made known to them.

**Ver. 28.** *And fear not them which kill the body*, etc.] This is a “periphrasis” of bloody persecutors, who, not content to revile, scourge, and imprison, put the faithful ministers of Christ to death, in the most cruel and torturing manner; and yet are not so to be feared and dreaded by them, as to discourage and divert them from the performance of their important work and office; for, as Luke says, (~~◀PRD▶~~ Luke 12:4) “after” that they “have no more than they can do”. This is all they are capable of doing, even by divine permission, when they are suffered to run the greatest lengths in violence against the saints; this is the utmost of their efforts, which Satan, and their own wicked hearts, can put them upon, or is in the power of their hands to perform: and the taking away of the lives of good men is of no disadvantage to them; but sends them the sooner out of this troublesome world to their father’s house, to partake of those joys that will never end; so that they have nothing to fear from their most implacable enemies; but should boldly and bravely go on in their master’s service, openly, freely, faithfully, and fully discharging the work they were called unto: for, the loss of a corporal life is no loss to them, their souls live after death, in eternal happiness; and in a little time God will raise up their bodies, and reunite them to their souls, and be for ever happy together. A noble argument this, which our Lord makes use of, to engage his disciples to a public and diligent ministration of the Gospel, in spite of all opposers; who, when they have vented all their malice, can only take away a poor, frail, mortal life; and which, if they did not, in a little time would cease in course:

*but are not able to kill the soul*; which is immortal, and cannot be touched by the sword, by fire and faggot, or any instruments of violence: it is immortal, it survives the body, and lives in a separate state, enjoying happiness and bliss, whilst the body is in a state of death:

*but rather fear him, which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.* This is a description of God, and of his power, who is able to do that which men are not: all that they can do, by divine permission, is to kill the body; but he is able to “destroy”, that is, to torment and punish both body and soul “in hell”, in everlasting burnings; for neither soul nor body will be annihilated; though this he is able to do. As the former clause expresses the immortality of the soul, this supposes the resurrection of the body; for how



otherwise should it be destroyed, or punished with the soul in hell? Now this awful being which is able to hurl, and will hurl all wicked and slothful, unfaithful and unprofitable, cowardly and temporising servants and ministers, soul and body, into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, is to be feared and dreaded; yea, indeed, he only is to be feared, and to be obeyed: cruel and persecuting men are not to be feared at all; God alone should be our fear and dread; though the argument seems to be formed from the lesser to the greater; yet this, is the sense of the word “rather”, that God is to be feared, not chiefly and principally only, but solely; and in some versions that word is left out, as in the Arabic, and Ethiopic, and in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel.

**Ver. 29.** *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?* etc.] A farthing, with the Jews, was a very small coin; according to them it contained four grains of silver <sup>f655</sup>; was the ninety sixth part of a “sela”, or shilling <sup>f656</sup>; and sometimes they make it to be of the same value with an Italian farthing: for they say <sup>f657</sup>, it is of the value of eight “prutahs”: and a “prutah” is the eighth part of an Italian farthing: it is used proverbially to signify a very little thing in the Misna <sup>f658</sup>;

“if of a command, which is light **rsyak** “as a farthing”, which Bartenora explains a “very little thing”, the law says, “that it may be well with thee”, much more of the weighty commands in the law.”

Hence, in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel, it is rendered by ׀ׁׂ ׁ ׃ [ׁׂ], “a little piece of money”; and this was the common price of two sparrows. Our Lord appeals to his disciples, for the truth of it, as a thing well known: according to the question in Luke, five sparrows were sold for two farthings, which makes them somewhat cheaper still. This shows they were of little account.

*And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father:* some copies add, “which is in heaven”; meaning, that one of them should not be shot, or be killed, without the knowledge, will, and pleasure of God. The design of Christ is to assert the doctrine of providence, as reaching to all creatures and things, even the most minute and worthless: he instances not in men, nor in the beasts of the field, but in the fowls of the air, and in those of the inferior sort, and more useless, in sparrows, yea in little sparrows; as the word may be rendered; whose price was so low, that two are obliged to be put together to fetch the least sum of money current: and

yet the providence of God is concerned with each of these; so that not one of them is taken in a snare, or killed with a stone, or shot flying, or sitting, but by the will of God: from whence it may be strongly concluded, that nothing comes by chance; that there is no such thing as contingency with respect to God, though there is to men, with respect to second causes; that all things are firmly ordained by the purpose of God, and are wisely ordered by his providence: and our Lord's further view is, from this consideration, to animate his disciples to a free, open, and constant preaching of his Gospel, not regarding their lives for his sake; for since their heavenly Father, in his providence, takes care of the meanest, even of the most irrational creatures, so that the life of one of them is not taken away without his will, much more will he take care of them; nor could their valuable lives be lost without his will and pleasure. Much such a way of arguing is used by the Jews, who <sup>f659</sup> say, *אִנֹּן רַב־לֵךְ לִי כְּאִדְּבַי אֶל אֵימָךְ יָד [I b m r w p x]*, "a bird without God does not perish, much less a man"; or, as it is elsewhere <sup>f660</sup> expressed,

"a bird "without God" is not hunted, or taken, how much less does the soul of a man go out of him?"

And again <sup>f661</sup>,

"a bird "without God" does not fly away, much less the soul of a man."

Two birds, or sparrows, as the word may be rendered, in (<sup><0844></sup>Leviticus 14:4) were used in cleansing the leper; one was killed, and the other let loose into the open field: and though it might be a contingent thing with men which was killed, and which preserved, yet not with God; and some think the allusion is here to that case.

**Ver. 30.** *But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.*] A proverbial expression, showing the perfect knowledge God has, and the exquisite care he takes, in providence, of all his creatures, particularly men, and especially his dear children and faithful ministers; as not a sparrow, so not a single hair of a man's head falls to the ground without the knowledge, and will of God: a way of speaking sometimes used to signify, that not the least hurt or damage should befall a person; (see <sup><0946></sup>1 Samuel 14:45; <sup><1041></sup>2 Samuel 14:11; <sup><4273></sup>Acts 27:34) and the phraseology of the text was in use, and very well known by the Jews; for so they represent God speaking <sup>f662</sup>;

“do not I number all the hairs of every creature?”

As our Lord applies this particularly to his disciples, his sense is, that they had no reason to be afraid of men, or fear anything that should befall them, for their bearing a faithful testimony to him; for, their valuable lives were under the special and peculiar care of divine providence; not only the days, months, and years of their lives were with God, and put down in his book of purposes and decrees, which could neither be shortened nor lengthened; and not only the more principal, and even all the members of their bodies were written in his book of providence, and a singular care taken of them; but even their very excrescences, the more minute parts, and which were of no great account with them, the “hairs” of their head”, even “all” of them, were not only known, but numbered”, taken account of; yea, the thing was done already, it was not to be done; a very strong way of setting forth the doctrine of divine providence: a doctrine which the Jews were not unacquainted with, who say <sup>f663</sup>;

“that the events of man, and accidents which come upon him,  
 μῦμϙ ydyb I kh, “are all by”, or “in the hands of God”;

and <sup>f664</sup> that

“nothing is by chance, but all things are **tnwkb**, “with design”;

or, as they elsewhere say <sup>f665</sup>,

“a man does not hurt his finger below, but they proclaim concerning it above;”

that is, as the gloss explains it, **wyl [ wrzg**, “it is decreed” concerning it: which comes very near to the phrase here used.

**Ver. 31.** *Fear ye not therefore*, etc.] Neither be afraid of men, nor distrust the providence of God; for if that reaches to the meanest of creatures, sparrows, and to that which is of the least account with men, the single hair of a man’s head; much more must it regard the lives of men, and still more such useful lives as those of the disciples were, who were called to, and employed in preaching the everlasting Gospel; a work which so much concerned the glory of God, the interest of Christ, and the good of immortal souls:

*ye are of more value than many sparrows.* Two of them were worth no more than a farthing; there must be a great multitude of them to be mentioned with any man: and indeed there is no comparison between the whole species of them and the life of a single man, and much less between them and the apostles of the Lamb. Any man is more valuable, as a man, than many sparrows, and much more a Christian man, and still more an apostle: the argument then is, that if God takes care of sparrows and is concerned for their lives, much more will he take care of his faithful ministers, and not suffer their lives to be taken away, till they have done the will and work of their Lord.

**Ver. 32.** *Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men,* etc.] The confession of Christ here, more especially designed, does not so much intend, though it may include, that which is less public, and is necessary to be made by every believer in Christ: for it is not enough to believe in him, with the heart, but confession of him must also be made with the mouth; and which lies in ascribing their whole salvation to him, giving him the glory of it; declaring their faith in him to others, and what he has done for their souls; and subjecting themselves to his ordinances, and joining in fellowship with his church and people: which confession, as it ought to be both by words and deeds, and to be hearty and sincere, so likewise visible, open, and before men. This, I say, may be included in the sense of these words; but what they chiefly relate to, is a confession of Christ by his ministers, in the public preaching of the Gospel; who ought openly, and boldly, to acknowledge, and declare, that Christ is truly and properly God, the eternal Son of God, the only mediator between God and men, the Saviour and Redeemer of lost sinners; through whose blood alone is the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of grace; by whose righteousness only men can be justified before God; and by whose sacrifice and satisfaction sin is only expiated; that he died for, and in the room and stead of his people, rose again for their justification, ascended to heaven in their name, is set down at the right hand of God, and ever lives to make intercession for them, and will come again, and judge both quick and dead: such a free and open confession of Christ ought to be made by all his ministers before men, and in spite of all the rage and opposition of earth and hell; and such shall not fail of being taken notice of, and requited by Christ; for he himself says,

*him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven:* as he has a perfect knowledge of them, and bears an affectionate love to them; so he

will openly own, and acknowledge them as his ministers, and speak in the praise and commendation of their works and labours; though they have been performed through the gifts, grace, and strength, which he has communicated to them: he will introduce them into his Father's presence, and recommend them to him, to be honoured, blessed, and glorified by him.

**Ver. 33.** *But whosoever shall deny me before men*, etc.] Deny that he is a disciple of Christ, and that Christ is his Lord and master, act contrary to him, deliver things repugnant to his mind and will; which for a disciple to do to his master was a very heinous crime with the Jews:

“if (say they <sup>f666</sup>) Rabbi Jochanan, **rwpyk**, “deny” Rabbi Eleazar, his disciple, he will not “deny” Rabbi Jannai, his “master”.”

Some regard may be had here to Peter's after denial of Christ; and this proviso be supposed, “except he repent”, as he did. Moreover, to deny Christ, is to drop, or oppose any of those truths which regard his person, office, and grace; or to hide and conceal them from men, through fear, shame, or cowardice of mind: and even not to confess him, through fear of men, is interpreted, by Christ, a denial of him; and such who deny him in any form and shape, either by words or deeds,

*him*, says he,

*will I also deny before my Father which is heaven*; he will deny them to be disciples, or that they belong to him; he will deny that he ever knew them, loved or approved of them; he will declare in the presence of his Father, his disapprobation of them, his indignation against them, that they are workers of iniquity; yea, he will do more, he will banish them from his presence, and send them into everlasting burnings.

**Ver. 34.** *Think not ye that I am come to send peace on earth*, etc.] The Jews had a notion of great outward peace and prosperity in the days of the Messiah; which was grounded on several prophecies of the Old Testament, not rightly understood by them; and the disciples of Christ had imbibed the same notion: wherefore our Lord thought fit to let them know the contrary; and that they must not expect outward ease and quiet, and worldly tranquillity would attend their ministry; for though he came to be a peace maker between God and sinners, by the blood of his cross; and was both the author and donor of spiritual peace to his people; and the Gospel

he brought with him, and sent them to preach, was the Gospel of peace; which, accompanied with his power, would produce peace in the consciences of men, and be the means of cultivating and maintaining peace among the saints; yet “peace on earth” in a temporal sense, whether in the world in general, or in Judea in particular, must not be expected as the consequence of his coming; so far from it, that he subjoins,

*I came, not to send peace, but a sword.* By the “sword” may be meant the Gospel, which is the means of dividing and separating the people of Christ from the men of the world, and from their principles and practices, and one relation from another; as also of divisions, discords, and persecutions arising from it: not that it was the intention and design of Christ, in coming into the world, to foment and encourage such things; but this, through the malice and wickedness of men, was eventually the effect and consequence of his coming; (see <sup><025></sup>Luke 12:51) where, instead of a “sword”, it is “division”; because the sword divides asunder, as does the sword of the Spirit, the word of God.

**Ver. 35.** *For I am come to set a man at variance against,* etc.] Or “to divide a man from his father”. Here our Lord opens and explains what he means by the sword, intestine divisions, domestic broils, family differences, as well as such as appear in towns, cities, and kingdoms, which are exemplified by other instances following;

*and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law:* the case is this, a father believing in Christ, embracing his Gospel, and submitting to his institutions, is contradicted, opposed, and persecuted by his own son, and a mother by her own daughter; in both which relations, natural affection knit them together; and the mother-in-law by her daughter-in-law, who before lived together in the most peaceable, kind, and tender manner: which must be imputed, not to Christ, and the doctrines of Christ, and the natural tendency of them, embraced by the father, the mother, and mother-in-law; but to the natural enmity of the son, the daughter, and the daughter-in-law, to everything divine, spiritual, and evangelical, or “vice versa”.

**Ver. 36.** *And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household.*] His children, and his servants, such that he has either begotten and brought up, or are daily fed at his table, and maintained by him. This, with the former instances, are borrowed from (<sup><306></sup>Micah 7:6) and the times of the Gospel are set forth in the same dismal and black characters, as those in which the

prophet lived; and much such a description do the Jews themselves give, of the times of their expected Messiah; which agreeing in words, as well as things, I cannot forbear transcribing.

“The government shall be turned to heresy (Sadducism), and there will be no reproof; the synagogue shall become a brothel house, Galilee shall be destroyed, and Gablan shall be laid waste, and the men of the border shall wander from city to city, and shall obtain no mercy; the wisdom of the Scribes shall stink, and they that fear to sin shall be despised, and truth shall fail; young men shall turn pale, or put to shame, the faces of old men, and old men shall stand before young men; the “son” shall deal basely “with his father, the daughter shall rise up against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and the enemies of a man shall be they of his own house”: the face of that generation shall be as the face of a dog, and the son shall not reverence his father<sup>f667</sup>.”

All which characters, how exactly they agree with the generation in which Christ lived, is easy to observe.

**Ver. 37.** *He that loveth father or mother more than me*, etc.] The design of these words, is not at all to lessen the due affection of children to their parents; or to detract from the respect and esteem, in which they ought to be had by them: it is the duty of children, to love, honour, and, obey them; who have been the means of bringing them into the world, and of bringing them up in it; nor do any of the doctrines of Christ break in upon the ties and obligations of nature, or in the least set aside any of the duties of natural religion: but the intent of this passage is, to show, that as Christ is infinitely above all creatures, he is to be loved above the nearest and dearest relations and friends; being God over all blessed for ever, and also the Saviour and Redeemer; which itself, makes him more amiable and lovely than a common parent. That man therefore, that prefers father and mother to Christ, and their instructions, and orders, to the truths and ordinances of Christ: who, to please them, breaks the commands of Christ, rejects his Gospel, and either denies him, or does not confess him, our Lord says,

*is not worthy of me*; or, as in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel, he is not *ytwal ywar*, “fit for me”: it is not fit and proper, that such a person should name the name of Christ, or be called by his name, and should be reckoned one

of his disciples; he is not fit to be a member of the church of Christ on earth, nor for the kingdom of heaven, but deserves to be rejected by him, and everlastingly banished his presence: for otherwise no man, let him behave ever so well, is worthy of relation to Christ, and interest in him; or of his grace, righteousness, presence, kingdom and glory. The same is the sense of the following clause,

*and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me:* whoever, to gratify a child, drops the profession of Christ, renounces his Gospel, and neglects his commands, it is not proper and convenient that he should bear the name of Christ, be accounted one of his, or be treated as such, but all the reverse.

**Ver. 38.** *And he that taketh not his cross,* etc.] By the “cross”, which was a Roman punishment, whereby malefactors were put to death, are meant all sorts of afflictions, reproaches, persecutions, and death itself; and particularly the ill will, hatred, and persecution, of near relations and friends, which must be expected by such, who bear a faithful testimony for Christ. Every minister of Christ, or professor of his name, has “his” own cross, his own particular afflictions, appointed by God, and laid on him by Christ, and which he should cheerfully take up, and patiently bear, for his sake. The allusion is to the custom of persons sentenced to be crucified, to carry their own cross, as Christ did his, and Simon the Cyrenian for him; and which our Lord here may have a respect unto, as well knowing what death he was to die, and that some of his disciples also would die the same death: wherefore Christ says,

*and followeth after me;* led on by his example, to preach or profess the Gospel, submit to the ordinances of it, and cheerfully suffer for the sake of it, when called to it. If a man, who would be thought to be a disciple of Christ, is not willing to do all this, but, in order to avoid it, complies with his friends, conforms to the world, and turns his back on Christ; of such an one he may well say, he

*is not worthy of me;* it is not convenient that he should stand among his disciples and followers.

**Ver. 39.** *He that findeth his life shall lose it,* etc.] That man that seeks to preserve his life, and the temporal enjoyments of it, by a sinful compliance with his friends and the world, and by a denial of Christ, or non-confession of him; if he is not, by the providence of God, deprived of the good things



of life, and dies a shameful death, both which are sometimes the case of such persons; yet he is sure to lose the happy and eternal life of his soul and body, in the world to come: so that the present finding of life, or the possession of it, on such sinful terms, will in the issue prove an infinite and irreparable loss unto him. On the other hand, Christ observes,

*he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.* That man that is willing to forego the present advantages of life, to suffer reproach and persecution, and lay down his life cheerfully for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, for the profession of his name, rather than drop, deny, conceal, or neglect any truth and ordinance of his, shall find his soul possessed of eternal life, as soon as separated from his body; and shall find his corporal life again, in the resurrection morn, to great advantage; and shall live with Christ in soul and body, in the utmost happiness, to all eternity.

**Ver. 40.** *He that receiveth you, receiveth me,* etc.] This is said to comfort the disciples, lest they should conclude from this account of the sorrows, afflictions, and persecutions they were to meet with, that there would be none that would receive them and their message; Christ therefore suggests, that there would be some that would embrace the Gospel preached by them, and receive them kindly into their houses, and entertain them in a very hospitable manner: and, for the encouragement of such persons, who would risk their own goods and lives by so doing, he lets them know, that receiving of his disciples, was interpreted by him, a receiving of himself; and what they did to them, would be taken as kindly, as if done to him personally; and, in like manner, would it be understood and accepted by his Father:

*and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.* To which agrees, what the Jews say <sup>f668</sup> of the angel, in (<sup>1022</sup>Exodus 23:22) “If thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I shall speak”: who observe, that it is not written, “that he shall speak”, but “that I shall speak”; intimating, that  $\mu\lambda\ \text{bqm}\ \mu\text{ta}\ \text{yl}\ \text{wl}\ \text{ak}\ \text{wnmyh}\ \mu\text{ta}\ \text{^yl}\ \text{bqm}\ \mu\alpha$ , “if ye receive him, it is all one as if you received me”: and the whole of this accords with a common saying among <sup>f669</sup> them,  $\text{wtwmk}\ \mu\text{da}\ \text{l}\ \text{ç}\ \text{wj}\ \text{wl}\ \text{çç}$ , “that a man’s messenger is as himself”. The Jew <sup>f670</sup>, therefore, has no reason to reproach Christ and his followers as he does, as if it was the sense of these words of Christ, and which the Christians give of them, that Christ and his twelve apostles were but one person.

**Ver. 41.** *He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet*, etc.] By “a prophet” is meant, not one that foretells things to come, but a preacher of the Gospel; for as prophesying sometimes signifies preaching, so a prophet designs a minister of the word: and to “receive” him, is not only to embrace his doctrine, but to entertain him in a kind, and generous manner; and he that does this, “in the name of a prophet”, not as coming in the name of another prophet, but upon this account, and for this consideration, because he himself is a prophet; so the phrase,  $\mu\zeta\lambda$ , “in the name”, or on the account of anything, is often used in the Misnic writings<sup>f671</sup>: he that regards such a person, and shows him respect, by an hospitable entertainment of him; not because he may be related to him after the flesh; or because he may be a man of good behaviour, of a singular disposition and temper, of much learning and eloquence, of great natural parts and abilities; but because he is a faithful minister of the Gospel; he

*shall receive a prophet’s reward*: either a reward from the prophet himself, who shall interpret the Scriptures to him, preach the Gospel to him, lead him more fully into the truths of it, and guide him to the true, and more clear and distinct sense of the sacred writings; which is an ample reward for his kind entertainment of him: or else, that reward which God has appointed, prepared, and promised, to them who receive his prophets; and which indeed is no other, than what the prophets themselves shall receive, even the reward of the inheritance, the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, a reward of grace, and not of debt; since both, in their way, serve the Lord Christ.

*And he that receiveth a righteous man, in the name of a righteous man.* He that is kind and liberal to any good man, whether he is a minister of the Gospel or not, who appears to have the work of grace upon his soul, and is justified by the righteousness of Christ, and expects eternal life on that account; if he shows respect to him, purely because he has the image of Christ stamped on him, and the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, and not on any natural, worldly, or civil accounts,

*he shall receive a righteous man’s reward*; either from the good man himself, who will not fail to pray for his benefactor, to wish him well, and give him all the assistance he can in his Christian course; to exhort, comfort, instruct him as much, and as far as his Christian experience will furnish him with; or else the same reward of grace the righteous man

himself shall have, namely, eternal life, as God's gift, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Ver. 42.** *And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones,* etc.] Our Lord gradually descends from prophets to righteous men, and from righteous men, to those of the lowest form and class among them; who have the least measure of grace, and share of spiritual light, and knowledge; who are outwardly the poorest, meanest, and most contemptible in the eyes of the world; and are little, even the least of saints, in their own esteem and account: whosoever takes notice but of "one" of these, receives him into his house, and gives him

*a cup of cold water only*, is regarded, a phrase used to express the least favour, or benefit whatever.

"So says <sup>f672</sup> Maimonides, one that calls to his friend to dine with him, and he refuses, and swears, or vows, that he shall not enter into his house, nor will he give him to drink, *ˆnw x t p j* "a drop of cold water", etc."

Moreover, this is said to prevent any objection, on account of the mean and low condition persons may be in, to their relieving necessitous objects; for everyone is capable of doing this, and if they can do no more, it is accepted. Now whosoever takes notice of, and shows favour to the meanest of Christ's people, though it be but bestowing so small a benefit as a cup of cold water; yet, if it is done

*in the name of a disciple*, or because that poor person is a disciple of Christ,

*verily*, says Christ,

*I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward*: it will be observed another day by Christ, who takes what is done to the least of his brethren, as done to himself. The Jews say many things in praise of hospitality, to *μ k j d y m l t*, "a disciple of a wise man"; and observe <sup>f673</sup>, that he that hospitably entertains such an one in his house, and causes him to eat and drink, and partake of the goods of his house, there is reason to believe, he shall be much more blessed than the house of Obed Edom was for the ark's sake, which neither ate nor drank with him; and which may be compared with this passage.