

SERMON.

“And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”—ST. LUKE, xxi. 24.

It is a great mistake to suppose that the Old Testament alone contains prophetic declarations. The New abounds with them. Our Lord Himself, and His Apostles, St. Paul and St. Peter, St. Jude and St. John, foretold the future of the world, announcing some events that have since transpired, and many that are yet to come.* Strange things were pictured by our Lord, as He sat upon the Mount of Olives, eighteen hundred years ago: the overthrow of the temple—the destruction of Jerusalem—the dispersion of the Jewish nation, and His own subsequent return to restore all things, and once more replace those foundations of the earth for so long a period “out of course.” The falling away from Christ and the usurpation of Antichrist,—the fearful errors and damnable heresies which should creep into the Church of Christ,—even the peculiar marks which should characterise the enemies of the Lord Jesus were delineated, as with a sculptor’s chisel, by the Apostle of the Gentiles.† when the Spirit spake expressly to him of the latter days. The purifying process through which the material world should pass,—the regeneration of the earth, poisoned by the serpent’s breath and blighted by the ancient curse,—the restitution of all things to their primeval beauty and their early purity,—are described by the Apostle Peter,‡ as though he had been transported forward to that day, and viewed from some lofty height the universal conflagration, when the heavens passed away with a great noise, and the elements melted with fervent heat, and the earth also, and the works that were therein were burned up. St. Jude§ took a retrospective glance, and, look-

* Matt. xxiv., Mark xiii., Luke xxi.

† 1 Tim. iv. 1, 3; 2 Thess. ii. 1, 12.

‡ 2 Peter iii. § Ep. Jude.