

strangers was a heavy charge against the Jews, and very often strongly represented by the Lord's faithful prophets.

That the liberty of man was, by the inspired law-giver, esteemed precious, appears in this; that such who unjustly deprived men of it, were to be punished in like manner as if they had murdered them. "He that stealeth a man, and selleth him; or if he be found in his hand, shall surely be put to death." This part of the law was so considerable, that Paul, the learned Jew, giving a brief account of the uses of the law, adds this, "It was made for men-stealers," 1 Tim. i. 10.

The great men amongst that people were exceeding oppressive; and, it is likely, exerted their whole strength and influence to have the law construed to suit their turns.—The honest servants of the lord had heavy work with them in regard to their oppression; a few instances follow. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, amend your ways, and your doings; and I will cause you to dwell in this place. If you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour; if you oppress not the stranger, the fatherless and the widow; and shed not innocent blood in this place; neither walk after other gods to your hurt, then will I cause you to dwell in this place," Jer. vii.—Again a message was sent not only to the inferior ministers of justice, but also to the chief ruler.

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