

subjects of guilt, whose flagitious character cried for a condign manifestation of Jehovah's displeasure. His holy perfections were insulted, and perhaps derided with atheistic scoff. It was now become eminently proper that there should be some demonstration of the justice and power of God, which should admit of no doubt; for the supplication of a following age could never have been more appropriate, "Lift up thyself, thou Judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud. JEHOVAH! How long shall the wicked—how long shall the wicked triumph!"*

Yet the Most High showed himself merciful and gracious. He sent warnings and threatenings, by "Noah, the preacher of righteousness;" and thus his "long-suffering waited" one hundred and twenty years.† But despised mercy must be vindicated by righteous punishment. God therefore made known his determination to inflict that punishment, in a revelation to his faithful servant. "Behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters;"—I will demonstrate my holiness and wisdom, in such a manner as shall admit of no doubt with regard to its judicial intention.

Of that awful event, the sacred narrative is clear and circumstantial.

"In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month," (answering to about the middle of November,) "the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth, forty days and forty nights.—The flood was forty days upon the earth. And the waters increased, and bare up the ark; and it was lifted up above the earth. And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail;

* Ps. xciv. 2, 3.

† 1 Pet. iii. 20. 2 Ep. ii. 5.