

*promised land*, have heard of the miraculous interposition of the Almighty; so frequently manifested in behalf of Israel; but as an influential principle, moulding their views, and affecting their conduct,—such knowledge of God, most probably was not in all their thoughts. Nineveh was in every respect a heathen city. Shall we be surprised then that iniquity exceedingly prevailed there to such a degree, indeed, that, to use the emphatic language of Scripture, “their wickedness came up before God.” Look abroad upon Christian cities and contemplate *there* the repulsive scenes of immorality and crime daily exhibited. Imagine, then, the influence,—the strong, powerful influence of Christianity over the public mind, to be removed, and we perhaps may form some idea of the guilt and sin of the ancient, splendid, but now devoted Nineveh.

Wicked, however, as Nineveh was, (and the history leads us naturally to suppose that it was pre-eminently so,) God did not proceed summarily to the execution of his purpose. The Prophet was sent to apprise its inhabitants of the intentions of Heaven with respect to them.

Thus commissioned, Jonah went, unattended, it would seem, into this immense Metropolis, a day’s journey; proclaiming as he went.—“Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.”

The sacred text here being so extremely brief, some scope must necessarily be given to the imagination. That this short denunciation should comprehend all Jonah’s intercourse with the Ninevites, is not at all probable. This was unquestionably the form of words he publicly proclaimed in the streets: but that he also explained the matter to them more at large, and displayed to them their guilt and danger, we must believe; or how otherwise shall we interpret the conduct of the Ninevites, without supposing them under a supernatural influence, which, for ourselves, we are as far from thinking, as we believe the Bible is from authorizing such thoughts? And that the inhabitants of such a city as Nineveh, would allow themselves to be wrought upon by an obscure foreigner passing through their streets, and crying—“Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown,”—without giving some further and satisfactory account of the nature of his mission, and at whose instance he came,—is a presumption too absurd for any reasonable person to entertain. No doubt Jonah explained *all* to their satisfaction; and his being a Hebrew, of a nation under the known and distinguished protection of Heaven, most probably lent its influence to fasten on the public mind a conviction of the truth of the danger he predicted.

But what was the effect which the divine denunciation, so solemnly pronounced by the Prophet, produced? As it is