

be applied to a people plundered of their wealth and stripped of their power, or as the word is sometimes used for plucking the hair of the beard in contumely, it may be applied figuratively to a depressed people treated everywhere with insult and indignity. Thus both these participles may be applied more naturally to the Jews in their present condition, than to any other nation of any other time.

“*To a people terrible from their beginning hitherto.*” “To wit the Jews, says the annotator in the English Geneva Bible, who because of God’s plagues, made all other nations afraid of the like: as God threatened.” The word if I mistake not is applicable to whatever excites admiration or awe. And the people of the Jews have been from their very beginning, are at this day, and will be to the end of time, a people venerable in a religious sense, awfully remarkable on account of the special providence visibly attending them.

“*A nation meted out and trodden down,*”—Or literally rendered according to the ancient translations, ‘A nation expecting, expecting, and trodden down.’ Now, are not the Jews, I would ask, in their present state a nation expecting, expecting, and trampled under foot? still without end expecting their Messiah, who came so many ages since, and every where trampled under foot, held in subjection and generally treated with contempt? And is not this likely to be their character and condition till their conversion shall take place?

“*Whose lands the rivers have spoiled.*” Rivers, i. e. armies of conquerors, which long since have spoiled the land of the Jews. The inundation of rivers is a frequent image in the prophetic style for the ravages of armies of foreign invaders. (Is. 8: 7, 8.)

Thus it appears that the description of the people to whom the swift messengers are sent agrees in every particular with the character and condition of the dispersed Jews, a nation dragged away from its proper seat, and plucked of its wealth and power; a people wonderful, from the beginning to this present time, for the special providence which ever has attended them, and directed their fortunes; a nation still lingering in expectation of the Messiah, who so long since came; and was rejected by them, and now is coming again in glory; a nation universally trampled under foot,—whose land “rivers, armies of foreign invaders, the Assyrians, Babylonians, Syromacedonians, Romans, Saracens and Turks, have overrun and depopulated.”

We have now heard messengers summoned—we have heard a command given to them to go swiftly with the message; we have heard the people described to whom the message was to be carried. It might be expected we should next hear the message given to the messengers in precise terms. But in prophecy, the curtain (if the expression may be allowed) is suddenly dropped upon the action that is going on before it is finished, and the subject is continued in a shifted scene; as it were of vision.