

xxviii. 39, 40.) 'And they that passed by, blasphemed him, wagging their heads, and saying, Vah ! thou who destroyest the temple of God.'

He hoped in the Lord, let him deliver him : let him save him, seeing he delighted in him. St. Matthew testifies in the same place, that those very expressions were used by the Jews. He trusted in God, let him deliver him now, if he will have him. (v. 43.) What a remarkable spirit of prophecy, which foresaw not only the events, but even the very words which the Jews were to employ at the Passion of Christ !

A sinner who has had the misfortune to lose the grace of God, is a worm, and no man, the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people. But if, deeply penetrated with his unhappy condition, he begins to call upon the Lord to deliver him, he should do so with confidence, and not be diverted from entering on a penitential career, by the taunts or derision of the world. On the contrary, he should urge them, as an additional motive to God, to hear his prayer. The same may be said of the just, when they suffer persecution for justice sake, and endure those spiritual aridities and desolations, by which the saints are purified in their progress to perfection.

9. For thou art he that hast drawn me out of the womb : my hope from the breasts of my Mother.

10. I was cast upon thee from the womb : from my Mother's womb thou art my God : depart not from me.

This is the fourth reason, addressed by Christ to his Father, and is founded on his perpetual innocence. Thou art he that hast drawn me out of the womb ; that is, I am thine from my birth, and particularly so, as I was not born in the natural manner, like other men, but by thy singular power, from the womb of

a virgin. My hope from the breasts of my Mother ; that is, as thou hast drawn me out of the womb, so it was by thee I was principally nourished. I have indeed sucked my mother's breasts ; but I knew that my virgin mother was supplied with milk from heaven, and therefore I have learned to hope and trust in thee from my mother's womb. I was cast upon thee from the womb ; when I came forth from the womb I fell into thy bosom, because thou didst protect me by a singular providence ; and from my mother's womb thou art my God, because in return for thy wonderful protection I began to honour and reverence thee, as my God, from my very infancy. Depart not from me. In the Hebrew these are the first words of the following verse—but in the Greek and Latin text they are accurately placed at the conclusion of this, for they follow his preceding declarations, as if Christ said, Since I was cast upon thee from the womb, and as from that time thou hast been my God, I therefore justly request that thou wilt not depart from me, and particularly at this moment, when the greatest tribulation is about to befall me in my corporal death.

Happy are they who when they call upon God in the time of affliction can remind him like Christ that they have served him, and accomplished his holy will from their youth ! Ah, it is good for a man, says the prophet Jeremy, that he has borne the yoke of the Lord from his youth !

11. For tribulation is very near : for there is none to help me.

It is most probable that the tribulation of which Christ here speaks, is his approaching death ; both because he immediately adds, They have dug my hands and feet—they have divided my garments amongst them, and because