

“your generations.” So that had he intended the posterity of the strangers so purchased to continue in slavery to the Jews, it looks likely that he would have used some terms clearly to express it. The Jews undoubtedly had slaves, whom they kept as such from one age to another ; but that this was agreeable to the genuine design of their inspired law-giver, is far from being a clear case.

Making constructions of the law contrary to the true meaning of it, was common amongst that people.—Samuel’s sons took bribes, and perverted judgment.—Isaiah complained that they justified the wicked for reward.—Zephaniah, cotemporary with Jeremiah, on account of the injustice of the civil magistrates, declared that those judges were evening wolves ; and that the priests did violence to the law.

Jeremiah acquaints us, that the priests cried peace, peace, when there was no peace ; by which means the people grew bold in their wickedness ; and having committed abominations, were not ashamed ; but, thro’ wrong constructions of the law, they justified themselves, and boastingly said “ We are “ wise ; and the law of the Lord is with us.” These corruptions continued till the days of our Saviour, who told the Pharisees, “ You “ have made the commandment of God of “ none effect through your tradition.”

Thus it appears that they corrupted the law of Moses ; nor is it unlikely that among many others this was one ; for oppressing the