

out from this original, and search being made for all other parts of Holy Scripture, both in the Colleges of the Sons of the Prophets, and all other places where they could be found, care was taken, for transcripts to be made out of these also, and thenceforth, copies of the whole became *multiplied among the people*; all those who were desirous of knowing the laws of their God, either writing them out themselves, or procuring others to do it for them; so that within a few years after the holy city and temple were destroyed, and the authentic copy of the law which was laid up before the Lord, was burnt and consumed with them, yet by this time, many copies both of the law and the prophets, and all the other sacred writings, were got into private hands, who carried them with them, into captivity.—That Daniel had a copy of the Holy Scriptures with him, in Babylon, is certain, for he quotes the law, and also makes mention of the prophecies of Jeremiah, which he could not do, had he never seen them. And in the sixth chapter of Ezra, it is said, that on finishing the temple, in the sixth year of Darius, the priests and the Levites were settled in their respective functions, according as it is written in the law of Moses. But how could they do this according to the written law, if they had not copies of the law then among them? And this was nearly *Sixty* years before Ezra came to Jerusalem.

“And further, in Nehemiah, chap.viii., the people called for the law of Moses, to have it read to them, which the Lord had commanded Israel, which plainly shows, that the book was then well known to have been extant. All that Ezra did in this matter, was to get together as many copies of the sacred writings as he could, and out of them all, to set forth a correct edition; in the performance of which, he took care of the following particulars.

*First*,—He corrected all the errors that had crept into these copies, through the negligence and mistakes of transcribers; for by comparing them one with the other, he found out the true reading, and set all at rights.

“*Secondly*,—He collected together all the books of which the Holy Scriptures did then consist, and disposed of them in their proper order; and settled the canon of Scripture, for his time. These books he divided into three parts:—1. The Law. 2. The