

I. The INTERNAL CHARACTER of all BAD MEN is painted in the most vivid COLOURS in the holy SCRIPTURES.

1. Their inward principles and frame of heart towards GOD and religion: they are ignorant of GOD: they have no conception of just ideas concerning the perfections of GOD: their carnal minds are enmity against GOD, Rom. viii. 7. they are haters of GOD, Rom. i. 30. GOD is not rightly in all their thoughts, Ps. x. 4. they have not one good thought of GOD: they cast off fear: they call not upon GOD: they say to the Almighty, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways: their foolish heart is darkened, Rom. i. 21. their heart and face is hard as an adamant stone, i. e. the diamond, which is the hardest of all stones: their conscience is seared with an hot iron: they have a reprobate mind, i. e. a mind void of judgment, or a right sense of truth: the heart of the wicked is little worth: they are like chaff: the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, Jer. xvii. 9. the wicked of the earth are as dross before GOD: they hate GOD's will and rob him of his glory: they set up their own will as their rule against the sovereign will of GOD: and they set up SELF, as their supreme end against that eternal and most WORTHY SELF that is in the nature and excellence of GOD: they have their portion in

this life: they mind earthly things, and are earthly sensual and devilish, totally alienated from the life and friendship of God; and it is their fixed choice and determination to live without God in the world. Now, how clearly is all this verified, and to be easily seen in millions.

2. Their enmity and hatred to all good men is strongly described in Scripture. All carnal and bad men have a peculiar hatred of the image of God in true christians: they may love good men for the advantages they derive from them as good neighbours, good tradesmen, and friends; but as bearing the image of Christ they love them not: nay, they hate them, and have a rooted antipathy and aversion to their holy dispositions and devotion to God. And this enmity is very deep and strongly rooted in the heart: it is durable and unconquerable by all the powers of reason and eloquence: it oftentimes appears very violent, and breaks out with an irresistible fury against the bodies and souls, the characters and estates, of good men. This enmity appeared in Ishmael. He that was after the flesh, persecuted him, who was after the spirit; and so it is now. Gal. iv. 29. "As Cain, who was of that wicked one the devil, and slew his brother: and wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." 1 John iii. 12. Cain was of the wicked one, the old serpent; and

and there have always been a race of many millions of the serpentine seed, who are of their father the devil; and the works of their father they will do. John viii. 44. The image of God in the souls of true christians has been in all ages the ground of the quarrel of bad men against them: and so it is at this very time in the various parts of Great-Britain. We can appeal to the observation and experience of all God's people, in all nations and in all ages, for the truth of this remark. 'Tis as clear as noon-day, and shines as bright as the meridian sun--- 'tis a truth written with sun-beams all over the world!

This persecuting spirit appears in various forms and in divers manners. The great patriarchs of the seed of Cain, Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Rabsakeh, Nebuchadnezzar and his grandson Belshazzar, Antiochus Epiphanes, Herod, Nero, Dioclesian, Charles the IXth of France, Bonner, Gardiner, bloody queen Mary, Laud, and Lewis the XIVth, with thousands more, have broke out into open rage and cruel violence against the church and people of God; whilst millions of the same brood, with the same malice in their hearts, have only proceeded to lesser acts of cruelty, or have displayed their wit, sharpened by spite, to slander and ridicule true christians. These have chiefly employed themselves in perse-

cution with the tongue or the pen, or both. Some of these geniuses of Satan have adopted this fine notion, that ridicule is the test of truth; and accordingly they have employed this test with different degrees of ability, but all to the utmost of their power. Others, of the coarser kind of second-rate persecutors, have been forced to content themselves with the lower methods of persecution, such as inventing and spreading lyes and slanders, propagating evil reports and scandal by whispering and back biting, in order to hurt the characters and ruin the usefulness of wise, good, and worthy ministers, and private christians: but the church of Christ, though ever assaulted, has been ever triumphant in the final issue and up-shot of things, and ever will be so to the end of the world.---See Fox's admirable Book of Martyrs, folio, lately published by Trapp; Neal's History of the Puritans, with Millar's History of the Propagation of Christianity, and Clark's Looking-Glass for Persecutors, with Mr. John Lockman's excellent History of Popish Persecutions, 12mo. a book I would earnestly recommend to all my readers of every rank and age.

3. The Scriptures describe the outward circumstances of many bad men as richer and higher in temporal life than the people of God.

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Not many rich, not many mighty, not many noble are called. 1 Cor. i. 26. Christ says, wo! unto you that are rich. Luke vi. 24.---There is not one promise made to a rich man, as a rich man, in all the book of God. The rich are for the most part classed under the head of bad men: and the revelation of God describes this body of men, in their outward circumstances, as rich, full and prosperous: their eyes standing out with fatness, and having more than heart can wish. Pf. lxxiii. 7. Not that all bad men are rich, or that all good men are very poor: there are millions of very wicked men that are extremely poor, though there are few good men that are very rich: for the holy Scripture places bad men chiefly as on higher ground than good men; and these proud rich men look down with contempt and scorn upon true christians, as low, mean, poor deluded enthusiasts, not worthy of one moment's attention or honour; and so it has been in all ages to this day.

4. They have a sad inward dissatisfaction of mind, and an awful want of peace of conscience in all conditions of life. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. Isai. lvii. 20, 21. The wicked are like the troubled sea, whose waters cast up mire and dirt: their inward temper resembles the lost spirits in hell: they have no rest day or night: they have no degree of solid satisfaction, no,
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not in the least for one hour: they feel a dreadful vacancy of all happiness within: they are neither pleased with GOD or man, or with themselves: they feel nothing but vanity and vexation in all their riches; nothing but pain and misery in all their pleasures: they have no GOD: GOD is gone! he is gone! is gone! they have not one steady friend in GOD's empire. Ah! poor, blind, miserable men, are you to be envied, when the very best of you are infinitely below the meanest true christian in the world! You have a secret dissatisfaction haunts your heart like a ghost, and are you to be envied? GOD's soul is departed from* thee, O wicked man, and are you to be envied?

5. The Scriptures are fulfilled in the death of all wicked men in the world.----We have seen clearly how the Scriptures are fulfilled in the hearts and dispositions of bad men towards GOD ---in their aversion, opposition, and persecution of the image of GOD in all good men---in their external circumstances---and their total want of peace and satisfaction in their own souls. Let us now view all bad men in their death and departure into eternity. As to the manner and circumstances of their deaths, I think they may be
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* Jerem. vi. 8. The original Hebrew word signifies plucked from thee; the phrase denotes an utter separation, joined with the utmost abhorrence and keen detestation. Thus, in Ezek. xxiii. 18. "My mind was alienated:" it denotes utter disunion and fixed disaffection. How dreadful is the case of wicked men!

ranged in the following views: some bad men die sudden and accidental deaths---some die unnatural deaths by their own lusts---some die violent deaths by self-murder---some die lingering deaths under long and sore diseases. With respect to the circumstances of their minds in death, they are many and various: some die raving mad---some die drunk mad---some die as quiet as lambs---some die with a vain hope of heaven on the footing of their imaginary virtue and good works---some die in the horrors of conscience, and know they are going to hell before they get there---some die under the frowns of an angry God, who begins a hell in their souls in this life. Such was the case of Francis Newport, Esq; son to the earl of Bradford, which I published seven years ago, under the title of the **DEATH-BED TERRORS** of an **INFIDEL**.* 12mo. price 4d.

Let us now take a **SCRIPTURAL PROSPECT** of the
DEATH OF WICKED MEN.

We see Cain a cursed vagrant, a living hell, a walking damnation in life and death. Millions of bad men die in the dreadful deluge, and go from a world of water to a world of eternal fire.

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* This is a fact well authenticated. The late Rev. Mr. John Oulton, of Liverpool, received it from the mouth of the Rev. Mr. Benjamin Jenks, rector of Harley, in Shropshire; and that excellent man was chaplain to the Earl of Bradford.

We see death and hell at once poured out of heaven on the outrageous sinners of Sodom and Gomorrah ; and the waters of the red sea sweep away an army of men, with the mad king at their head, into everlasting burnings. You see Nadab and Abihu die under the rage of devouring fire. Levit. x. 2. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, are destroyed in a moment by the earth opening and swallowing them up alive. You see many thousands stung to death by fiery serpents. A sabbath-breaker is stoned to death. Exod. xxxi. 14. Numb. xv. 35. You see two lewd, impudent wretches driven out of life, and sent from the flames of lust to the flames of hell in a moment. Numb. xxv. 8. Balaam, the conjuror, sent to his father, the devil, in an instant. Numb. xxx. 8. Josh. xiii. 22. Achan stoned to death for covetousness and rebellion. Josh. vii. 25. Five wicked kings hanged on a tree. Josh. x. 24. Adonibezek, the cruel tyrant, who cut off the thumbs and toes of seventy kings, meets with a dreadful retaliation and a miserable death. Judg. i. 6, 7. Ehud, another tyrant, groans out his cruel soul. Judg. iii. 22. Sisera dies a shameful and sudden death by the hands of a woman. Judg. iv. 21. Abimelech, a tyrant, hath his brains beat out by another woman. Judg. ix. 53. Thousands of cruel tyrants perish in a moment by the hand of Sampson, at his death. Judg. xvi. 30. Two lewd

lewd and impudent priests perish in one day. 1 Sam. iv. 11. Agag, a cruel tyrant, is hewn in pieces before the Lord. 1 Sam. xv. 33. Goliath, a monster in stature and in pride, perishes by the hand of a shepherd boy. 1 Sam. xvii. 49. Nabal, the churl, his heart dies within him, and he becomes as dead as a stone. 1 Sam. xxv. 37. Saul in a fit of despair and horror murders himself. 1 Sam. xxxi. 4. The incestuous Amnon is murdered amidst revelling and drunkenness. 2 Sam. xiii. 28. Absalom, the rebellious son, is hanged in the boughs of an oak, and struck dead with three darts. 2 Sam. xviii. 14. Ahitophel in a fit of pride and fear hangs himself. 2 Sam. xvii. 23. Shimei, the cursing rebel to David, cut off by the sword. 1 Kings ii. 46. Joab, the cruel assassin, is driven away in his wickedness. 1 Kings ii. 28. Four hundred and fifty of Baal's priests slain. 1 Kings xviii. 40. Ahab, the bloody tyrant, shot to death with an arrow, and the dogs lick his blood. 1 Kings xxii. 37. Forty-two impudent children are torn to pieces. 2 Kings ii. 24. An infidel nobleman trod to death. 2 Kings vii. 20. Jezebel, the cruel queen, is dashed to pieces and eaten by dogs. 2 Kings ix. 33--35. Rabshakeh, the blaspheming bully, with near two hundred thousand rebels, struck dead in one night. 2 Kings xix. 25. 2 Chron. xxxii. 21. Jehoiakim, the deistical
king

king of Judah, who cut to pieces and burnt the Scriptures of God, dies like a dog, and is buried with the burial of an ass. Jerem. xxxvi. 23. xxii. 19. Belshazzar, the insolent and blaspheming tyrant, in the midst of his drunkenness, sees a man's hand on the wall write his eternal doom. Dan. v. 25--30. Haman is hanged on the gallows he prepared for Mordecai. Esther vii. 9. Judas, the cursed traitor, who sold his master's blood for three pounds fifteen shillings, in despair and horror, hangs himself, and departs to his place in hell. Matth. xxvii. 5. Herod, for his monstrous pride, is stricken by God, eaten by worms, and gives up his soul. Acts. xii. 23.

R E C O L L E C T I O N.

What a striking proof is here that the Scriptures are given by inspiration of God. What a clear and convincing demonstration of the boundless mind and understanding of God! We have a most amazing evidence that God discerns the nature, qualities, and ends of all things in the universe; and that he peculiarly attends to the hearts of all mankind, compares them with his holy nature and law, and marks with the utmost precision the agreement, difference, or opposition, of every man's nature and actions to that law!

How odious to God's holiness! how obnoxious to his justice must all wicked men appear! how
sinful

sinful and guilty! how abominable and loathsome are the human race in the sight of God! and how infinite is the divine patience towards a guilty world! The great Robert Bolton might well say, "if the most patient man on earth was to be raised into the vast expanse, and had power and knowledge to see all the horrid crimes which are committed in one hour by mankind, he would set all the world on fire in the next" How should we adore our Lord Jesus, the mighty God, for restraining the lusts and bridling the passions of men, otherwise God's people would be soon rooted up from the earth, and our world would in one day become an aceldama, a field of blood, and a scene of desolation and horror! We now proceed to some lovely prospects.

II. The SCRIPTURE is wonderfully fulfilled in all GOOD MEN ON EARTH; as it clearly reveals their EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES and INTERNAL CHARACTER.

I. Consider good men as a COLLECTIVE BODY of people, and compare them with the wicked: they are lower in circumstances---fewer in numbers---and more exposed to trials than thousands of wicked men---yet immoveably safe and victorious---mixed with hypocrites---and in a great variety of changes and conditions in the world.

(1.) They are LOWER in outward circumstances. The church of Christ for the most part consists of

people mean and low as to the riches and honours of this world; tho' they are not the very lowest dregs of mankind, as we have before observed: many of the devil's children are in a more fordid and beggarly condition than the poorest of the people of God. In a word, true christians, for the major part, are of the middle sort of mankind: they are, as to their external circumstances, between poverty and riches, between beggary and nobility; and this is the best state they can be in to be humble and useful, to be saved from many temptations, to be kept watchful and active, and to be in the lively exercise of grace, and advance in the power of religion, and the glories of gospel sanctification and good works.

(2.) They are FEWER in numbers than the children of the devil. The true church is the *less* as well as the *lower* part of mankind. Our master observes, that many are called, but few are chosen: and he says, fear not, little flock. Luke xii. 32. And the observation of Moses will hold good, as to the true church of God, in all ages to this day. "Thou art an holy people to the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than
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than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn." Deut. vii. 6--8. I may add, the oath which he swore from eternity to his divine Son, that he would invincibly save all his people from their sins with an absolute, certain, and perfect salvation.

(3.) They are more exposed to TRIALS than many unregenerate men in the world. The genuine members of the church of Christ are always in a state of conflict with internal sin; and for the most part exercised with the fraud and force of an invisible enemy, whose art, malice, and diligence, are beyond all the powers of language to express. They are likewise tried by various events in providence, which are painful to the flesh and vexatious to the soul; frequent sorrows and distresses under the pressures of guilt; whilst the men of the world appear in joyous circumstances of freedom and ease, which are more agreeable and plausible to all sensual and superficial judges of happiness. Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice. John xvi. 20. The church is always in some state of suffering; and will be so, more or less, whilst in this world. The people of GOD have commonly as much trial and exercise as they can well bear. The excellent Mr. Thomas Boston,
author

author of that most useful family book, intituled, the **FOURFOLD STATE OF MAN**, 8vo. has published a discourse, called the **CROOK in the LOT**; wherein he shews, that every true believer has some **CROOKED THING** or other in all the stages of his life, to exercise his graces, and keep him from lukewarmness, laziness, and carnal security: the Scripture is fulfilled in a striking manner in this respect. We see two sorts of men in the world; some bearing the cross and following Christ, denying self, crucifying the flesh, sowing in tears, and resisting the powers of temptation and the allurements of the world. Millions of mankind, on the other hand, we see in a dead security, without one deep and serious thought of **GOD**; living in unlawful pleasures; indulging their filthy lusts; putting far off the evil day; without care of their nobler part; neglecting, abusing, and hazarding their precious and immortal souls; and no serious fear of future bad consequences at death and judgment in the eternal world. Now all this is the scene described in Scripture, agreeable to the plan and state of things there laid down.-----See this admirably treated on in the incomparable sermons on the **TRUTH and INSPIRATION of the SCRIPTURES**, by the learned and amiable Mr. Benjamin Bennett, 8vo. 1730.

(4.) The Scriptures represent the church of Christ on earth as **IMMOVEABLY SECURE**, and
INVINCIBLY

INVINCIBLY SAFE, amidst all the dangers that threaten it from within, i. e. from in-dwelling sin; and from without, arising from the world and the devil.

The true church shall never die---she is immortal; and, though always assaulted, yet will be ever invincible and ever triumphant. The gates of hell, i. e. the powers and policies of hell never have prevailed to destroy the church, and they never shall prevail to ruin one single believer in Christ. The eternal Son of God has pledged his word, his honour, and his oath, that his sheep shall never perish; and neither men, devils, nor themselves, shall pluck them out of his hands. John x. 28. The church has been like the bush, in flames, yet not consumed. Exod. iii. 1. The true people of God have been ever preserved amidst devils, atheists, infidels, tyrants, persecutors, and hypocrites, which are her very worst enemies, and always do her the most damage in every period of time.

Two things add a lustre to this surprising providence of Christ, and make it shine with double glory and beauty. It has met with the most violent opposition---and other kingdoms have sunk into ruin under a far less weight.

1. It has met with the most mighty and dreadful opposition. Never had any body or society
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of people such formidable enemies as the church of Christ, and yet it has survived all assaults, and triumphed over all oppression.

The utmost rage of earth and hell has been exerted, against the people of God, for almost six thousand years; and yet they still live, and shall live for ever.

The excellent Lampe, in his admirable Synopsis of Ecclesiastical History, 12mo. 1726, judiciously observes, that the whole of the history of the church exhibits two faces, or the appearance of two distinct and opposite kingdoms, i. e. the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of the devil.

1. The kingdom of Christ consists in three things---the doctrines of free grace---able divines, full of sound wisdom, learning, and zeal---with internal holiness and scriptural worship in the members of this church.

2. The face of the kingdom of the devil exhibits three things to our view---fundamental errors, or destructive mistakes, in the grand essentials of the christian religion---artful preachers, and corrupt writers, of great rational powers, joined with learning and the pomp of science, who, with deep deceit and address, animated with a determined zeal and virulence, against the truth in all ages, have endeavoured