

warnings of his prophets and the remonstrances of their own consciences, he solemnly resolved to leave them to be hardened in sin, and to ripen for destruction. In like manner the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, by their filthy and abominable wickedness, provoked the Lord, not only to withdraw his restraints, but to make them the monuments of his eternal vengeance. The most astonishing forbearance the Lord manifested also toward the Israelites in the wilderness. Forty years long was he grieved with that generation. At length, grown indignant by their incessant murmurings, ingratitude and rebellion, he swore in his wrath that they should not enter his rest. Their short and limited season of probation was then closed, and their state of eternal retribution commenced.

If we trace the history of the several kingdoms of Judah and Israel, we find them subject to frequent and alternate changes from prosperity to adversity. They were taught, by experience, the truth of that divine aphorism, "WHEN THE RIGHTEOUS ARE IN AUTHORITY, THE PEOPLE REJOICE; BUT WHEN THE WICKED BEARETH RULE, THE PEOPLE MOURN."

When such men as DAVID and JOSIAH were their kings, their times were times of reformation, and Providence smiled upon all their concerns. But when such as AHAB, JEROBOAM and MANASSEH ruled over them, Providence frowned, wickedness increased, and the land mourned. In consequence of the great wickedness of the people, their day of gracious visitation was generally short—their sun of prosperity was soon covered with a dark cloud of adversity.

If we descend to later times, the glory of empires, kingdoms and nations appears still more transitory and fading. On the page of history many of them suddenly arise to view, exhibit a temporary splendour, and then quickly disappear, and are seen no

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