

character, doctrine, and miracles, were visibly fulfilling, and a general expectation of his coming prevailed over the world. Had these Pharisees and Sadducees taken due pains to acquaint themselves with these prophecies, and with the singular events, which were accomplishing them; had they been as attentive to these "signs of the times," as to the signs of the weather, they might easily have perceived that these were the times of their expected Messiah, and that their nation was shortly to be given up to awful punishments for rejecting him.

"That, which hath been, is now; and that, which is to be, hath already been."\* "Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us."† Are there not many of the present generation of men, who resemble these ancient Pharisees and Sadducees? They can "discern the face of the sky;" they are wise to prognosticate the course of events with respect to political and commercial affairs; but they "discern not the signs of the times;" they are criminally ignorant of the Scripture prophecies, which relate to the present period, and inattentive to events, which are remarkably fulfilling them. But this, however, should not surprise us; since the prophet has given us warning, that at this period "the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand."

\* Eccles. iii. 15.

† Ch. i. 10.