

BIBLE TREASURY - VOLUME 1

by William Kelly

The first volume of Kelly's Bible Treasury, a periodical collection of biblical expositions, doctrinal studies, and practical articles from the Plymouth Brethren tradition. Kelly was one of the most prolific biblical scholars of the 19th century.

99 Chapters

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Vol 01 - Introductory Address.

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Professor A. A. Wallace.

[1856 001 1st edition] The Bible Treasury is intended to supply an acknowledged want in religious periodical literature, by providing a popular organ for the interchange of practical opinion upon Biblical subjects. Yet the work, it is hoped, will present one positive, definite, pervading thought — the grace and the glory of God, as revealed in the person, the work, and the exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ. It will seek to proclaim Jesus Christ and him crucified. It will endeavour to set forth the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which shall follow. It will be designed to unfold the fulness of the Gospel both of the grace and the kingdom of God. Prophecy will thus necessarily occupy a large share of our attention. It is a subject upon which almost all earnest Christians are deeply exercised; and, happily, it is ground common to all believers.

We frankly admit, however, that we look and long for the personal and visible advent of our Lord Jesus Christ; and are as fully persuaded that He will thus come a second time and take to Himself His great power and reign, as we are that He came once visibly and personally, in weakness and humiliation. With us, this is a polar truth, harmonizing much that would otherwise be discordant, and giving order and arrangement to elements, which without it, would be chaotic and non-attractive. We believe that the hearty reception of this truth would quicken the church of Christ into new and energetic life; and we shall seek, by suitable argument and illustration, to promulgate it amongst all classes of evangelical Christians, without reference to theological or ecclesiastical distinctions. Further than this, we are not the advocates or exponents of any particular system of prophetic interpretation, nor is The Bible Treasury connected, either directly or indirectly, with any society, church, or other organization.

We shall not refuse to open our columns occasionally to those who may differ from us upon this important topic. One of our objects in commencing The Bible Treasury is, to provide a literary platform for the discussion of prophetic and other practical subjects; and we hope to be able to accomplish that object, consistently with the principles laid down in our "postscript to contributors and correspondents."

An important part of our review will be occupied with the discussion or illustration of Biblical subjects, calculated to assist the student or teacher in his labours; and otherwise to advance the cause of truth or promote edification. We have obtained the co-operation of Christian brethren who are able to place at the service of the church the result of laborious study and patient critical investigation; nevertheless our periodical will be a popular, as distinguished from a scholastic or critical one. It is said of our Lord, as an emphatic testimony to his vocation as a teacher, that "He spake as one having authority, and not as the scribes:" but it is also said, that "the common people heard Him gladly." We desire for ourselves and our contributors, to emulate His example.

In The Bible Treasury how can we forget the land and people of Israel? From time to time we shall endeavour to present our readers with accurate records in connection with these deeply interesting subjects, which are so intimately bound up with the future history of the church and the world; and it affords us no small gratification to number more than one Hebrew Christian brother amongst our stated contributors.

As far as our space will admit, we hope to chronicle passing events, such as public meetings, lectures, etc.; and to give brief and compendious notices of the work of God in various parts of the world; in so far as these events or notices may bear upon our leading objects. We shall hold ourselves at liberty occasionally to open our columns to any important topic, the discussion of which will be likely to bring the church back to the first principles of the Word of God, or to unite Christian brethren; and we shall be glad to admit the communications of any who have useful information to supply, or who are anxious for the solution of questions profitable to believers in general. Finally, we shall strive earnestly for "peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ;" adding heartily, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Amen. [Ed. Professor A. A. Wallace.]

Vol 01 - The Re-Translation or Revision of the Bible.

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Original Contributions

C. E. Stuart, Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, June 1856.

{The original article as printed has the Hebrew text in many places. This has not been reproduced here for lack of expertise.}

(1). [01 1856 010]

It is not God's desire that any of His intelligent creatures should remain in ignorance of His will as far as He has been pleased to communicate it. Great in counsel, excellent in working, His plans, when unfolded by the Holy Ghost, must ever afford delight and occupation to those who, whatever may be their rank in the universe, know that He is God, and they are His servants.

"The angels that excel in strength do His will, hearkening to the voice of His Word." Possessed of finite intelligence, the revelation of what has been for ages hidden in the mind of God does afford them subjects for meditation as they see His counsels gradually unveiled before their eyes; and kept by God, "the elect angels" as the Word describes them, what He does, and what He says has for them an interest beyond anything else. For what can interest a creature, whose heart is right with God, so much as that which concerns Him, and redounds to His glory? Accordingly we read, that they desire to look into the things concerning the Lord Jesus, now reported unto us by them that have preached the gospel unto us with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. (1 Peter 1:12.) They learn there, not only God's will for them, and the service He would have them render to the heirs of salvation, but God's mind and purpose about His Son; His wonderful plan of salvation and everlasting blessing for sinners; the manner by which all that He is can be displayed; His authority, where it has been impugned, be vindicated, and Himself be fully glorified. For all this, though not yet to be recorded as having a place in the history of the universe, is nevertheless the subject of divine revelation. God has spoken of it, and from His words His creatures may now learn what He will yet do. So interested then are the angels in all that concerns God, that, although this revelation was made for man, and for the most part direct from God to man, they desire to look into it. By the church is now made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenlies the manifold wisdom of God. (Ephesians 3:10.) From His word, by the prophets, they learned the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow. For the announcement of that wonder of wonders, the humiliation and death of the Son of God, was made to man, not angels. Then predictions of what He would do, and how low He would stoop, was first disclosed in the word of the Lord by the prophets.

What an honour has God put on His prophets, His apostles, the church! The children of Adam, according to the flesh, have become in His goodness and favour the medium of communicating to the angelic hosts the counsels of God, till then hidden in the secret recesses of His heart. Men, not

angels, have been the general depositories of His truth, regarding His Son, the destiny of this world, and all connected with it. They needed a revelation, for they were fallen, and, without it, must have perished for ever. They are more directly concerned in it, because, if believers on Christ — children of God, they are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. They have a place before God, and a relationship to Him, such as no angel can aspire to. They have an association with the Lord Jesus Christ, such as none but the redeemed can enjoy. All then, that God has been pleased to reveal, should surely interest His children. Shall, we rest satisfied with the knowledge of salvation and deliverance for ourselves from everlasting wrath? Had the elect angels no interest outside the knowledge of their personal safety, they would not have been described as looking into the things concerning the Lord Jesus. Should we not, sensible of the favour shown to us, desire to become acquainted with this revelation, whether it directly bears upon our personal salvation, or not? Has God been, for a period of 4000 years, unfolding step by step His mind, and shall we be careless about the terms He has employed? Shall He confide to us the manner of the kingdom, or the course of events, which must precede its establishment in power after our removal from this earth, and shall we listen to it as unconcerned and unwilling auditors? Meagre, indeed, must that soul's apprehension be of the favour conferred on it as a child of God, if it cares not to know all that its Father has told it. Selfish must he be, who, satisfied with the confidence of his own safety, cares not to hear about what concerns God's well-beloved Son. What interests God should interest us; what concerns His Son should concern us. The very words of the divine revelation should have a value in our eyes unsurpassed, nay, unequalled. God has written down His thoughts for man's instruction, for His children's edification. This should be reason enough for us. God saw fit, that we should have not a dim, hazy, tradition, of what He had once communicated to us, but, that the very terms, in which it had been made, should be handed down to the latest generations. It is a written revelation we possess, dictated by the Spirit of God, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth. (1 Corinthians 2:13.) Then these Scriptures, the several books which together we call the Bible, are holy. The subjects of which they treat, the thoughts which they communicate, the words in which they are clothed, are all from God for man's use and guidance.

Moreover, it is a selected revelation. We have not recorded in it all that God has revealed during these 4000 years to His people. Jonah prophesied of the restoration of the coasts of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain. The fulfilment of God's Word is recorded, but the terms of the revelation have not been preserved. (2 Kings 14:25.) Paul writes of having heard unspeakable words, which it is not possible for a man to utter. (2 Corinthians 12:4.) John heard the voice of the seven thunders, but was forbidden to record what they said (Revelation 10:4.) And the same apostle tells us, that many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have life through His name. And if all had been written, the whole world could not contain the books that should be written. (John 20:30-31; John 21:25.)

Again, we would call attention to the languages chosen, by which to convey the thoughts of God, as an additional proof that what was written, and so carefully selected, was for man's use and guidance. In Hebrew, Chaldee, and Greek, has the Spirit of God been pleased to write. He spake by the disciples, on the day of Pentecost, in many different tongues. In three only has He written what, it pleased God we should be acquainted with. To them must we turn, if we would learn the

exact sayings of the Spirit about the Son of God, about man, about the world, the final destiny of the human race, and the earth on which we tread. And each of these languages, when employed, was just the best medium that could have been found, by which to publish far and wide the acts and purposes of God. Hebrew, the language of Palestine, as the names of places and people, before Israel possessed it, indicate the adopted language of Abraham and his descendants, as the difference between the language of Jacob and that of Laban, the Mesopotamian, clearly shows (Genesis 31:47.) Hebrew was also the language of commerce, the Phoenicians being the great carriers of the world in their days. Westward, along the Mediterranean to the far off Islands of the Cassiterides they penetrated, Eastward, down the Red Sea, along the Eastern Coast of Africa, and to India they found their way. The navies of Solomon, too, in the days of Israel's greatest glory, went to Ophir. By such means, the knowledge of the Hebrew tongue must have been extended beyond the confines of Canaan, and so an opportunity have been afforded of letting men, of different nations, speaking languages of different families from the Semitic, hear something of the wonders and truth of that God who, was worshipped in such splendour at Jerusalem as Jehovah God of Hosts. How far, through the faithlessness of Israel, this result fell short of what might have been, we have not now to inquire. We have only to do with the fact that God chose this language, in which, for 1100 years, with only a brief interval, He communicated His thoughts to men. Was it a mere accident, as men would say, that Hebrew was the language selected; was it not rather from design? For what other tongue could have answered the end so well? Abraham gave up his native tongue for the language of Canaan; but God was by this preparing for that time, when His word should not only be written on tables of stone, or altars, in Canaan, so that Israel could understand it, but be recorded in that tongue, some knowledge of this must have extended, as names of places to this day testify, wherever the great merchants of Tyre and Sidon penetrated with their wares.

With the rise of the first of the four great empires, which were to exercise supreme authority within the prophetic earth, the Aramean or Chaldee language came into prominence. A language foreign to the Jews in the days of Hezekiah, not understood by the common people when Rabshakeh appeared before Jerusalem, it was afterwards to be the tongue in which they would converse, when Hebrew would cease to be spoken in ordinary society. Hence we have the Targums, the translations (and often very free ones), of the sacred writings of the Old Testament. But, before the Jews had dropped the pure Hebrew, God made choice of Chaldee to make known the better thereby to the nations what it behoved them to be informed of. First used in Jeremiah 10:11 for the message sent by Him to the Gentiles, it was afterwards the language in which God's communications to Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar were made, and His gracious intervention on behalf of His suffering servants in the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius recorded. From Daniel 2:4 to the end of Daniel 7:1-28, the book in the original is in Chaldee. A glance at the book shows the wisdom of this. God would teach the Gentiles that, though they had triumphed over the kingdom of Judah, they had not triumphed over Jehovah: their gods had not given them the victory. He, and He alone, was the true God, the God of heaven. Those portions, therefore, which concerned the latter days, and the vicissitudes of the city and people, are written in Hebrew; but those portions, which were designed to remind the Gentiles, that God had vindicated His honour, and manifested His power to save those faithful to Him, are in Chaldee. The wisdom of man is found incapable of explaining the thoughts of God, Daniel 2:1-49. The power of man is powerless to destroy those who trust in God, Daniel 3:1-30. The pride of man is humbled, and God alone is to

be exalted, Daniel 4:1-37. The impiety of man is signally punished, Daniel 5:1-31. The hostility of men to God's servant ends in their utter discomfiture and death, Daniel 6:1-28. And lastly, the counsels of God, as to supreme dominion over the earth, are revealed, ending with the establishment of that kingdom which shall never be destroyed, Daniel 7:1-28. In Ezra we get another portion written in Chaldee, Ezra 4:8, – Ezra 6:19; and Ezra 7:12-27, just that part of the history which records God's interventions on behalf of the oppressed and feeble remnant, now returned to their own land, that the Gentiles might learn, that Jehovah could, and did, protect His faithful people; that His word, by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, could stimulate them to work, though the decree had as yet not been reversed in their favour; and, that He could turn the hearts of Darius, and Artaxerxes to favour them, and to take an interest in the work of His house at Jerusalem.

The ages were rolling by. The time was approaching when the hope of Israel should appear, and the mystery, kept secret, since the world began — the Church — should be unfolded. It is deeply interesting to trace how God was preparing for the advent of His Son, that, when He should appear, and the Scripture, be appealed to in support of His claims as the promised seed and Messiah, the nations of the earth should have within their reach a translation of the word of God, made by Jews, and accepted by the bitterest foe of the truth, as generally correct, to which they could appeal, and see for themselves, when subject to the Spirit, as the Bereans did, (Acts 17:11-12,) whether or not Jesus was the Christ. The great centre of trade had ceased to be found at Tyre. The language of commerce was no longer Phoenician, or Hebrew, but Greek. A Greek translation became a desideratum for the Jews of the dispersion. About the year 280 B.C. this want was supplied; and when God next caused fresh revelations to be written, He chose not Hebrew, nor Chaldee, but Greek, the language then generally understood throughout the Roman earth. In the Roman senate, as well as at Jerusalem, Greek might have been heard. To the strangers of the dispersion Peter wrote in Greek. To the Roman Christians, as well as to the Hebrews, Paul dictated, what the Holy Ghost would have him say, in Greek. The twelve tribes, scattered abroad, had a message addressed specially to themselves, but James announced it in Greek. At Rome, at Alexandria, at Ephesus, at Antioch, at Jerusalem, Greek was understood; so in Greek the New Testament was written, that it might be read far and wide by Gentiles as well as Jews. What care then has God taken that His word should be made known, by using the language, best adapted for it, at the different periods of its delivery; that not merely the general sense, but the very words, in which His mind was expressed, might be within the reach, as far as possible, of those concerned!

Passing from the age of revelations, we may still trace God's care for His word, in the manner He provided for its dissemination through the medium of translations. As the knowledge of Greek declined, a Latin translation for the Christians in the western part of the Roman empire became a necessity, and, when needed, believers found their want met. For the Churches of North Africa, as early as the second century, a Latin translation had been made from the Greek, called the *Vetis Latina*. Subsequently some parts of the New Testament, the Gospels at least, were translated in North Italy, and called *Versio Itala*. Jerome first connected portions of these two, which, in his day, had become blended together, and afterwards translated the Old Testament directly from the Hebrew. As years passed on his version was mixed up with the preceding ones, and hence was formed that Latin version now known as the *Vulgate*. Containing some gross doctrinal errors, and

others not affecting doctrine, it was, nevertheless, for centuries the only translation in which the Scriptures could be read by the greater part of the nations of Western Europe. From it Bede translated. From it Aelfric likewise in the 10th century translated portions of the Old Testament. From it Wicliff learnt God's truth, and then translated the New Testament for the benefit, of his countrymen. Thus a Latin translation, first made for the Christians of North Africa, was destined to be the only source for ages from which God's saints would learn that truth which satisfies the soul. With the dawn of the Reformation access to the original sources was reopened; and the invention of printing brought within the reach of many the Scriptures in the original tongues. Then afresh translations were made. German, English, French, Italian, and Spanish versions by degrees appeared, made more or less directly from the Hebrew and Greek. Tyndale was the first who translated the New Testament for English readers. With the Greek before him he nevertheless was influenced by the Vulgate; and thus, even in the present day, the authorised version bears traces of the influence that translation once exercised over the Western Churches. Tyndale's New Testament appeared in 1525 A.D., the Old Testament a little later. After him Coverdale brought out a translation of the Bible in 1535; Matthews in 1537; Taverner in 1539; Cranmer's Bible appeared in that same year. The Genevan version was published in 1557-1560, and the Bishop's in 1568-1572. Some preferring the Genevan, others the Bishop's, at length in 1611 came out the Authorised version, which, after some years, was generally accepted as the English version. Here too we may trace the goodness of God. The value of having one version, not two or more in common use, is great. Before therefore the Colonial empire of Great Britain had attained to its colossal greatness; before the different denominations in England and her colonies had appeared, or been moulded into distinct separate bodies; before the English tongue had spread over so large a portion of the earth's surface, and jealousies between the mother country and her colonies had led the latter to regard with suspicion anything emanating by royal authority from the former, the Authorised version appeared; and, wherever the English language is spoken, or English enterprise has penetrated, thither that version has been carried, and wherever English or American missionaries have gone, and provided the natives with a translation in their own language, the influence of the Authorised version is felt, the value of one commonly accepted translation attested. Are these slight advantages? Was this the result of accident, or of design!

But here arises a further question. Is this version a faithful one? Is it a translation which admits of amendment? Is the cry for revision the cry of people ignorant of the subject, or the simple candid expression of minds competent to form a correct opinion about it?

From 1702, when an essay appeared by Ross proposing a new translation, the question of revision has not been allowed to slumber for any length of time. Lowth, Secker, Newcome, Blayney, Pilkington, Brett, have in one way or other advocated it. Kennicott, by the publication of various readings of the Hebrew text, and suggested emendations of the Authorised version, stimulated the desire for it. The labours of eminent scholars on the Greek Testament, names familiar to many of our readers, have shown that the received text, and Beza's text, were neither of them an accurate representation of the Greek original. The labours of textual critics in our days have confirmed this, and demonstrated that, in certain passages, the true reading, supported by every great authority, differs from that known, and followed, when the Authorised version was made; and scholars have shown, that, in other passages, a correct version of the original would differ from that given by King James's translators. We must not shut our eyes to all this. A version,

which could command the general assent of all Protestant bodies, would be an inestimable boon. Meanwhile the calling attention to passages needing revision is a work of real service. All that any one proposes he can scarcely hope will be accepted; yet it will not be time thrown away if, giving what he thinks is a more correct translation of the original, he brings out into prominence some shade of meaning, which has been hither unperceived. We are well aware that, in a matter of this kind, mere assertion is of no avail without proof of what is asserted. Our proofs we must reserve for other articles.

(2). [01:024]

It would have been strange if, after all the learning and diligent labours of Biblical students for the last 200 years, no advance had been made in philological studies. Strange, too, would it have been, if the science of textual criticism had not progressed since the authorised version was made. Much, that was then unknown, has been since elucidated. The meaning of words, but seldom met with in the Hebrew Scriptures, has been in many cases cleared up by a comparison with other languages of the Semitic group. Greek phrases have been illustrated from classical authors. The grammar of the different languages has also been attended to, and much light thrown on that department of study, so needful for an accurate acquaintance with the meaning that the Spirit of God intended should be conveyed. The texts, too, of both the Old and New Testaments have been subjected to a rigorous examination. Since that day MSS., then unknown, have been brought to light, and the readings they present of the New Testament have in many instances been given to the world. ABCDFaLNPQRXYZ, Tischendorfianus, Sangallensis, Various Codices, Oxoniensis, Zacynthius, aleph and a few others, fragments of the Gospels; ABCDFaI aleph of the Acts and Catholic Epistles; ABCDGFaHI aleph of the Epistles of Paul; ABC aleph of the Revelation have been published, and the readings of others collated. When the authorised version appeared, the Codex Vaticanus (B) was known, but not collated; the Codex Alexandrinus (A) had not been published; Codex Bezae (D of the Gospel and Acts was known, but its peculiar readings had not been accurately determined; the Codex Sinaiticus (aleph) was still hidden in the convent-library of Mount Sinai, and the Nitrian MSS. had not given forth their treasures to the world. Now materials have been amassed for revising the texts of both the Hebrew and the Greek Scriptures.

If we speak of the Hebrew Scriptures, the labours of Kennicott and De Rossi must be mentioned. If we speak of the Greek Scriptures, Walton, Mill, Bentley, Bengel, Wetstein, must not be forgotten. But these labourers, while searching out and recording readings, did not publish a revised text, being contented for the most part with stating the readings of MSS. worthy of attention; and what Wetstein and others attempted in regard to the New Testament, that Boothroyd did for the Old, by publishing an edition of the Hebrew Scriptures, with the important readings, ascertained by Kennicott and De Rossi, noted at the bottom of the page.

In 1775-7, a new era dawned on textual criticism. Griesbach then first published a critical text of the New Testament. Scholz, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, have since followed his example; whilst Hamilton, in 1821, published his Codex Criticus of the Hebrew Bible, the first attempt to form a critical text of the Old Testament.

By the labours of these and other scholars, what, it is pertinent to ask, has been accomplished? Have they demonstrated the perfection of the text from which the authorised version was made? Does the authorised version, when critically examined, faithfully represent the meaning of the

originals?

At this point the subject divides itself into an inquiry regarding the Hebrew Scriptures, and the translation made from them; and another and separate question — the condition of the text of the Greek Testament, and the translation made from it. Throughout this article we shall confine ourselves to an examination, brief though it must be, of the Old Testament, as presented by the authorised version; and the first question that meets us is this, What is the condition of the common Hebrew text? By what standard shall we try it? How shall we determine its accuracy?

As for the Hebrew, so for the Greek, there are three sources to which we can turn to help us to an understanding of what the text originally was, viz., MSS., versions, and quotations from early Christian writers. A more formidable difficulty, however, presents itself at the outset, when we come to inquire about the Hebrew text, than when we examine into the accuracy of the common Greek text. The Hebrew MSS., though by no means few in number, are nearly all of one recension, exhibiting for the most part the readings approved of by the Masoretic Scribes. Their age, too, when compared with the antiquity of some MSS. of the New Testament, is comparatively modern. The Hebraeo-Samaritan Pentateuch, 1:e., the Pentateuch in Samaritan characters, preserved by the small and decreasing sect of the Samaritans, which we might have expected would have been of the greatest use as a concurrent witness of what Moses wrote, often differs from the Hebrew so much, that its readings would require support ere being accepted in preference to that text handed down by the Jews. In one place it has substituted Gerizim for Ebal (Deuteronomy 27:4), to favour the Samaritan worship. In others, its accuracy is open to grave suspicion.

Of ancient versions, the LXX, the Chaldee Targums, the Syriac, the Greek versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, as much as are extant, and the Vulgate, where it exhibits the text of Jerome's Latin version, are of great value, and often support readings differing from those of the common Hebrew text. Some of these have the support of MSS. authority. Others may reflect a text, very ancient, but no longer extant in Hebrew; but without MSS. authority such readings we could scarcely venture to incorporate with the generally accredited text. For he would be a bold critic who would amend the Hebrew by the readings supposed to have been adopted by the translators of the LXX, and other versions, however ancient, though the variations found in the different translations deserve to be noted. Lowth and Houbigant have attempted this, but it must be evident that conjecture of what ancient translators had before them is slender ground on which to meddle authoritatively with the Hebrew or Chaldee.

Of quotations from the early Christian writers, those are of value which men, as Jerome and Origen, conversant with the Hebrew, have preserved, who tell us often what the text was in their day. The works of Jewish writers should also be consulted.

By the common Hebrew text is to be understood that published by Van Der Hooght at Amsterdam, in 1705, in two volumes, 8vo. This was the text Kennicott used, and is the one generally reprinted, and answers in Hebrew to the textus receptus of the Greek Testament.

A few various readings are here subjoined. If the reader desires to be further informed on this subject, he should consult Davidson's Revision of the Hebrew Text of the Old Testament.

Genesis 49:10, Shiloh. Some MSS. read Sheloh, supported by the Hebraeo-Samaritan (hereafter in this article quoted as Sam.), LXX, Syriac, the Targums of Onkelos and Jerusalem, and the Greek translations of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, and many Jewish authorities. Jerome, with the Vulgate, translates "qui mittendus est," as if deriving the word from to send. For the common reading, many MSS. can be adduced, and the Graeco-Venet. version. If the Hebrew text be followed, the word must be taken as an appellation of the one predicted. If the other reading be preferred (and it does seem best accredited, the word Sheloh must be translated "whose it is," 1:e., to whom the government belongs, and be regarded as equivalent to "whose it is" as translated in Ezekiel 21:27. "The sceptre shall not depart . . . until he comes, whose it is."

Deuteronomy 33:2, "A fiery law" two words as commonly printed, but to be read as one according to the Masora. Many MSS. with Sam. agree in this. Accepting this correction, the word, which means "Springs," must be regarded as a proper name Sinai, Seir, Paran having been mentioned, the sacred writer speaks of two others, Meribah Kadesh, here translated "with ten thousand of saints," and Ashdoth (as the two words joined together form) translated "a fiery law." The verse would then mean, as Fuerst has translated it, "Jehovah came from Sinai, and appeared to them from Seir; He appeared in brightness from Paran, He came forth to them out of Meribah Kadesh, having Ashdoth at his right hand, 1:e., on the south." Ashdoth is the name of a place near the Dead Sea, in the south of the territory of Reuben (Joshua 13:20), Meribah Kadesh being in the wilderness of Zin (Numbers 20:1-29). The LXX. leaves Kadesh untranslated kades, and renders the last clause, "at his right hand angels with him." The Vulgate has probably here been the original of the English version.

2 Samuel 8:12-13. Syria. Many MSS. supported by LXX. and Syriac, read "Edom," as in 1 Chronicles 18:1-17, which seems correct, the valley of Salt being in Edom (2 Kings 14:7.) The interchange of the letters (r) and (d) makes the difference.

Judges 18:30, "Manasseh:" so many MSS. Others have the letter n enlarged; the common text has it suspended above the line, thus Manasseh. Some, followed by the Vulgate, omit n: so Jerome with some Jewish writers. Omitting the n, the word in Hebrew becomes Moses, who was the father of Gershom the Levite. Jewish tradition tells us the name was altered, that the shame of having an idolatrous priest in the genealogy should not rest on the house of the lawgiver. Probably Moses is the true reading. The LXX. reads Manasseh, but, being originally a Jewish translation, its authority here would be scarcely entitled to much weight. It shows, however, how early this alteration must have been made.

Joshua 21:36-37. These verses are omitted by the Masora. Very many MSS. with many printed editions, have them, and all the versions. The common text omits them. Without them the list of cities is incomplete.

Nehemiah 7:68 is an example of the converse. Whilst the common text retains the verse, very many MSS., the LXX. (Vatican text) and Syriac, omit it.

Again in 2 Samuel 14:21, the Masoretic text punctuates "thou hast done," referring to Joab, whilst all the versions, and some MSS., agree with the English translation, which adheres to the written text or ch'thib, "I have done." In 2 Samuel 12:21, for "he called," some MSS., with the Syriac, Targum, and approved of by the Masora, read "she called," speaking of Bathsheba.

When and how some of the variations in the Hebrew arose, it would now be impossible to say. The origin of others, if their date be unknown, can however be easily traced. Similarity in the form of letters, as in examples already quoted, is one source of alterations; similarity in the sound of words is another, e.g., the substitution of aleph lamedh for holem lamedh, or vice versa.

1 Samuel 2:16. Here the authorised version following the common text, which reads holem lamedh - to him for aleph lamedh - nay, has to supply the negative to make sense. Many MSS., with LXX., Syriac, Vulgate, and one of the Targums have the negative in the place of the pronoun and preposition. Isaiah 49:5, the text of the authorised version gives one reading "be not gathered," the margin has the other "gathered to him." The Vulgate here supports the authorised version. Some MSS. with LXX., Targum, and Aquila read as the margin without the negative. In Isaiah 9:3, we meet with another example "not increased" (so Symachus and Vulgate; but the margin with several MSS. the Targum and Syriac read, "to it increased." In these instances probably the best attested reading is that which differs from the common text, and the authorised version which follows it. In Isaiah 63:9, the authorised version differs from the common text, and follows that supported by many MSS., the Talmud, and Jewish writers, "He was afflicted," lit. "to him there was affliction." But the LXX., Syriac, and Vulgate agree in the substitution of the negative for the pronoun and preposition, though they differ as to the translation of the clause. If we follow the text here which many prefer, we must translate somewhat as follows: "In all their afflictions he was not an adversary;" or, "in all their straits he was not straitened."

A comparison of the variations of the Hebrew with those of the Greek, will show that in the latter the alterations are often more important, and affect more materially the sense and form of a passage, than is generally the case in the former. This is easily accounted for by the reverence amounting almost, if not quite, to superstition with which the Jews regarded the originals. Though blinded to the full meaning of the word, they took great care of it. They would not alter, as a rule, a letter of the text, even if that letter was enlarged, reversed, or misplaced. They handed down the text as they found it, after they had settled in an early age of the Christian era, what they believed it to be; but noted in the margin what they conceived should be read. Such corrections are termed

K'ri, "read," and the text ch'thib, "written." Again, if a word had been accidentally dropped out of the text, they did not insert it. Its vowels would be found without the consonants to which they belonged, and a note would tell the reader that such a word should be read; see, for an example of this, Judges 20:13. Yet, with all the care bestowed on the text, we cannot say it is faultless, or that readings have not crept into it, which were not in the originals as they came from the inspired writers. On the other hand, we should not be hasty in altering it, but we might have the important differences noted in the margin of the English Bible, as is already done in the case of some of the examples given above.

Turning from the text to the authorised version, let us see whether the translation at all times faithfully represents the meaning of the originals, in those places where the readings of the Hebrew are not open to doubt. We shall arrange the examples now to be quoted under different heads —

1. Passages, the translation of which depends on the meaning of one or more difficult or uncommon words.

Genesis 36:24, "mules," rather "hot springs," so Vulgate. See Fuerst's Lexicon. The LXX. leaves the word untranslated iamein. It occurs nowhere else.

Numbers 14:34, "My breach of promise," "alienation" or withdrawal from anything; hence, metaphorically, "enmity." Occurs elsewhere Job 32:10. LXX., "the anger of my wrath," lumon tes orges mou. Vulgate, ultionem meam, "my vengeance."

Deuteronomy 32:42, Judges 5:2, "Revenues," "avenging." The noun occurs nowhere else. What can it mean? The context in Judges helps us to an understanding of it. A victory has been secured by the leaders and people of Israel. God is to be praised, the leaders having led, and the people having willingly offered themselves. This meaning is confirmed by the construction of the two clauses in Judges 5:2, and by the meaning of the root when compared with the Arabic, which has the sense of projecting, standing forth prominently. Hence, leadership suits the context in both places, "from the head of the princes of the enemy," — (Deut.) — "when the princes led in Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves." In this sense the LXX. translates in Deut., and Theodotion in Judges.

Judges 5:7; Judges 5:11, "The inhabitants of the villages ceased," and "towards the inhabitants of his villages." To make sense, the authorised version in both places supplies inhabitants of. What, then, is the meaning of the word, which is met with nowhere else? The root bears the sense of cleaving, dividing, hence judging, and thus the idea of a ruler, which suits the context, is arrived at. "As for a ruler they ceased in Israel." "The righteous acts of His ruler." The Vulgate has translated the word by fortes, the LXX. in verse 7 by dynatoo. A kindred word is met with in Habakkuk 3:14, and nowhere else. There the authorised version introduces the idea of "villages." But ruler, or chief, will suit the context. The LXX. has translated it by dynaston. The Syriac, the Targums, and Jarchi, in the main agree with the idea of ruler; and the Vulgate translates it bellator.

Judges 5:11, "They that are delivered from the noise of archers." Here again, to make sense, the authorised version supplies a great deal. In Hebrew we have only two words. All turns on the meaning to be assigned to the participle, Piel, of. Proverbs 30:27 here comes to our assistance, "The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands;" margin, "are gathered together". Hence the idea of an orderly procession, which suits the context in Judges, so we may translate "more than (i.e. louder than) the noise of men marching in procession."

Judges 13:18, "a secret," rather "wonderful," so margin. He does not conceal His name. See Isaiah 9:6, "His name shall be called Wonderful." He, therefore, who appeared to Manoah was Jehovah Jesus.

Job 17:6, "And aforetime I was as a tabret". In the previous clause Job speaks of himself its a by-word. It is best to take this clause as describing something similar. The meaning then would be, "I am one whose face is spit upon," 1:e., an object of abomination before them. The word occurs elsewhere only as a proper name. Here the versions vary in their translations, the LXX. expressing it by gelos, the Vulgate by exemplum.

Psalms 7:13, "He ordaineth His arrows against the persecutors". Better "He maketh his arrows burning ones," 1:e., to consume His enemies. See Fuerst's Lexicon.

Psalms 56:2, "O Thou most high". So the Chaldee and Aquila. But it is best to take the word here as an adverb, "haughtily," "insolently." See Rosenmüller's Scholia, and Fuerst's Lexicon.

Psalms 68:6, "With chains", rather "into prosperity." It occurs nowhere else.

Psalms 77:2, "My sore ran and ceased not." What is the meaning of the word translated "sore?" A better translation has been proposed, "my hand at night was stretched out, and ceases not," 1:e., he continued in prayer.

Isaiah 19:10. The meaning here turns chiefly on two words. A better translation is given by Henderson, "and her foundations (i.e. nobles, pillars of the state) shall be broken, and all workers of hire (i.e. labourers) are grieved in mind." See also Fuerst.

Isaiah 30:7, "Their strength is to sit still". Various have been the renderings of this difficult clause. Some join the pronoun to the first word, others connect it with the following. Fuerst translates, "their violent pressing after aid ceases." Lowth and Henderson apply the clause to Egypt, "I have called her Rahab, the inactive," 1:e., the one who sits still. Lee and Gesenius also apply it to Egypt, "Insolent in their habitations." Rosenmüller, Ferocia, nunc desidia; LXX., hoti mataia he paraklesis humon aute; Vulgate, Superbia tantum est, quiesce. All these different translations are so many confessions of the difficulty of the passage. But none of them supports the authorised version, which, though it expresses what is true of God's people, does not express the truth in this place.

Isaiah 30:32, "grounded staff," rather "rod of appointment," 1:e., appointed for punishment, Gesenius, Fuerst, Henderson.

Ezekiel 1:24, "Voice of speech," "sound of a multitude," Fuerst, "tumult," Henderson, "falling rain," Rosenmüller. It occurs also in Jeremiah 11:16, translated "tumult." The versions generally appear to have read "speech," except the Vulgate which translates "sonus multitudinis," which might be followed.

Daniel 7:9, "Were cast down." better, "were placed," so LXX., Vulgate.

Hosea 6:3, "As the latter and former rain unto the earth", Better, "as the latter rain which fructifies the earth." Here * must be taken as future Hiphil of * governing "earth," and not the noun, which is elsewhere translated "former rain." See Lee and Fuerst.

Habakkuk 1:9, "Their faces shall sup up as the east wind." * only met with here, according to Lee means "desire." "The desire (Lee), direction (Fuerst), of their faces is eastward." Coming on the land of Canaan, their aim is to move eastward with their spoil.

{* The original has the Hebrew text.}

2. Passages in which the translation might be improved.

Genesis 4:8, "And Cain talked with Abel his brother." Rather, "and Cain said to Abel his brother." There is an evident hiatus in the sense in the Hebrew which the authorised version does not show. The Sam, with most of the versions, supplies "let us go into the field," but without MSS. authority, except in the Samaritan codices. Genesis 41:40, "According unto thy word shall all my people be ruled." This is too free. The original is as follows:— "And on thy mouth shall all my people kiss."

Compare Psalms 2:12. Martin translates, "Et tout mon peuple te baisera." Samuel, when he anointed Saul, kissed him (1 Samuel 10:1). Numbers 12:11-13, "Alas, my lord, I beseech Thee lay not Let her not be as one dead Heal her now O God, I beseech Thee." The urgency of Aaron with Moses, and the importunity of Moses with God, are beautifully expressed by the repetition in each case of the particle of entreaty "Alas, my lord, I beseech Thee Let her not, I beseech Thee O, God, I beseech Thee, heal her, I beseech Thee." Martin gives expression to the particle in each case, "Helas, monseigneur, je te prie. . . . Je te prie qu'elle. . . . O, Dieu Fort! je te prie, gueris-la je t'en prie." Numbers 16:13, "except thou," rather "that thou." Noldius "quod," LXX hoti; but, the Vulgate agrees with the authorised version. Dathan and Abiram, in reality, bring two charges against Moses, that he designed to lead the people into the wilderness to their destruction, and that he aimed at making himself a prince over them. The English translation conveys the idea of an alternative; the Hebrew of an additional ground of complaint, because Moses had sent for them.

The historical books will furnish a few examples:—

Joshua 24:2-3; Joshua 24:14, 15, "the flood," * lit. "the river," 1:e., Euphrates; so also Isaiah 59:19. But in Jeremiah 46:7-8, "the flood" is * lit. "the river," 1:e., the Nile. Judges 2:21, "Will not drive out any," Hebrew "a man" *, which is more forcible. Judges 5:13. Another translation of this verse is as follows:— "Then descended part of the people among the nobles: the Lord descended for me among the mighty." The difference of translation here turns on whether the word be from the root to descend, or to rule. The LXX. connected it with the former, which yields a sense in perfect accordance with the details of the battle; for Barak descended from the mountain to the valley (Judges 4:14, Judges 5:15), and the Lord went before him. The verb must be regarded as the Aramaic form of the perfect. Judges 13:12, Manoah's question, as given by the authorised version ("How shall we order the child? and how shall we do to him?") fails to convey what he really did say. "What shall be the manner (condition) of the child, and his work?" See Vulgate. A curious mistake we meet with in Rth_3:15-16 :— "And she went into the city. And when she came to her mother-in-law she said." It should be, "And he went into the city. And she went to her mother-in-law, and she said." So LXX. and Martin. Probably the Vulgate here led the English translators astray, which translates "ingressa est civitatem et venit." Often, as the reader must have remarked, it might have been followed with advantage; here its lead should be discarded. 2 Samuel 23:4. "As a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain." If the order of the original is attended to, we get a good sense: "As a morning without clouds for brightness; as the young grass of the earth (nourished) by rain."

See Vulgate.

{* The original has the Hebrew text.}

From the poetical books we select the following:—

Psalms 16:3 "To the saints that are in the earth, and the nobles (i.e. excellent), in them is all my delight." In Psalms 55:22, a little alteration would improve the passage so often quoted; "Cast thy lot," 1:e., that which God has appointed thee. In Psalms 68:4, if we read, "Cast up for him," or "level for him," 1:e., prepare his way, we shall better understand what the Psalmist wrote. Compare Isaiah 40:3-4. Again, in Psalms 74:18, the Lord is reminded that the enemy has

reproached Him — "hath reproached Jehovah." So LXX. and Vulgate. Another correction should be made in Psalms 73:24, "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and after the glory thou wilt receive me." Compare Zechariah 2:8, for the same phrase correctly translated. This is a most important difference, and shows that the saints who will use this psalm will understand their position as sharers in the blessings on earth when the Lord reigns. Their calling is earthly, ours is heavenly. We shall be received by the Lord before the glory (1 Thessalonians 4:1-18), they after it has appeared. Such a verse in the Psalms shows that the hopes they express of future blessing are for others of God's saints than those who share in the heavenly calling.

Turning to the prophets, a more exact rendering helps us to understand Isaiah 6:13, "Which being cut down have still the trunk," for "whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves." The prophet speaks of violent dealing with the nation, and compares it to a tree roughly used; the English version, on the contrary, speaks of an annual operation of nature. A little attention to Isaiah 53:11, shows that the prophet speaks of two things, "He shall make righteous the many, and (not "for") He shall bear their iniquities." So Vulgate. At times we believe the authorised version has failed to convey the sense of the original, because the translators had not seized the great outlines of prophecy. Psalms 73:24, has been already noticed as an instance of this. Ezekiel 37:26-27 affords another. Two things are spoken of here, God's sanctuary and God's tabernacle. His sanctuary will be among them. His tabernacle over them. See Revelation 7:15, in Greek — "will tabernacle over them." In the following chapter we read, Revelation 8:8, "which have been always laid waste," rather "continually." They were once fruitful, but since God's judgement has been poured out on Israel their fertility has departed. Martin translates more correctly "continuellement." Another instance of want of accuracy is found in Daniel 7:18; Daniel 7:22; Daniel 7:25; Daniel 7:27. The Chaldee has two words translated always in the authorised version by one. "Most High" which occurs only in verse 25, "He shall speak great words against the Most High." Elsewhere, in verses 18, 22, 25, 27, it is not God of whom the prophet writes, but the high places. The saints of the high places shall take the kingdom (Daniel 7:18), and judgement be given to them (ver. 22). He shall wear out the saints of the high places, the heavenly saints; the heavenly saints who are subsequently martyred (ver. 25); but the people of the saints of the high places shall have the kingdom under heaven, 1:e., shall share in the earthly kingdom (Daniel 7:27). This clears up the passage greatly. The translation of Haggai 2:9 should be noticed. God owns but one house as His. It has been twice destroyed, it will be again; but in His eyes the house, however often rebuilt, is ever the same. So the Hebrew should be here translated, "the latter glory of this house," not "the glory of this latter house. In Zechariah 10:4, the prophet is speaking of those who shall proceed out of Judah in a future day. "From him shall proceed a corner or chief (So. Judges 20:2; 1 Samuel 14:38; Isaiah 19:13) from him every ruler;" for this word, elsewhere translated taskmaster, oppressor, is here used in a good sense. In Zechariah 11:10, for "all the people," read "all the peoples." The covenant made with all the peoples — God's promise to Abraham, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed — was apparently broken when the Lord was rejected and died. It is this the prophet is occupied with — the effects of his rejection and death to others beside Israel. Afterwards the other staff which shadowed the brotherhood between Judah and Israel was broken. The Staff called Beauty concerned all the nations. Similarly, in Zechariah 12:3-4, "all the people" should be "all the peoples," 1:e., the nations arrayed against Judah and against God. One more passage remains to be noticed, Zechariah 14:3, instead of "Then shall the Lord go forth," we should read, "And the Lord shall go forth," with LXX., Vulgate, and Martin, who

has "car." The text does not fix the time, but the order of the events.

3. Passages in which words have been added, materially affecting the sense.

Exodus 34:33, affords a notable instance of this, which makes the sacred writer to have written just the opposite of what he did write, and necessitates the omission of the conjunction "and." "And till Moses had done speaking with them he put a veil on his face." Moses wrote, "And Moses finished speaking with them, and he put a veil on his face." So LXX. and Vulgate. Affrighted at Moses, whose face was resplendent with divine glory, the children of Israel feared to approach him; but they had all to draw near, to behold the glory, and to learn what he had to communicate. That finished, he covered his face with a veil, till he entered again the presence of God; afterwards he came out and again spoke to the people with his face unveiled, but veiled it when he had done speaking to them. Thus the passage is in harmony with 2 Corinthians 3:1-18, which gives the real reason of the veiling of Moses' face, "that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished." They could not "steadfastly behold his face for the glory of his countenance," and they could not, because the veil hid it, see the transient character of the glory with which it was illuminated. To be brief, one more passage is referred to — Hosea 6:3, "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord." The Hebrew expresses no condition, "And we shall know, we shall follow on to know the Lord." So LXX. Martin renders it, "Car nous connaitrons L'Eternel, et nous continuerons le connaitre."

4. Passages where, through a want of accuracy in the tenses, the sense is obscured.

This is oftenest the case in the prophetic portions of Scripture. Thus, in the prophetic Psalms 67:6, the Hebrew states, "the earth has yielded her increase." The authorised translation translates "Then shall the earth yield her increase." A reference to Leviticus 26:42, shows that God promises in the latter days to remember the land. Hence, when that takes place, the remnant, observing the returning fertility of the soil, will know their time of blessing approaches, so add, "God, our God, shall bless us." Again, in Psalms 97:6, the verbs are in the perfect: "The heavens have declared His righteousness, and all the peoples have seen His glory." The manifestation of the Lord having taken place, all idolators shall be confounded

5. Passages in which the definite article has been improperly omitted.

Judges 2:11, Judges 3:7, Judges 8:33, Judges 10:6; Judges 10:10, should be rendered "the Baalim" — not one, but many male gods; and "the Asheroth," translated "the groves," but rather, the female divinities, in Judges 3:7, and "the Ashtaroth," in Judges 10:6. The article, when expressed, brings out the enormity of their guilt — they forsook the one God to serve the many, the true God for the false ones. 1 Samuel 31:13, 1 Samuel 22:6, "a tree" should be "the tamarisk," a well-known one. Daniel 9:27, Daniel 11:39, "the many." Judges 15:19, "the hollow place." It remained after Samson had drank at it.

6. Passages in which a proper name has been translated.

Judges 15:19, for "the jaw," we should read, as the margin, "Lehi." The spring was not in the jawbone, but in Lehi, so named from the instrument Samson used. So in Judges 13:25, it should be as the margin has it in "Mahaneh Dan," a place so named because of what happened, as recounted in Judges 18:12. In Judges 20:43, we read the children of Israel trod down the

Benjamites "from Menuchah," not as in authorised version "with ease." See LXX. and Martin. Zephaniah 1:10, "an howling from the second rather "Mishneh," a part of Jerusalem. See 2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chronicles 34:22, in the margin. In Ezekiel 27:19, "going to and fro" should be "from Uzal," a district of Arabia (so LXX. and Aquila); but in Ezekiel 27:11, "Gammadim" should be translated "garrisons." See Fuerst.

7. Passages where the punctuation should be amended. Deuteronomy 1:32-33, these verses form part of the speech: "And in this matter ye are not trusting the Lord your God, who goes before you in the way," etc. The speech ends with verse 33. In Psalms 56:4, there should be a question, "I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?" So Martin; but in Psalms 101:2, we should probably read without the note of interrogation, "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way, when Thou wilt come to me." So Vulgate, Lee, and Roseumüller. Again, in Jeremiah 38:15, the last clause we should read without a question, "and if I counsel thee, thou wilt not hearken to me," so Vulgate and Martin; but LXX. in both these places agrees with the authorised version.

From the instances brought forward, want of space alone necessitating a selection, it will be seen that our English version is decidedly in need of amendment. How that may best be accomplished is not the subject before us; but if we dwell for a time on its defects, we must not shut our eyes to its excellencies. It has been pronounced, and with truth, as a whole, the best of modern versions. For it we have much cause to thank God. Compared with the Douay version, made for Roman Catholics in England, how great is the difference, how immense its superiority; but if it can be improved by being made a more faithful translation of the originals, shall we refuse to see its deficiencies? Surely the translators, were they now alive, would desire nothing else than that their defects should be amended, and the word of the living God, which they sought to convey to the English reader, be as accurately rendered as possible. But if a revision be undertaken, it should be of a text based on MS. authority. It must be of the Hebrew and Chaldee, read with points; and it must proceed on the understanding that it will as faithfully as possible — the idioms of the languages being duly considered — translate the text, remembering that the business of a translator is to convey the meaning of what the author wrote, and not what he thinks he should have written. The tenses of verbs, and the numbers of nouns, should be carefully attended to. In this our translators have failed, forgetting at times that the work of a translator is to translate the text — the business of the teacher to expound it. These two offices should be kept distinct. Were this work carried out efficiently, many passages might undergo a slight change, familiar words and phrases might disappear, portions of the prophetic parts might be greatly altered, and the poetical writings emerge from the pen of the translator in places almost wholly recast. How differently, for instance, the song of Deborah would read, if translated from the Hebrew afresh, with all the light we now possess regarding the meaning of the terms the prophetess employed. But if with these changes we felt sure we had approached more closely to the meaning of the Spirit of God, we should gain and not lose. In the meantime passages may well be examined, and suggested improvements canvassed.

(3). 2nd Edition, Volume 1, September 1856.

[01:065]

Much has of late years been done to verify, as far as possible, the text of the Greek New Testament. Whether any critical text yet published should be invariably followed as correct is a

question open to doubt, or perhaps some would say, one which admits of no doubt. Perhaps the text which, from the abundant materials now gathered together, shall generally command the confidence of scholars and Bible students has yet to appear. Meanwhile, we can in some places clearly see what should be read, and what corrections of the common Greek text (whether the second Elzevir edition, published in 1633, or the third edition of Stephen, published in 1550) should now be made. That neither of these texts can be accepted as an accurate reprint of the originals or even of what was read as such in the early ages of Christianity, we need not now stop to prove. Nor, since several attempts to revise the authorised version of the New Testament, or to translate afresh from the Greek, have of late years appeared, need we stop to inquire whether that version needs amendment. We shall, therefore, confine our remarks to pointing out some corrections of the authorised version which, in any revision, will most probably be made.

And, first, of corrections arising from changes in the Greek text.

1. Words or clauses which should be omitted.

Matthew 6:13, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, amen;" Matthew 25:13, "wherein the Son of man cometh;" Matthew 27:35, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots;" Acts 10:6, "he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do;" Acts 8:37, the whole verse; Acts 9:5-6, "it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Romans 1:16, "of Christ;" Romans 6:11, "our Lord;" Romans 8:1, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" Romans 15:29, "of the gospel;" Romans 16:18, "Jesus;" 1 Corinthians 5:1, "so much as is named;" 1 Corinthians 6:20, "and in your spirit, which are God's;" 1 Corinthians 7:5, "fasting and;" 1 Corinthians 10:28, "for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof;" 1 Corinthians 11:24, "take eat;" 2 Corinthians 4:10, "the Lord;" Galatians 3:1, "that ye should not obey the truth;" Colossians 1:2, "and the Lord Jesus Christ;" Colossians 1:14, "through His blood;" Colossians 1:28, "Jesus;" Colossians 2:11, "the sins of;" 2 Thessalonians 2:4, "as God;" 1 Timothy 1:17, "wise;" Hebrews 3:1, "Christ;" Hebrews 11:13, "and were persuaded of them;" Hebrews 12:20, "or thrust through with a dart;" 1 John 5:7-8, "in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth;" 1 John 5:13, "that believe on the name of the Son of God;" Jude 1:25, "wise;" Revelation 1:8, "the beginning and the ending;" Revelation 1:11, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and;" Revelation 2:20, "a few things;" Revelation 2:24, "and unto;" Revelation 5:14, "him that liveth for ever and ever;" Revelation 11:17, "and art to come;" Revelation 14:5, "before the throne of God;" Revelation 16:14, "of the earth and;" Revelation 20:5, "again."

A fertile source of errors in the text has been the tendency to harmonise two independent accounts of the same thing. The Spirit of God surely had a reason for every word He saw fit to use. As the sacred writer wrote it, He intended it should appear. All that one recorded, it was not God's mind that others should record likewise. So, in Mark 2:17, "to repentance;" Mark 3:5, "whole as the other;" Mark 11:10, "in the name of the Lord;" Mark 14:22; Mark 14:2 nd, "eat;" should be omitted, whilst in the parallel passages of Matthew or Luke the words will be found in the text unchallenged.

2. Additions which should be made.

Acts 4:27, "together + in this city;" Acts 16:7, "Spirit + of Jesus;" Acts 20:23, "witnesseth + to me;" 1 Corinthians 9:20, "as under the law + not being really under law;" 1 Peter 2:2, "grow thereby + unto salvation;" 2 Peter 3:3, "scoffers + in their scoffing;" 1 John 2:23, "Father + but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also;" Jude 1:25, "Saviour + by Jesus Christ our Lord;" Revelation 8:7, "earth + and the third part of the earth was burnt up;" Revelation 14:1, "having + His name and."

3. Alterations which should be made.

Matthew 9:36, "were harassed," for, "fainted;" Matthew 18:28, "pay if thou owest anything," for, "pay me that thou owest;" Luke 2:22, "their purification," for, "her purification;" Luke 3:2, "high priest," for, "high priests;" John 3:25, "a Jew," for, "the Jews;" John 17:11, "keep them in thine name, which," for, "keep through thine own name those whom;" Acts 3:20, "before was appointed you," for, "before was preached unto you;" Acts 6:8, "grace," for, "faith;" Acts 9:6, "but," for, "and the Lord said unto him;" Acts 14:3, "by granting," for, "and granted;" Acts 14:14, "rushed forth," for, "ran in;" Acts 14:17, "you," for, "us;" Romans 2:17, "but if," for, "behold;" Romans 7:6, "having died in that," for, "that being dead;" 1 Corinthians 1:23, "heathen," for, "Greeks;" Galatians 4:26, "our mother," for, "mother of us all;" Ephesians 1:18, "heart," for, "understanding;" Ephesians 3:9, "dispensation," for, "fellowship;" Ephesians 5:9, "light," for, "Spirit;" Ephesians 5:21, "Christ," for, "God;" Ephesians 5:29, "Christ," for, "Lord;" Colossians 3:22, "the Lord," for, "God;" 2 Thessalonians 2:2, "the Lord," for, "Christ;" 1 Timothy 6:19, "that which is really," for, "eternal;" 2 Timothy 2:19, "of the Lord," for, "of Christ;" Hebrews 8:11, "fellow citizen," for, "neighbour;" James 5:9, "judged," for, "condemned;" 2 Peter 2:18, "in some degree," for, "clean;" 1 John 5:13, "who," for, "and that ye may;" 2 John 1:7, "gone out," for, "entered;" Jude 1:12, "carried away," for, "carried about;" Revelation 1:5, "loveth," for, "loved;" Revelation 2:15, "in like manner," for, "which thing I hate;" Revelation 8:13, "eagle," for, "angel;" Revelation 11:4, "Lord," for, "God;" Revelation 11:15, "the kingdom is," for, "the kingdoms are;" Revelation 15:3, "nations," for, "saints;" Revelation 17:8, "and shall be present," for, "and yet is;" Revelation 18:20, "saints and apostles," for, "holy apostles;" Revelation 20:12, "the throne," for, "God;" Revelation 21:7, "these things," for, "all things;" Revelation 22:6, "spirits of the," for, "holy;" Revelation 22:19, "from the tree," for, "out of the book;" Revelation 22:14, "wash their robes," for, "do His commandments."

Attention to these and other alterations which might be noticed will often throw great light on Scripture, and will correct the thoughts of God's children. For example, in the alteration of "Christ" for "the Lord" in Ephesians 5:29, we learn that "Lord" is not a correct term to use when speaking of Christ and the Church. The propriety of the changes in Ephesians 5:21, Colossians 3:22, 2 Timothy 2:19, will be apparent. Set on high as Lord and Christ all are to own not only God, but Him who is Lord.

Besides these changes in the text, others must be made in the translation.

1. In some cases the definite article has great force, and should be inserted.

John 6:32, the bread from heaven; John 16:13, all the truth; 1 Corinthians 10:5, with the most of them; 1 Corinthians 12:12, the Christ, because speaking of the Head and the members together; 2 Thessalonians 2:8, the wicked (or rather, the lawless one); 2 Timothy 4:7, the good fight; Revelation 7:14, the great tribulation.

2. The translation should be amended.

Acts 7:59, "praying and saying," for, "calling upon God, and saying," so Syriac, Vulgate, Martin, Tynedale; Romans 11:31, "have not believed in your mercy, that they," for, "have not believed, that through your mercy they;" 1 Corinthians 9:21, "in lawful subjection," for, "under the law;" 1 Corinthians 15:2, "hold fast," for, "keep in memory;" 2 Corinthians 3:7, "began with glory," for, "was glorious;" 2 Corinthians 3:8, "subsist in glory," for, "glorious;" 2 Corinthians 3:11, "was with glory," for "was glorious;" "subsists in glory," for, "is glorious;" 2 Corinthians 3:18, "unveiled," for, "open;" 2 Corinthians 4:3, "veiled," "it is veiled," for, "hid," "it is hid;" Galatians 5:17, "in order that ye should not," for "so that ye cannot;" Ephesians 3:15, "every family," for, "the whole family;" Ephesians 3:18, "may be thoroughly able," for, "may be able;" Ephesians 6:4, "discipline," for, "nurture;" Php_4:5, "gentleness," for, "moderation;" Colossians 3:10, "unto full knowledge," for, "in knowledge;" 2 Thessalonians 2:2, "is present," for, "is at hand;" 2 Thessalonians 3:5, "patience of the Christ," for, "patient waiting for Christ;" Titus 2:13, "our great God and Saviour," for, "the great God and our Saviour;" Hebrews 4:14, "passed through," for, "passed into;" Hebrews 10:23, "hope," for, "faith;" Hebrews 12:2, "leader and perfecter of the faith," for, "author and finisher of our faith;" 1 John 2:19, "all are not of us," for, "they are not all of us;" 1 John 3:4, "practises lawlessness," "lawlessness," for, "transgresseth the law;" "transgression of the law;" Revelation 7:15, "shall tabernacle over them," for, "shall dwell among them."

3. The needless insertion of some words, and the omission of others should be attended to.

Matthew 20:23, read, "is not mine to give, but to those for whom it is prepared of my Father;" Matthew 25:14, read, "for it is as if a man, going from home, called his servants;" 1 Corinthians 14:1-40, read, "tongue," simply; John 8:1, read, "and Jesus went," so Tynedale and Geneva; 2 Corinthians 5:6, read, "and know that," so Tynedale, Cranmer, Geneva.

4. More care should be exercised in the translation of words.

The distinction between (wios)*, a son, manifested as such to others, and (tecnon)*, a child, expressive of relationship, should be carefully preserved. The Lord Jesus is called (wios), never (tecnon), except in Luke 2:48 (when addressed by His mother), and Revelation 12:4. Of believers both terms are used, but only in the writings of Paul, Matthew 5:9; Matthew 5:45; Luke 6:35, Luke 16:8, Luke 20:36; John 12:36; Revelation 21:7, excepted. John generally speaks of relationship to God, a child, so uses (tecnon). Paul speaks of this, and of the position before the world as a son as well, so uses the word (

wios) likewise. (See Romans 8:14; Romans 8:16.) To the Lord as an infant, (paidion), a little child, is applied (Matthew 2:1-23; Luke 2:17; Luke 2:40); and when twelve years of age he is called (pais), a child, the same word used of Him after his resurrection, in Acts 3:13; Acts 3:26, Acts 4:27; Acts 4:30. Paul is the first in Acts who proclaims Him as Son (wios, Acts 9:20) of God. Between the fold aule (John 10:1; John 10:16) and poimne (John 10:16) there is a wide difference, which should be noted. God owns now no fold; the sheep formerly in it have been led out of it; but He has a flock. Hell, (hades), the place of departed spirits, and hell, (gehenna), the place of torment, which occurs only in Matthew 5:22; Matthew 5:29-30; Matthew 10:28; Matthew 18:9; Matthew 23:15; Matthew 23:33; Mark 9:43; Mark 9:45; Mark 9:47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6; are not the same place; yet the authorised version fails to point this out. Again, should not the reader be informed

that comforter (John 14:16; John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7) is the same word in the Greek as advocate (1 John 2:1), (paracletos), showing that whilst the advocacy of the Lord is carried on on high, there is another advocate, the Holy Ghost, on earth? Again, why should (episcopos) be translated bishop in 1 Timothy 3:2, and overseer in Acts 20:28?

{May be found elsewhere transliterated as huios and teknon.}

Examples might be multiplied, but our business is not to translate, but to show the need of a careful revision, both of the text and of the authorised version. When undertaken, if faithfully executed, will it not be the most convincing proof that those whose religion is professedly drawn from the Bible, and by which word and that alone, they profess to be guided, are above all party considerations, desiring for themselves and others God's word in its purity and its simplicity?

Vol 01 - Ezekiel.

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(The Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Translated from the original Hebrew, with a Commentary, Critical, Philological, and Exegetical. By E. Henderson, D.D. London, Hamilton, Adams & Co.)

Reviews.

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Jeremiah and Daniel, with the son of Buzi, were the great prophets of the captivity, as indeed they were in part contemporaries of one another, however they differed in their position and in the work which God gave each to do.

In Jeremiah we see a heart surcharged with grief, as he looked on the sin and misery and imminent judgement of the beloved people of God. Willing to plead that he was a child who could not speak, he is called to go to all that the Lord should send him, and to speak whatsoever He should command — a prophet unto the nations, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant. Man — Jeremiah himself — would not have so ordered his path, for his was a timid spirit, which would gladly have retired into a lodging-place in the wilderness apart, and there have melted away in weeping for the daughter of his people. But God chose this man of tender sympathies to be the vessel of His terrible denunciations, and caused the one who interceded with the deepest feeling for Judah to know that all was in vain to stay the ruin. The iniquity was full, with less and less of heart to repent, and increasing rejection of God and His testimony, as he had to learn in his own sorrowful experience. Jerusalem, then, and David's house, having proved hopelessly wicked, nothing remained but judgement — a judgement which extends in principle to all nations. (Jeremiah 25:1-38) These nations are given into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, who should at the close be judged like the rest. Thus while Jeremiah exhorts to entire submission to the divine judgement, the destruction of Babylon is most fully and minutely declared. There is no account of the successive empires, as such, but solely of that one which God had raised up to set aside His own people and king, who had now become His worst dishonour, and the scandal of all the Gentiles. But the downfall of Jerusalem involved, that of the various independent nations, who revolved, in the ways of God, around that centre. Jeremiah shows, accordingly, the rise of Babylon into its peculiar place, but also its fall, as the occasion of a deliverance of the captive people: the pledges of a vaster judgement, and of a more glorious restoration at the end of the age.

It was the lot of Daniel, while still assigning a singularly marked niche to Babylon, to develop, by the Holy Ghost, the whole course of the Gentile powers, "the times of the Gentiles," who should, one after another, tread down Jerusalem. In other words, Daniel surveys the very serious and

interesting parenthesis,* during which God suspended His direct government of the earth, hitherto connected with David's house in Jerusalem, and retreating into His sovereignty, as God of heaven, committed universal power apart from His calling and presence, to Nebuchadnezzar and his successors. Of this momentous, but too little estimated, change, Daniel is the grand witness in the Old Testament. He fills up the interval during which God's proper and immediate governance of the earth ceases. There had been a feeble testimony to His earthly government in Israel, which was set aside for a time by the Babylonish captivity. There will be the fulfilment of His rule when the last holder of the dominion, which was entrusted first to Nebuchadnezzar, shall fall under His judgement, God dealt with the world, not merely in providence, but through Israel, before the existence of the system symbolised by the statue of Daniel 2:1-49. He will deal with the world, after the extinction of this system by the little stone cut without hands. The intervening space is occupied with the rejection of Israel, and the contemporaneous supremacy of the imperial nations.

{* In a certain sense it was of all periods the most solemn and affecting; for it was during these times, as all know, that a remnant of the Jews returned in connection with and dependence on their heathen lords, and in due time had the responsibility and the guilt of rejecting their own Messiah. But all this is unnoticed by Ezekiel.}

Evidently, therefore, the prophecy of Daniel fits into the space which is left open in the book of Ezekiel, who gives us most striking and instructive pictures of the state of things before and after the great image, but overleaps all between. Thus, at the beginning, we see that when the city, and even the sanctuary, became the scene of ungodliness and idolatry, Nebuchadnezzar takes Jerusalem, and the glory of God visits and abandons it. (Ezekiel 1:1-28 – Ezekiel 11:1-25.) At the end, (Ezekiel 40:1-49 – Ezekiel 48:1-35), it is equally clear that the glory returns, never to depart from the land and people, as long as God has relations with the earth. Accordingly, all the rest of the book bears out and confirms this first and prominent lesson, which no spiritual reader can fail to discern. There is a remarkably full display of the government of God here below, and this in Israel as His earthly centre. The earlier half of the book is devoted chiefly to proving and rebuking the sin which necessitated the judgement, and so much the more because God was there as a governor. The latter part dwells rather upon His ways with Israel to restore them fully as His people, reveals the judgement of those nations who should venture to dispute His rights in connection with Israel, and predicts the establishment of the temple and all pertaining to it, as well as the final division of the land for the people, suitably to the glory of God and the rule of the true David.

Hence, in Ezekiel, you have no longer the man whose heart was broken, as he viewed the insensibility of God's people, not only to their exceeding sin, but to the yearnings of the Spirit over them, if peradventure they might yet repent. Our prophet sees the people thoroughly obdurate, so as to be no longer morally appealed to, no longer open even to rebuke. And therefore it is that in Ezekiel we find that the time is come to announce that the Lord could not act on the principles of His ancient dealings with Israel, and a new line of conduct is set forth. Individual conscience is appealed to; each must be judged according to his own ways. (Compare Ezekiel 18:1-32, and Ezekiel 33:1-33.) The condition of the individual before God is everything now that the nation is judged. And if judgement is threatened and executed on all nations, beginning with Jerusalem, the object is that all may know the Lord — know Him by His vengeance, as Israel will also by the accomplishment of His word.

Another consequence that flows from the governmental aspect in which Israel and Jerusalem are looked at in Ezekiel is, that Christ's coming in humiliation is never spoken of there. His glory we have, but not His sufferings. Indeed, properly speaking, the second advent of Christ is not described any more than His first. The results of His presence, His judgements, His reigning in the midst of Israel, are prominent; but neither His cross nor His coming again in the clouds of heaven. Judgement of sin borne by the rejected Messiah is nowhere the thought, but the judicial dealing of the Lord with His people and the nations. A remnant is set apart and spared, and the reserve of God's sovereign grace is disclosed, whereby all is changed where all was lost, and He can and will restore His people and bless them according to all His heart, under the sway of the rightful king. "And my servant David shall be their prince for ever."

Again, from considering the diverse objects of these prophecies, we discover the true solution of their peculiarities. Thus, it is noticed by Dr. H. "that among the predictions against the enemies of the covenant-people, we find none directed against Babylon." But he adds an explanation which ought never to have proceeded from a christian pen — "to what this is to be ascribed, it is difficult to imagine, except it arose from a desire not to give unnecessary offence to the government under which the prophet lived " (p. 9). Is it possible that one who writes thus can rightly hold that Ezekiel was inspired, and his writings the word of God? And, in the next place, if any prophet could have been supposed to be actuated by such motives, it was Daniel, who resided, not in the country only, but in the capital, nay, who stood in the palace of Babylon's most imperious king. Does he shrink from uttering the dirge of Babylon? The very contrary. In the second chapter he opens to the king fearlessly the true meaning of his dream, and in his interpretation — far from weakening — he gives a very personal force to the head of the great image — "Thou art this head of gold;" and closes all with the declaration that an indestructible kingdom, set up by the God of heaven, should consume all these kingdoms, as the little stone was seen to break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold. Still more pointed is Daniel 4:1-37, where Daniel interprets for the king the dream which made Nebuchadnezzar afraid, and filled the prophet with mute astonishment for a short season. And no wonder. Yet did not the prophet shrink from explaining that it was he, Nebuchadnezzar himself, who for his pride of power was doomed to be the object of the most terrible humiliation which the Most High ever inflicted, though mercy was to triumph over judgement in the end. But, thirdly, the judicial scope of Ezekiel required him, under the guidance of the Spirit, to introduce the king of Babylon, not as the first of the bestial empires, (which was reserved for another prophet who predicted it under circumstances still more calculated to silence him, if human prudence ruled,) but as the servant of the Lord in executing judgement upon the apostate people of God, no less than the Gentiles. Ezekiel brings us up to the point when imperial supremacy was entrusted to the king of Babylon, but gives us neither the destruction of that city, nor much less the history and judgement of the imperial power. Jeremiah, in accordance with the Spirit's design by him, gives us the former, (Jeremiah 50:1-46, Jeremiah 51:1-64); Daniel gives us both with the utmost precision (Daniel 2:35; Daniel 2:45; Daniel 5:1-31, Daniel 7:4). That is, Ezekiel gives us the preliminary struggles of the king of Egypt, who wished to be the great imperial head, but fell, as the Assyrian had already fallen, and Nebuchadnezzar received that place in the sovereign disposal of God. But having got there, Ezekiel stops, and again brings forward the ways of God with Israel, when He in the last days falls back on His grace, judges all their oppressors, and re-establishes them as His nation in holiness and glory before all the earth. Therefore it is that the end of his prophecy presents such a full view of God's final dealings with Israel and the

Gentiles, the sanctification of His name in their midst, the proof of His grace, and the return of His glory to rest on an immutable basis. Daniel, on the contrary, just leads you to the brink of this bright era, and there

he concludes, his subject being the course, character, and judgement of the great Gentile empires, as related to the Jews.

There is no reference, therefore, in this prophecy, to what is called "the spiritual kingdom," as men so often deduce from Ezekiel 17:22-24, or from the closing vision. Elsewhere are indications of mercy to the Gentiles; and that during Israel's temporary blindness, but they are foreign to the purpose of God in Ezekiel. Isaiah and Hosea furnished prophetic hints, of which the Holy Ghost, who inspired them, makes fruitful use, when the due time came, by the ministry of the apostle Paul. Here it is another character of events and visions and revelations, which have for their foundation God removing His government from Israel, and God re-establishing it there before all nations. All is fitly closed by the description of a sanctuary, its ritual, and other appurtenances, adapted to an earthly though regenerate people, to Israel on earth, and in no way, nor time, to the Church of the first-born which are written in heaven.

Dr. Henderson is "constrained to abide by the idea of a literal temple," and so far is he right. "That it was the restoration of the material temple, then in ruins, that the prophet had in his eye, is the only hypothesis which fully meets the exigency of the case." Indeed, one has only to read the comments of such as Gill, etc., to see how inevitably the so-called spiritual interpretation drives its advocates into plain and positive contradiction of the New Testament. For the priests are, in this scheme, made to represent christian ministers! An idea more incompatible, not only with the true place of the believer and christian ministry, but with the grace of God as now displayed in the gospel, can scarcely be imagined. This will serve to show how a false prophetic notion invariably tends, if systematically carried out, to overthrow the work or the person of Christ. All errors probably tend to the same point when confronted with the full light of God; but happily His mercy keeps His saints from working them out to their mature and deadly consequences.

Now, it is striking to observe how God has graciously guarded against this spurious spiritualism no less than against Dr. H.'s idea that it refers to what was restored after the return from the Babylonish captivity — a return, by the way, which Ezekiel does not notice. For most important changes are here anticipated, embracing things sacred and political. The divisions of the land among the twelve tribes did not differ more from the ancient arrangement, than did the predicted temple; sacrifices, feasts, etc., from the previous order of Moses and of David. That the feeble remnant under Ezra and Nehemiah rebuilt the city and the sanctuary, according to this pattern, and conformed to these predicted innovations, is contrary to all the evidence of scripture which we possess; and we have ample light upon the restoration, both in a civil and in a religious point of view. The gathering of Israel from the heathen and out of all countries, the remnant knew too well, had not taken place; nor had the gracious work of God in cleansing and renewing them been yet accomplished, much less had the earthly blessings of the kingdom been vouchsafed. (Ezekiel 36:1-38) The dry bones were still unquickened; Ephraim and Judah were as far apart as ever. (Ezekiel 37:1-28) Nor had the last Gentile foe, Gog, made his appearance on the mountains of Israel. (Ezekiel 38:1-23; Ezekiel 39:1-29). There was no pretence to parcel out the land as Ezekiel prescribed, nor to build a temple according to his magnificent scale. It was a day of small things

and the ancient men that had seen the former house wept, when the foundation of the post-captivity temple was laid before their eyes. But among the people who shouted for joy, not one, we presume, fell into so great mistake as Dr. H. Who of these Jews, untaught and unspiritual as most were, could have thought that they who had mercy extended to them in the sight of the Persian kings, to set up the house of God and its desolations, and to have a wall in Judah and Jerusalem, were beholding a temple, whose earthly grandeur was to transcend the house of Solomon, far more than the house which he built outshone the lowly tabernacle of the wilderness?

On the other hand, we agree with Dr. H. that a matter-of-fact sanctuary is meant. The more a reader "studies it, and the more he enters into the minutiae, with the greater force does the conviction rivet itself in his mind. Talk to him about spiritual and mystical meanings, you puzzle and bewilder him. He may admire your ingenuity, and be brought to be half inclined to embrace your theory, but he cannot, after all, rid himself of the notion of a material building and literal ordinances" (p. 189). This is true, and cannot be got rid of by the mysticists. But it is more important to observe that, in the feasts, Pentecost or the feast of weeks has no place. This fact, and it is not the only one of the sort, destroys the notion that the present dispensation was meant. For notoriously that feast is, above all others, the type of the Christian position, which is founded on the death and resurrection of Christ, and characterised by the presence of the Spirit. Doubtless, in the millennium, the Spirit will be poured out on all flesh. Still however blessed a privilege that may be, the presence of Christ the king is much more distinctively what marks the age to come — the answer of glory to the sufferings of the Messiah. Accordingly, as the millennial age is here meant, we have the indispensable Passover and the Tabernacles then fulfilled; but no Pentecost — an absence most unaccountable, if the bearing were to foreshadow the place and privilege of the Church now, but perfectly natural if the future and earthly reign of Christ were intended.

There are many to whom the idea of a material temple, of earthly priesthood, and literal sacrifices, bloody and unbloody, is repulsive, and this not only in the abstract, but because each and all seem opposed to the letter and the spirit of the Epistle to the Hebrews. But these Christians forget that that epistle addresses the "partakers of the heavenly calling," and supposes persons in separation from the mass of the Jewish nation. Suffering on earth, and in relation with Christ on high, in no way applies to the state of things which Ezekiel takes for granted; for there it is Israel, as such who are brought into blessing on earth, reigned over by their long-expected king, and their every foe judged, so as to sanctify and make known Jehovah to all the earth.

Nor is it just to say that such a restitution of earthly rites, etc., is to retrograde. It would be so if men compare the Church's portion, even now, with that of millennial Israel or the Gentiles; but such a comparison is unfair. Rightly viewed, there is decided and most blessed progress in the ways of God. We have had Israel tried and found wanting. We have the Church proved, and still proving itself, just as unfaithful to its high calling and responsibilities. The millennium will be the manifestation of God's kingdom, in both its parts, "earthly things," as well as "heavenly." And what advance more precious or conspicuous! The Church, which had failed here below, will be displayed in unflinching glory above; and Israel, hitherto so rebellious, shall be called the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord, their city no longer forsaken, nor their land desolate. Thus it is a partial view which creates the difficulty. Divine revelation, as a whole, preserves the earthly people and the heavenly Church in their due spheres, without confusion; and shows that in the age to come there will be no more retrogression than in God's past dispensations. For us, no doubt, it

would be going back, but not for Israel, who will then offer intelligently that which sets forth the work of their Messiah.

In a word, then, faith leaves room for all the words of God, and waits on the Spirit for wisdom in applying them. The tendency of Popery has ever been to find in the Christian Church the accomplishment of such prophecies of earthly glory, as are found in Isaiah, Ezekiel, etc. And Popery is in this more consistent than Protestantism; for Popery regards Christianity as an elongation of, and improvement on, the Jewish economy, and finds an earthly high priest, priests, Levites, temple, sacrifices, fasts, feasts, etc., answering to those of the Mosaic system. Protestantism discards all these in profession, if not in practice; but as it in general denies the future and distinctive place of Israel, it arrogates to itself that coveted prize of earthly exaltation, and is thus forced to adopt the mystical principle of interpretation. If not, it falls back on the strange praeterism of Dr. H, which can only see in Gog the past history of Antiochus Epiphanes, and in the glowing pictures of the sanctuary and the land and city the prefiguring of what was done under Ezra and Nehemiah. It is clear that such exposition exposes the word of God to the charge of the grossest exaggeration, and helps on the growing incredulity of these last days. To faith it makes little difference whether God speaks of the past or of the future: the believer cordially accepts all He says and loves to look for a bright morrow.

Vol 01 - What is the Church?

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Do the Old Testament Saints Form Part of It. *

("Does 'the Bride' include the Old Testament Saints?" "Old Testament Saints." Two articles in the "Quarterly Journal of Prophecy," for January and April, 1857.)

Reviews.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, June 1857.

(1st Edition, June 1857 [01:202])

(1) [01:198]

Few questions can compare in importance with those which relate to the nature, calling, privileges, responsibilities, and destiny of "the Church of God." There are indeed questions of foundation-truth, as to God Himself, as to the person and sacrifice of His beloved Son, and as to the application of His saving benefits by the Spirit through faith, which take precedence of all others. But where these, through the mercy of God, are settled questions, and the soul by faith knows God in Christ, through the quickening operation of the Holy Ghost, it finds itself associated with many others in the blessedness to which it is thus introduced; and there can scarcely then be a more important enquiry than this, What has God revealed touching the corporate standing of those who are thus linked together by their enjoyment of the common salvation? In what relation do they stand to God? to Christ? to the Holy Spirit? to one another? and to the world? If these mutual and corporate relations do form a subject of inspired instruction, how much must depend on our reception of it, as to intelligent communion, enlightened obedience, faithful testimony, and fruitfulness in every way to the glory of God.

We hesitate, not to avow our conviction, that God has fully revealed His mind on these subjects; and we believe spiritual acquaintance therewith, to be one of the most pressing wants of Christians generally in the present day. With this conviction, we hail the appearance of the papers before us. Hostile as they are, to what we deem the scripture doctrine of "the Church," their publication indicates the hold which that doctrine has gained on many minds; and it tends at the same time, to promote still further enquiry. Total silence as to this doctrine has, for years, been observed by some, who have viewed its propagation with no friendly eye; and that now they should deem it needful openly to resist it, only shows the extent to which, through the mercy of God, it has forced itself on the attention of His people. Nor do we intend anything unkind to the writer (or writers) of these articles, when we add, that the character of their opposition in no degree abates our confidence in the doctrine they assail. For what mode of discussion have they chosen to adopt? Do they meet the whole question fairly in the face, and examine, and test by scripture, the definition of "the Church," given by those whose views they controvert? Do they consider in detail the array of New Testament evidence, by which that definition is sustained? Do they

demolish thus the position they assail, and afterwards proceed to give their own definition of the principal term in question, demonstrating, by scripture quotations, that such is its universal or even its ordinary signification and use, in God's holy word? To have discussed the question thus, would have brought it fairly to the test of scripture, and would evidently, on the whole, have best promoted the interests of truth. But we see no want of charity in supposing, that this (or some similar mode of discussion) would have been the course adopted, had it afforded any prospect of success. So far from this, is the line actually pursued in these articles, that, evading the primary question as to what "the Church" is, and silently passing over what has been advanced on this subject, they rest their whole case on objections, having reference to the Old Testament saints, and their place in the scene of future glory. This is little more than a collateral, and certainly a very subordinate question. It derives its importance from the bearing it is represented as having on the general subject. Had more direct and weighty arguments been at command, we may be sure, from the animus of these papers, especially the last, that they would have been employed. But as the inferential reasoning on subordinate points which is used, might lead some to prejudge the whole question, and settle down in conclusions unwarranted by scripture, contrary to its scope, and subversive of some of its plainest teachings on the primary and specific subject of what "the Church" really is, we are ready to examine all that these papers contain. But as truth and edification, not controversy and triumph, are the objects we desire to keep in view, the editor of the Quarterly Journal and his contributor (or contributors) must excuse us, if we seek to keep in relief what they have sought to put in the shade, the doctrine of the New Testament as to what constitutes "the Church of God."

1. We believe that what scripture terms "the Church," did not exist in Old Testament times. If it did, where are the passages which prove it? Where in the Old Testament does the phrase occur? Or where is the subject treated of under any other terms? If there be passages in the ancient scriptures which recognise "the Church" as then existing, what could be easier than to produce them? or what so decisive of the question which these articles discuss? But no such passages are produced; and for the best of reasons, that none such can be found. Indeed these articles themselves do not contend that "the Church" existed on earth in Old Testament times. One of them, the second, admits that "Abraham and the Old Testament saints had not the same fullness of light, nor the same dispensational privileges, as were possessed by Peter, and Paul, and John. Neither the Old Testament saints, nor even John the Baptist, who came between the Old Testament and the New, were dispensationally in the kingdom of heaven as an economy on the earth." (pp. 98, 99.) Now we are far from accepting the quiet assumption of the writer, that "the Church" and "the kingdom of heaven" are equivalent terms; but this affects not his admission, that there are dispensational differences between Old Testament saints and such as are under the "economy" at present existing on "earth." His estimate of these differences may be, that they are of little importance; and he may contend that "heaven is not made a transcript of the dispensational differences of earth;" but the question is, In what light does scripture present these differences? They would certainly not seem unimportant, from such words as the following; words, be it remembered, not addressed to "the Church," but to the disciples during the life-time of our Lord on earth. Even at that time we are told, "he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: for I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which you hear, and have not heard them." (Luke 10:23-24.) And the disciples were far from

having at that time heard or seen the whole of what was intended for them. It was long after this, and just on the eve of their Lord's departure, that He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." (John 16:12-13.) Surely, if what they saw and heard, in the earlier stage of their tuition by our Lord Himself, had been the object of longing, but unsatisfied, desire to the saints of former ages, there must be a still greater chasm between all that those Old Testament saints enjoyed, and the blessedness of the disciples, when the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, had come. Dispensational differences there were, as the articles under review admit: but they were of a character such as these articles would never suggest. This will become more apparent as we proceed. Meanwhile, it is well to remember, that it is not even contended in these articles, that "the Church" existed on earth in Old Testament times.

2. There did exist in those ancient days, and that as recognised of God, a state of things quite incompatible with the scriptural conditions of the existence of "the Church." In "the Church" there is neither Jew nor Gentile; while in Old Testament times these words expressed a distinction divinely instituted, and which might on no account be set aside. To neglect the appointed feasts and holy days was, in the last dispensation, a sin so grievous, that Israel's captivity and dispersion are said to be, that the land might "enjoy her sabbaths; as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land, even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate, it shall rest because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it." (Leviticus 26:34-35.) Now, to "observe days, and months, and times, and years," is enough to make an apostle stand in doubt of those who do so. (Galatians 4:10.) Then, there was one place, where the Lord had chosen to place His name, and there alone might He be approached and worshipped. Now, no special sanctity attaches to one place rather than another, but "where two or three are gathered," says our Lord, "in my name, there am I in the midst of them." "The uncircumcised" was then an appellation resting upon all but the favoured, separated race: now we read, "I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." This may surely serve to show, that the differences we are contemplating are not mere variations of circumstance or detail, but radical, fundamental differences. Let it not be forgotten, either, that there were true saints at that time — pardoned, no doubt, and made heirs of ultimate, everlasting felicity, through the retrospective efficacy of Christ's precious blood. But the grace by which such chosen ones were saved, so far from placing them outside the frame-work of the dispensation under which they lived, inclined their hearts to observe, with a faithfulness peculiar to themselves, both the principles and institutions of that economy. With them it was obedience and faithfulness to observe, what it is faithfulness in "the Church" to disregard. How evident that "the Church", not only did not, but could not then exist.

3. It was not even by the incarnation, or the personal ministry of our Lord upon earth, that "the Church" was formed. No doubt the incarnation was an essential pre-requisite to the formation of "the Church," just as it was to the accomplishment of redemption. But redemption was accomplished, not by incarnation, but by the cross. And while the wondrous Person, confessed by Peter as "the Christ, the Son of the living God," was beyond all question "the Rock," on which not "the Church" only, but all who shall be saved everlastingly are built, we have the authority of that Blessed One Himself for the assurance, that but for His death He must have continued "alone." He was the foundation; but it was in His death on the cross that He was laid as such; and in His very reply to Peter, in which He speaks of Himself as the "Rock" on which "the Church" was to be built,

He speaks of the building of it, as a then future work. He does not say "upon this rock I have built," or "am building," but "upon this rock I will build my church." And, as though to intimate at once how He was to be laid as the foundation of this edifice, "from that time forth, began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." (Matthew 16:21.)

"The Church" is again mentioned in Matthew 18:1-35 "tell it to the Church." But here also, our Lord evidently speaks anticipatively of His own departure, and of the time when His name should replace His bodily presence, as the centre around which His disciples should be gathered. John 16:23-24, shows, that while He continued with them, they did not ask in His name, but that they were to do so, when His bodily presence had been withdrawn. One thing is undeniable: that where Christ Himself mentions "the Church" He speaks of its formation as a then future event. The above are the only two instances in which we read of the word being used by Him; and further investigation will show, that where without the use of this term, the subject is contemplated in His discourses, He speaks of the existence of "the Church," as well as of that by which it exists, as dependent on His own departure.

4. It was not till after His ascension, that our Lord baptised with the Holy Ghost, and it is by this baptism, that "the Church" exists. If there be one function or prerogative of Christ more insisted on in the gospels than any other, as essentially distinctive of His person and office, it is that of baptising with the Holy Ghost. It is omitted by none of the evangelists. Their histories of our Lord's forerunner vary in length and in minuteness; but each records his testimony, that the greater, the mightier than he, should "baptise with the Holy Ghost." Each records also, in connection therewith, the descent of the Holy Ghost upon our Lord Himself. But on this point, John the Baptist's testimony, as recorded by the beloved disciple, is of deep and special interest. "And I knew him not: but He that sent me to baptise with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptiseth with the Holy Ghost." (John 1:33.) What function could be more essentially divine than this? Who but a divine person could dispense, as of His own bounty, heaven's richest treasure? Who else could baptise with the Holy Ghost? And yet He to whom this distinctive glory belonged, was Himself a man, undistinguishable from others even by His own forerunner, till marked out to Him by His reception of that which He was afterwards to bestow. How deep and real was the humiliation of the One who had thus "descended" low enough to receive, as man, that gift of the Holy Ghost, which He alone, as God, could bestow! Surely it behoves us, with unshod feet, and in the spirit of lowliest worship, to tread such holy ground, as that on which these wonders unfold themselves.

But when was this Blessed One to baptise with the Holy Ghost? Was this among the miracles of love and mercy with which His service on earth was replete? Or was it reserved as the crowning miracle, which was to signalise His ascension to heaven, when He had been rejected and crucified on earth? With any one familiar with the New Testament, to ask this question is to answer it. It was after His resurrection that our Lord, "being assembled together with" His disciples, "commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me: for John truly baptised with water; but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:5-6). On this passage we would remark:

1. How the Lord refers to the baptism of John; literally quoting his words, as though to place beyond dispute, that the event of which He Himself now spake as imminent, was to be the definite accomplishment of John's well-known prediction concerning Him. The prophecy, and its imminent fulfilment, are placed by our Lord in juxtaposition, that their relation to each other may be perceived by all.

2. This passage demonstrates, that when these words were spoken by the risen Saviour, the baptism with the Holy Ghost had not yet taken place. If the disciples had not received it, on whom could it have been conferred?

3. It is equally clear, that this baptism was none other than the descent of the Holy Ghost, ten days after these words were uttered. The disciples were not to depart from Jerusalem but wait, for they should be baptised with the Holy Ghost "not many days hence."

4. Our Lord identifies this baptism with "the promise of the Father, which, said he, ye have heard of me." Can there be a doubt that He here refers to His closing discourse to His disciples, in John 14:1-31 – John 16:1-33? There, it is admitted by all, the promise of the Spirit is to be understood of the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. And when to all this is added the fact, that the first mention of "the Church" historically, as actually existing, is immediately after the record of this event, it may well be asked how demonstration could be more complete, than that which is thus afforded, that "the Church" began to exist on the day of Pentecost?

"And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." This first historical mention of "the Church," so soon after the descent of the Spirit, is no mere incidental, fortuitous connection of events. It is by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, that "the Church" exists; and there could be no mention of the effect, save anticipatively, before the cause which produces it was in operation. In the chapter in which Paul treats expressly of these subjects — in which he says, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular," — in which he speaks of God having set apostles, prophets, etc., "in the church," — in that very chapter he says, "For by one Spirit we are all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13). Could there be a more express declaration, that it is by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, that "the Church" — "the body of Christ" — exists?

5. What is this baptism of the Holy Ghost? A most momentous question, and of the deepest importance to the correct apprehension of the subject before us. The second of the two articles under review, referring to such as hold the views we are propounding, says, "Abraham and the Old Testament saints, say they, are to be excluded, because they did not receive, whilst on earth, the Holy Spirit, in the same manner * as we have received it, who have lived since Pentecost." Let us see whether Christ and His apostles so speak of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, as to warrant observations tending, as these do (however unconsciously to the writer), to depreciate its importance. Let us see whether they treat it as a mere receiving of the Spirit in a different manner from the Old Testament saints. What is the baptism with the Holy Ghost?

{* The italics are thus printed in the article itself.}

First, as to the expression "received" — "because they (the Old Testament saints) did not receive, while on earth, the Holy Spirit, in the same manner as we." The writer's view evidently is, that the

Old Testament saints, and we who have lived since Pentecost, have all received the Holy Ghost, only in a different manner. Turn then, dear reader, to John 7:37-38. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." What means this wondrous announcement? was it of a blessedness to be at once, during the Saviour's lifetime on earth, experienced by thirsty souls who came to Him to drink, that He thus spake? was it then, at that very time, that such were not only to be themselves refreshed by the living water, but also to be channels through which rivers of it should flow to others? The largeness and graciousness of the Saviour's words might seem to have left them open to this construction. But to prevent this — to prevent all misapprehension as to what those rivers of living were, or as to when they were to flow, the beloved disciple is inspired of God to add, "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet [given]; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." If then, our Lord's own words, authoritatively expounded by the Holy Ghost, are to decide the question, the difference between saints before, and saints after Pentecost, is not a mere difference in the manner of receiving the Spirit. What scripture calls receiving the Spirit had no existence, and could not have, till Jesus was glorified. "The Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive." And as though to preclude the possibility of a question, we are told, "for the Holy Ghost was not yet [given]," — surely then not yet received — "because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

Do we then deny that there were "saints" in Old Testament times? or maintain that before Pentecost, people became saints without the operation of the Spirit? Far be the thought! We have never for a moment questioned the "sainthood" of Abraham, Moses, and others: * nor have we ever imagined that any man, in any age, could become a saint, save by the agency and work of God the Holy Ghost. But scripture distinguishes what our brethren unwittingly confound. It distinguishes "the baptism with the Holy Ghost" — "the gift of the Holy Ghost" — "the receiving of the Holy Ghost" — from those operations of the Spirit by which, equally before and after Pentecost, souls are quickened and renewed. Because the faith that saves, as well as every gracious temper, and holy act resulting therefrom, are, and always have been wrought in fallen man by the Holy Spirit, the inference is drawn, that all saints of all ages have received the Spirit, and that any change since Pentecost has only been in the manner of receiving it. But had not Peter, James, and John, been as surely regenerated by the Spirit, as Abraham, David, or Isaiah? Had not Jesus said to them, "Now ye are clean, through the word which I have spoken to you?" Had He not said of them, "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me: and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me?" And yet, according to John 7:39, they had not "received" the Spirit; "for the Holy Ghost was not yet [given]; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." It was after all this that their risen Lord assured them, "ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

{* But for the seriousness of the whole subject, we could have smiled at the contradiction to which, on the front page of the April No., the Editor of the Quarterly Journal of Prophecy commits himself. We are not sure whether it ever fell to our lot to witness in print so flat a contradiction in terms. His contributor says, "Thus in a tract now before us, we find the words, 'Those risen and glorified saints [mark, reader, saints] who do not form part of the Church.'" To this the Editor appends the following: "This is precisely the Popish theory, which gives the title of saint only to those who have

lived since Christ came." The work quoted (Plain Papers on Prophetic and other Subjects), referring to the faithful in Old Testament times, calls them "saints" in the very passage which is produced. Popery, it seems, withholds from them the title of saints, and only gives it to certain others. This, says the worthy Editor of the Quarterly is "precisely" the same thing! To give and to withhold are, with the Quarterly Journal, identical terms!}

What is this baptism with the Holy Ghost? May we not receive some instruction as to it from the descent of the Spirit on our Lord Himself? He is never said, indeed, to have been baptised with the Holy Ghost, but He is said to have been "anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power" (Acts 10:38). Again, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me," etc. (Luke 4:18). So characteristic is this anointing of the place which Jesus had been ordained to fill, that this is what the very name "Christ" denotes. "The anointed," "Messiah," and "Christ," are but one and the same title of this blessed One, to whom all glory belongs. Evidently it was as man that He received this anointing. But as man He was already perfect; as to His nature He was so from the first; "conceived of the Holy Ghost," His nature, as man, was essentially holy. The meat-offering under the law — emblem of Christ in the perfectness of His life on earth — was compounded with oil, as well as anointed therewith. He did not need the anointing to make Him what He already was, pure, holy, perfect; but He received it as the broad seal, visibly set upon Him, of the ineffable satisfaction with which God His Father viewed Him in the place He had stooped to occupy. "Him hath God the Father sealed" (John 6:27). And seeing that the place to which He had thus stooped was none other than the subject, dependent, creature-place, it behoved Him that all He did, and said, and suffered, should be manifestly not by any power inherent in Him as man, perfectly holy as He was, but by the power of the Holy Ghost. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil: for God was with him." Accordingly, from the moment the Spirit descended like a dove lighting upon Him, we find everything attributed to the Spirit, as the power in which Christ fulfilled His mission. He was "led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil" (Matthew 4:1). "He returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee" (Luke 4:14). "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God," said He, "then the kingdom of God is come unto you" (Matthew 12:28). "Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God" (Hebrews 9:14). Even after His resurrection it is said of Him, "until the day in which He was taken up, after that He through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen" (Acts 1:2). Not only was this blessed One "God over all," — "God manifest in the flesh;" not only was He perfect man, holy and without spot; but because He was so, He was the vessel of the full power of the Holy Ghost, with which He was anointed, and in the power of which His whole work was accomplished. But, until His ascension, He was the alone vessel in which the Spirit thus dwelt and wrought. The disciples were, no doubt, quickened by His divine power as the Son, and the subjects thus, as all saints had ever been, of the regenerating operation of the Spirit. From their Master they had received power also to heal the sick and cast out devils, just as prophets of former days had received such power from God for special ends to be answered by their ministry. For such ends there had been individuals even "filled with the Holy Ghost;" as, for instance, Elizabeth (Luke 1:41), Zacharias (Luke 1:67), and John the Baptist (Luke 1:15). The two former seem to have been so filled for the particular occasion, the latter habitually. But all this is distinct from that of which Jesus was the first and the only perfect example; we mean, the being sealed or anointed with the Holy Ghost, in such sort as to become the temple of His presence, the vessel of His power, so that everything said and

done was the expression of His holiness, and by the working of His power. "The Church," by being baptised with the Holy Ghost, is brought, derivatively and subordinately, into a similarly blessed place. In Christ there was no opposing will or power; while in us alas! there is. He received the anointing, moreover, as the seal of what He was intrinsically, while it is only "in Him," by virtue of His person and work and of our union with Him, that we are "anointed," or "sealed." But, giving full place to these and all other essential differences between the saints and Him who "in all things" must "have the pre-eminence," it still remains true, that by the baptism with the Holy Ghost, saints are now so incorporated with Christ, so one with Him, as to form the vessel of the presence and power of the Holy Ghost. A passage, one verse of which has been already quoted, declares this in the most emphatic terms. Both verses are as follows: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body, SO ALSO IS CHRIST. For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:12-13). So absolutely one are the Head and members by the one Spirit, which has baptised all into one body, that to the whole — Head and members together — the name Christ (the anointed) is given — "SO ALSO IS CHRIST." The whole chapter treats of the operations of the Spirit in this body, in which He dwells. All serve as "the manifestation of the Spirit," (1 Corinthians 12:7), to demonstrate that "it is the same God which worketh all in all" (1 Corinthians 12:6). But whatever variety there may be of gifts, services, or operations, "all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will" (1 Corinthians 12:11). Did anything like this exist in Old Testament times, or at any time prior to the day of Pentecost? Is it not here directly attributed to the baptism with the Holy Ghost? and have we not seen, by the concurrent testimony of several witnesses, that never till Pentecost did this take place? Jesus Himself was anointed with the Holy Ghost on earth. But in that He was alone. To share this holy unction with His people, He had to receive it afresh on high, as the seal of His Father's infinite delight with the whole work He had perfected below. It was to be in answer, also, to His own intercession on high. "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter" (John 14:16). Himself anointed "with the oil of gladness, above his fellows" (Hebrews 1:9), it was to communicate it to them that He thus received it. "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:23). "The Church" is the result.

(2)

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[01:214]

It is true that, even after the formation of the Church, by the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, divine mercy lingered over Jerusalem and her sons, unwilling to give them up, so long as any means of bringing them to repentance was left untried. The expression of this mercy in the special character of Peter's ministry to the Jews, has been already pointed out in the "Bible Treasury" (see p. 41). But connected with this peculiar ministry of the apostle of the circumcision were two remarkable facts. First, the numerous converts to Christ who were its fruit, instead of constituting the Jewish remnant, of which psalmists and prophets had so largely written, as

passing through the final troubles in Judea, and emerging into the light and gladness of millennial times, were "added to the church" — to that new and unique assembly, which had begun to be formed on the day of Pentecost. Secondly, so distinct was this assembly from the Jewish nation,

as such, that when Peter and John had been before the rulers, who had threatened the two apostles, and let them go, we read of these, that "being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them." There now existed within the Jewish community, Gentiles not having yet been called, a perfectly distinct body or corporation to which, as to their own company, the apostles returned, when threatened by the rulers. The rejection of the apostles' testimony — in truth the testimony of the Holy Ghost — by the heads of the nation became, at the same time, increasingly distinct, until at last it was definitively declared in the murder of Stephen. But if Jerusalem and the earth thus close their ears and hearts against the testimony of the Holy Ghost, heaven opens to the dying witness for Jesus, and he sees the glory of God, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God. Death for Christ on earth, and glory with Christ in heaven, are thus shown to be thenceforth the portion of the Church. With the exception of the twelve, the faithful are scattered from Jerusalem, and go to Samaria and beyond, preaching Christ. By special revelation, Peter is sent to the Gentiles; Saul, the persecutor, converted by sovereign grace, when in the full career of opposition to Christ, becomes the apostle of the Gentiles; Antioch, where he is first introduced by Barnabas to the work, becomes itself a centre from which the evangelising testimony goes forth; Jerusalem thus gradually loses the metropolitan place which, even as to the gospel and the Church, it had held in the earliest days of apostolic ministry; and eventually every trace of difference between Jew and Gentile disappears, being swallowed up in that transcendent grace which gathers out from both those who form the one body of the earth-rejected but heaven-enthroned Christ.

No one can read the New Testament without perceiving, that it is to this new assembly, formed at Pentecost, and gradually developed by the power of the indwelling Holy Ghost, till it embraced Gentiles as well as Jews, that the word "Church" is familiarly and habitually applied. "And the Lord added to the church." "And great fear came upon all the church." "At that time there was a great persecution against the church." "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church." "A whole year they assembled themselves with the church." "Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church." "Prayer was made without ceasing of the church." "The church that was at Antioch." "When they were come and had gathered the church together." "Being brought on their way by the church." "When they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church." "Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church." "When he had landed at Cesarea, and gone up and saluted the church." "All the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." "The church of God which is at Corinth." "As I teach everywhere in every church." "Set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church." "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God." "And God hath set some in the church." "He that prophesieth edifieth the church." "Beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it," "Head over all things to the church." "Christ is the head of the church." "Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it." "Nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church." "I speak concerning Christ and the church." "He is the head of the body, the church." "For his body's sake, which is the church." "Nymphas, and the church which is in his house." "The church of the Laodiceans." "The church of

the Thessalonians." "The house of God, which is the church of the living God." "The church in thy house." "The church of the firstborn." "Let him call for the elders of the church." "Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church." " I wrote unto the church." "The church in Ephesus, Smyrna," etc. Such are the occurrences of the word in the new Testament. We have not used a concordance in giving them, and the list may not, therefore, be quite complete. Where the word is used in the plural "churches" we have not given it. But can any one seriously glance through these passages, and deny that they speak of a body or community actually existing on earth, and which only began to exist on earth at Pentecost? Some speak indeed of that body in its totality, from the commencement to the close of its existence on earth: such, for instance, as style it, "the church of God," "the church, which is his body," viz., the body of Christ. Others treat of such a portion of this whole, as exists at any given time, in one place or district, and which forms "the church of God" or "the body of Christ" in that place. Some even contemplate the gathering of those who, in their particular sphere, constitute "the body the church," in this or that believer's house. But where is there a passage which intimates, not to say affirms, that Old Testament saints, or saints on earth during the millennium, form part of the church? If any one maintain that this is the case, it is on him surely that the burden of proof rests. It is the more important to observe this, seeing that we are not aware of any who do maintain, that the Church existed as such, on earth, in Old Testament times; and as to millennial saints, most pre-millenarians would, at all events, allow, that the Church will be in some such sense complete at the beginning of the thousand years, as to be reigning with Christ throughout that period. If then the Old Testament saints are to form part of the church in glory; and if even millennial saints are ultimately to be incorporated therewith, it must be by some act, or acts, of divine power, apart from that which formed the Church on earth at Pentecost, and which continues the process of its formation throughout the present period. And where are we told in scripture of any such act of divine power? And if no such scripture testimony be produced by our brethren, how can we be expected to assent to their conclusions?

But it is time we turned to a more detailed examination of the two papers in the Quarterly Journal. The first begins by allowing that there are "great diversities of degree" among "the innumerable company of angels;" while the next paragraph makes the following important admission: "Analogous to these diversities in that race * of unfallen beings, we find among the redeemed from among the fallen considerable diversity of rank and position." The well-known parable of the talents is first cited; and then we read, "we find mention of the 'general assembly and church of the first-born,' as well as of 'the spirits of just men made perfect,' even as we find in the Apocalypse, not only an innumerable company that no man can number, but also a special subdivision of that company, the 144,000 whose song none can learn." It is not to canvass these statements that we quote them, but to show how much is admitted in favour of the principle, that all the redeemed have not necessarily the same place in the scene of future glory. How far the subsequent reasonings of our contemporary, especially in the second paper, can be reconciled with these primary admissions, is another question. It is satisfactory to find that these admissions are made. For more than a distinction between "the church of the first-born," and "the spirits of just men made perfect," we should scarcely ourselves contend. We are told, moreover, that "these distinctions in glory are subservient, no doubt, to the manifestation of divine sovereignty in the ages to come. New Jerusalem is not built on a flat plain, nor are its palaces all of one height, † and after one model. The land of uprightness has its hills and mountains, its fields and its gardens. One star differeth from another star in glory."

{* Might it not be asked, in passing, Where have we scripture authority for terming the angels "a race?"

† This is a somewhat unfortunate illustration, in view of the Apocalyptic description of the city as a perfect cube, "the length, and the breadth, and the height of it," being equal. True, it is of the city, not of its palaces, that this is written, nor do we remember the passage in which these are mentioned. The whole description of the city is, of course, symbolical. But a poetic style, like that of this article, however suited to the description of Eastern travel and scenery, is not to be trusted in the things of God. The play of imagination may seem harmless; but it will generally be found coming unintentionally into collision with some statement or other of God's word.}

But this is not the whole of what the paper before us concedes. "As to the millennial day," says the writer, "we see it quite consistent with the analogy of divine arrangement elsewhere and at other times, that there should be the risen saints above, and on earth a vast population, like the sea and its waves, who are holy and spiritual men, but are not glorified." The difference is, in this case, attributed to the fact of the millennial saints serving on a different platform from "those who lived amid temptation when Satan was loose, and are therefore rewarded then with the rank of kings." Whether these kings and subjects can both alike form the body of Christ (the one class, as this article puts it, being "raised up members of Christ," and the other, "members of Christ who have not passed through death and resurrection); whether scripture speaks of both as "members of Christ," is part of the question in debate. There can be no question as to the one class; and if scripture does anywhere speak of the other in such terms, nothing can be easier than to produce the passages. All that we now wish to point out is this, that our brethren admit the existence, for the whole millennial period, of differences between the millennial saints, and those whom we believe the New Testament calls "the church" — differences of no less magnitude than those which distinguish men in the flesh from risen and glorified saints. According to the "Quarterly Journal," the saints of the present period, whom we believe to be what scripture terms "the Church," will, throughout the thousand years, be reigning with Christ in glory, while multitudes of saints will be still on earth in bodies of flesh and blood. We contend for no such difference as this between "the Church," and Old Testament saints. We believe that the latter will, with the former, be raised and glorified at the descent of Jesus into the air; and that both will reign with Christ throughout the millennial period. We believe them, nevertheless, to be distinct; and when the writer of this paper in the "Quarterly Journal" shows how the differences he admits between glorified and earthly saints are, for a thousand years, "consistent with the analogy of divine arrangements," we will, by the self-same arguments, show the consistency therewith of such differences between the Church and Old Testament saints as scripture appears to us to recognise.

"But," says the article before us, "nothing of all this affects the question we propose to consider. Does THE BRIDE include the Old Testament saints? That is, it does not necessarily affect that question: for there may be all these diversities, and yet all belong to the one bride," etc. To this we reply, that the admitted existence of certain differences, is, of course, no proof that certain others exist. But if, as is the case in the second article, these other differences are denied, not on the ground of their separate and intrinsic character, but because all who are redeemed, justified, called, and belong to Christ, must therefore "have all things" — "the highest blessings," which any of them enjoy — then the differences, admitted at the opening of this first paper, do most materially "affect the question." They so far affect it that the one paper upsets the other. The

reasonings of the latter article are as decisive against the admissions of the former, as against the views which both are intended to contravene. If, as the second article contends, "heaven is not made a transcript of the dispensational differences of earth," how can "the general assembly and church of the first-born" "be distinguished, as the first paper admits it is, from 'the spirits of just men made perfect?'" Be it, if you please, that the writer of the first paper supposes them to be distinguished only as a part is distinguished from the whole. That is a very real distinction; and it is certainly, in this case, supposed to be "a transcript of the dispensational differences of earth." If "the differences of earth, dispensational or individual, do not continue in heaven," (second paper, page 105,) how can the author of such a statement reconcile it either with the admissions of the first paper, or with those he is himself compelled to make, where he says "there will, indeed, be difference of reward among the members of the one redeemed family, as is taught in the words, 'Be thou over ten cities: be thou over five cities?'" He cannot consistently make the exclusion of difference absolute against us, and partial in regard to such differences as he and the writer of the first paper allow. Differences in heaven are absolutely excluded on the grounds alleged by this writer, or they are not. If they are, he is proved inconsistent with himself, and the second paper absolutely subversive of the first. If they are not, their exclusion cannot be used absolutely against the particular difference in debate; and yet this writer argues thus when his object is to condemn, as subversive of foundation truth, the sentiments of those who hold it as dear and as sacred as he can do himself! But more of this anon. We only, at present, remark on the admissions made by the first writer, and the bearing they have on the question under review.

The first writer * gives a list of arguments said by him to have been alleged against the thought of the Old Testament saints forming part of "the Bride." At these and the writer's replies we will glance seriatim; but we would, in the first place, protest against the idea that we, or any of whom we know, are anxious to prove that the Old Testament saints will not form part of "the Church," or "Bride of Christ," in glory. In itself, this seems to us a very subordinate question: and any prominence which may have been given to it has arisen from the efforts made, first, to assume that Old Testament saints will form part of the glorified Church; and secondly, on this ground, to depress the standard of present Church privilege and enjoyment to the level of what was proper to Old Testament saints. It is this studied and laborious effort to depreciate the Church, or rather the grace manifested towards the Church, which is so evil in its character, and withering in its influence. Supposing its full place given to what God reveals as to the present standing, calling, portion, and hope of the Church, and questions yet entertained as to whether ultimately the Old Testament saints may not become part of it in glory, nothing could be happier than humbly and lovingly to inquire together, what foundation there is in scripture for such a thought. But to assume that the Old Testament saints will surely form part of the Church in glory, and to use this assumption, where it gains credit, to deny all that is at present distinctive of the place and portion assigned to the Church by rich and sovereign grace — this is what cannot be too firmly withstood.

{* One can scarcely suppose these two articles to proceed from the same pen. The first is florid in its style, and kindly in its spirit, but evidently written by one who is not at home in the subject. The second is plain in style, bitter in spirit, and seems to us to be the production of one well acquainted with the question, as it was discussed from ten to twelve years ago. If so, where is the fairness of his reiterating objections, which were then so fully answered, without taking the least notice of the answers?}

We do not remember anywhere to have seen 1 Peter 1:12 quoted to show that the Church will hold a place in glory distinct from that of Old Testament saints. It may have been quoted, and fairly, to show the superiority of the present dispensation to those of former times.

Nor secondly, do we remember Hebrews 3:1, to have been so quoted. We have no doubt that "the heavenly calling" is an expression of wider import than "the church." The fact is, that they against whom the arguments of the second paper are directed (and it is with these only that we are concerned), hold, and are often reproached for holding, that the mystery of the Church's unity by the Holy Ghost with Christ in heaven was specially revealed to Paul, and so not treated of by Peter, who was the apostle of the circumcision, nor even by Paul himself when writing to his Hebrew brethren. The truths ministered by Peter, James, and John, were all, we need not say, consistent with those specially revealed to Paul. Paul, moreover, writes on other subjects as no one would but he, to whom "this dispensation of the grace of God," as he terms it, had been confided. But it is in Ephesians and Colossians that the subject is formally developed.

And so we pass to the third argument, said by the writer to be alleged against the thought of the Old Testament saints forming part of the Church. As it relates to a passage which has largely been discussed in connection with the question before us, we would consider it somewhat more fully. But let us hear the article under review.

"On no stronger grounds," it says, "is Ephesians 3:6, brought forward as excluding them, 'that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.' It is assumed too often, that the 'mystery' was something else than the discovery of that hidden truth, that not Jew only, but Gentile, should share in what Christ had done, not Judea only, but in the end all the world. The promise of the inheritance was not meant here to be spoken of as peculiar to saints of New Testament times. The old saints sang in David's days, and David led the song, 'The righteous shall inherit the earth,' and that pointed to the inheritance which the bride has claim to." This is the whole of what is said in reply to all that has been advanced, not only on the text quoted from Ephesians 3:1-21 but on the doctrine of the epistle throughout. In reply we would observe:

1. You cannot depreciate the portion of "the bride," without equally depreciating the inheritance of the Bridegroom. The very words, expressive of their relation to each other, imply the bride's participation in all that can be shared with her by her Lord.

2. Can then Christ's inheritance, as revealed in the Epistle to the Ephesians, be brought down to the measure of such Old Testament promises as the one here quoted, that the righteous shall inherit the earth?" "That pointed," we are told, "to the inheritance which the Bride has claim to!" Yes, and so does the sovereignty, of Rutland belong to the Queen of Great Britain! But what would be thought of any one who, in treating of the dominions to which the Prince of Wales is heir, should say, "He is to have the sovereignty of Rutland?" The illustration may appear extreme, but the proportion between Rutland and the British Empire is far greater than between "the earth" and Christ's "inheritance," as set forth in the Epistle to the Ephesians. We read there, of the good pleasure which God hath purposed in Himself, in the dispensation of the fullness of times, to gather together (or head up) in one "all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth" (Ephesians 1:10). We read of the working of the mighty power of God, "which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the

heavenlies, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things," (observe it, dear reader!) "to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him which filleth all in all." (Ephesians 1:20; Ephesians 1:23). It is in this headship over all things in heaven as well as on earth, that the Church is associated with Christ, as His body, His fullness.

3. It is after having declared this, and treated of the breaking down of the middle wall of partition by the cross, Jew and Gentile becoming, in Christ Himself, "one new man," even the Jewish sanctuary being superseded and replaced by this living temple, this "habitation of God through the Spirit" — it is after all this, that the apostle begins to treat of "the mystery."

4. It has not been "assumed," as the writer in the Quarterly Journal states, but largely proved, that the "mystery" was something else than the discovery, that not Jew only, but Gentile, should share in what Christ had done, not Judea only, but in the end all the world. Let any one read Ephesians 3:1-21 and the latter part of Colossians 1:1-29 and say whether the apostle does not evidently labour to express, that what had been revealed to him, and by him made known to others, was something new, unprecedented, unique, and previously unrevealed, unheard of, and unknown. But could the matter have been truly represented thus, if all that he meant by "the mystery" was, that Gentiles share in what Christ had done? So far from this being a mystery hid in God, there is nothing which had been more definitely revealed. Had it not been promised and sworn to Abraham, "In thee shall all families," and "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed?" Had not Moses said, "Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people?" Had not both Psalms and prophets largely testified, that "all the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord"? that "Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God"? that in the true Solomon, men shall be blessed, yea, and "all nations call him blessed?" Was he not to "sprinkle many nations," and to be "a light to the Gentiles," and God's "salvation to the ends of the earth?" As every one acquainted with the subject knows, such quotations might be greatly multiplied. How then can it be supposed by any, that it was a "hidden truth," "the mystery" for the first time revealed in the apostolic age, that Gentiles "should share in what Christ had done?"

5. But while the Old Testament explicitly foretells that Gentiles should partake of salvation through Christ, it is always as distinct from Israel, and subordinate thereto, that they are represented in the ancient scriptures. "Ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you." Jerusalem is to be called the throne of the Lord; the sons of strangers are to build up her walls, feed the flocks of her sons, and be their plowmen and vine-dressers; while they themselves are named "the priests of the Lord," "the ministers of our God."

Such are the conditions of Gentile blessing as revealed in the Old Testament, and to be accomplished in the ensuing dispensation. For though certain principles embodied in the prophecies on this subject may and do apply to the present period, it is in the millennium they are to be definitely fulfilled. But "the mystery," of which Paul says so much in Ephesians and Colossians, is that of the present formation of a body, in which all distinction between Jew and Gentile is unknown, by virtue of the union and identification of both with a rejected and glorified Christ. The very verse, quoted in the article we review, speaks of Gentile believers, not only as

fellow-heirs, but also "of the same body." That they should be of the same body, even with Jews, had never been intimated: but that both should be of the same body with Christ, constituting the body of which He is the glorified Head, this was a mystery indeed, the existence and revelation of which amply justifies all that the apostle says.

We have no recollection of Luke 7:28 being used by any in proof of the special place and distinctive glory of the Church. This is the fourth passage alleged to have been so used. It may, like Peter 1: 12, have been employed to show the superiority of the present over former dispensations: but no one who understands the doctrine impugned in the two articles under review would urge this passage in its support. "The kingdom of God," or "of heaven," evidently includes the subjects of the heavenly rule thus designated. The members of the Church are doubtless individually, while on earth, subjects of God's kingdom; but the relation of the Church, as a whole, to Christ, is that of His bride, His body, whose place is to participate in His reign, instead of being its subjects.

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Hebrews 11:40 is treated at considerable length in both papers. In the former it is first sought to be shown that the passage says nothing in favour of any special place being assigned to saints of the present period; and then it is used as a positive argument for the equality of the Old Testament saints with these. The second paper still further considers the passage in both points of view. But the doctrine of the one paper seems to us utterly subversive of that taught by the other. The writer of the January article reasons from what he judges "the better thing" provided for us to be; but in April we are told that the passage "does not teach that God had provided something better for us than for them." The explanation of "the better thing" in the first article we are quite at a loss to understand. First, it is urged "that the apostle was speaking of what these Old Testament saints were yet to obtain (the italics are not ours) in connection with us and along with us." Then it is argued that "they were not without us to be made perfect (i.e., thoroughly set at rest from guilt, and introduced into full confidence toward God)". Are we then really to suppose that these departed saints have yet to obtain rest from guilt, and full confidence toward God? No such depreciation of Old Testament saints as this can justly be charged on such as hold them to be distinct from what scripture calls "the church."

The second paper proposes a new version of the passage altogether. "But if the central clause be placed, as it should be, in a parenthesis, and if the ellipsis be supplied, then all appearance of ambiguity is removed. These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, (God having made a better provision for us than that, viz., that they should at present receive the promise,) in order that they, apart from us, should not be perfected." This is indeed a bold proposal. To insert the demonstrative pronoun "that," and then explain it, as though it were a part of the passage, inserting the explanation also, as a mere supplying of an ellipsis, is to use a liberty with God's word by which it might be made to say anything. In this instance it is used to make the passage say the very opposite of what is said by the words actually found in the Greek.

But let us hear what is said in favour of the change.

"The substantive instruction of the passage is contained in the first and last clauses:— 'they received not the promise, in order that they might not be perfected apart from us.' (choris hemon.) The central parenthetic clause does not teach that God had provided something better for us than for them (that would contradict the word *choris*, apart from); but it teaches that he had provided for us a better thing than to allow that they should be perfected apart from us. The word *choris* (apart from) could not on the other supposition, have been used; for if we had the calling and glory of the Church, and they not, then, indeed, they and we should be perfected 'apart' one from the other, the very thing which this verse declares to be impossible." On all this we remark:

1. that to read the central clause parenthetically is a purely gratuitous change, uncalled for by anything in the passage, which makes good sense just as the translators have left it.
2. To read it parenthetically creates the ellipsis which the writer supplies, and which exists not as the passage stands.
3. The construction of the passage is against the reading the central clause as a parenthesis. The words *peri hemon* and *choris hemon* so connect the two phrases, ("a better thing for us," "that they without us,") as to make the latter dependent on the former. But if so, how could the former be part of a parenthesis?
4. So far is *choris* from excluding the idea of their perfection (that of Old Testament saints) being different from ours, that it is used in passages where similar differences are undeniably recognised. "Without (*choris*) me, ye can do nothing." Does the word here exclude all difference of dignity or glory or power between Christ and His disciples? "The man is not without (*choris*) the woman in the Lord." Does this mean that they are in all respects equal? Why, the whole drift of the passage is in proof of the man's superiority. That is, the word is used in scripture in a sense quite different from that which this writer wishes to fix upon it absolutely in the passage under consideration.

As to the passage itself, and its bearing on the question in debate, so far from its being "the text most relied on to prove that the Old Testament saints are" not included in the glorified Church, we know of no work in which it is so urged. There may be such works, but they have not fallen under our notice. We ourselves have long hesitated as to whether by "the better thing provided for us," was meant our present dispensational privileges, or some special place of future glory, and have never therefore relied on the passage as a proof of the latter. But the present discussion inclines us, more than previously, to the latter view. The distinction made but a few verses farther on between "the spirits of just men made perfect," and "the Church of the first-born ones * which are written in heaven," certainly seems to teach that the class denominated "spirits of just men," will, when made perfect, which is only in resurrection, be still distinct from "the church of the first-born ones written in heaven."

* The word "first-born" is here in the plural, and may be thus rendered. It applies to those of whom the Church consists, not in this text to the One to whom the Church belongs.

The January article closes with a series of numbered paragraphs, which, after all that has been considered, may be very briefly dispatched.

"1. Does the Church not mean the whole body of the redeemed?" The answer is, this is precisely the question at issue, to which these articles give an affirmative, and we a negative reply. Neither therefore can assume their own view, and reason from it, as the writer here does.

"2. If the redeemed all form Christ's body, then all of them of the Old Testament, even as of the New, shall rise to the same glory." Yes, but first prove that "Christ's body" and "the redeemed" are interchangeable terms. Christ is never spoken of as head of the body except as risen and ascended. If He is, let the passages be brought forward. To produce Isaiah 26:19, and thus represent Christ as the head of a "dead body" (!) is the plainest possible confession that no texts more to the purpose could be found by the writer, in the Old Testament.

3. "The Queen in gold of Ophir" is represented by the writer of Psalms 45:1-17 as the bride of "the king." The psalm consists of things he had made "touching the King." No doubt there are principles in common between such scriptures as the Canticles and this psalm, and those in the New Testament which treat of the Church's bridal relation to Christ. Much found in the one may thus, for uses of edification, be applied to the subject of the other. But, still, the subject is distinct. Jerusalem is the King's bride. It is of her that Ezekiel 16:1-63, Isaiah 54:1-17, and Hosea 2:1-23 treat. It is to her people that it is said, "Thy maker is thine husband;" of her land that it is written, "thy land shall be married;" and of herself, "as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." But the Church is "the bride, the Lamb's wife." Betrothed and affianced to Him, during His rejection by Israel and the earth — the lone companion of that rejection, and inheritor of the griefs of which, as the Father's faithful witness and servant, He drank so full a cup — it is in that character of heavenly grace in which alone she has known and confessed her unseen and absent Lord, that she is to be associated with Him in the glory, in that day when the glory shall be revealed.

4. The remarks on the transfiguration take for granted that to be glorified with Christ is equivalent to being "of the church, or bride." But there is nothing said either of the body or bride of Christ in the scripture accounts of the transfiguration. It was "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" of which the favoured three beheld a specimen in the holy mount; and we know of none who question that Old Testament saints will, equally with those who compose the Church, be raised and glorified at Christ's coming.

5. The reasoning on the types needs no comment, as there is not even the pretence of giving scripture authority for the application of them made by the writer. Many seriously dispute that the cherubim were types of the Church.

6. The psalms are referred to in proof that Old Testament saints are to rise in the first resurrection, and to reign as kings in the millennial age. Neither of these positions should we for a moment think of disputing. But when it is said that "the general import and drift of such passages evidently is, that these saints were led by the Holy Spirit to look for the same honour as we of the New Testament Church are led to expect," it does but mournfully evince how this system of interpretation reduces what it calls "the New Testament Church" to the standard of Old Testament truths.

We turn now for a moment to the second paper that we may not omit noticing anything it contains. Its leading arguments have been already considered in their connection with, or contradiction to,

the previous article. It opens by denouncing the doctrine which distinguishes between the Church and the Old Testament saints, as "strange, "novel," "disastrous in its consequences," and "necessarily affecting that which the scripture reveals respecting the redemption that is in Christ." These are heavy charges, indeed so heavy that they ought not to be made unless supported by the most substantial proofs. What then are the proofs by which such charges are supported in the present instance? The only proof alleged is a most glaring misrepresentation of what the question at issue is; and the only evidence brought forward in support of the charge is a quotation which completely repels it. But our readers shall judge for themselves. The question is stated in the following terms:—

"Surely there can be no more important question than this — what is it that gives title of entrance into the Church and all the Church's blessings? Is it not simply and only the redemption that is in the blood of Jesus?"

Undoubtedly it is; and woe to the man whose hopes are based on any other foundation. But is it on the question of the Church's title to glory that this writer is at issue with those whom he opposes? God forbid! They acknowledge, at least equally with him, that redemption in the blood of Christ is the only ground on which any of Adam's race can be entitled to a place in glory. But it is a pure fallacy of this writer to suppose, because the title is the same, that there can be no diversities of glory among those who all, and all alike, owe their blessedness to the blood of Christ, and to that blood alone. Has God ceased to be a sovereign because in His grace He has given Christ to accomplish redemption by His blood? Is the Holy One so limited by His own purely gratuitous provision for man's recovery, as to be precluded by it from bestowing various dignities on those whose only title to anything but perdition is the precious blood of Christ, and the grace which places its value to their account? Let this writer account for the immeasurable difference between the glorified saints and the saved inhabitants of the millennial earth throughout the thousand years; let him show how this diversity can consist with the blessedness of both being based solely on the value of Christ's blood; and let his explanation be what it may, it will serve equally to show how any distinction that God may please to make between one portion of the redeemed and another, throughout eternal ages, is consistent with the same blessed fact.

Besides, what becomes of the millennial saints? They either form part of the Church or they do not. If they do, then all the arguments about the Old Testament saints having part in the first resurrection, and reigning with Christ go for nothing; for here are myriads of the Church who evidently do not share in either. If they do not form part of the Church, then all the reasoning about redemption is null; for here are saints redeemed by Christ's blood, who instead of constituting the Church, are living on the earth, while the Church reigns in glory with her Lord.

But the article under review asserts dogmatically that "the heavenly city is a symbol of corporate condition. It represents the glory of the Church as a whole." "As a whole," let it be remembered: and so positive is the writer on this point, that he adds, "Not to belong to it is spoken of as equivalent to perdition." Now when is it, we ask, that the Church answers to this symbol of its glory "as a whole?" Is it only in the post-millennial, eternal state? Or does not the detailed description of it, as shown to John by the angel, exhibit it in connection with the millennial earth? Are not the leaves of its tree of life for the healing of the nations? And do not the nations [of the saved] walk in the light of the heavenly city. Still "it represents," says this writer, "the glory of the Church as a

whole." Clearly, then, the saved nations of the millennial earth do not form part of the Church: and the conclusion drawn by others as to Old Testament saints, and condemned by him as affecting fundamental truth, follows necessarily, as to millennial saints, from what he himself affirms.

If it should be pleaded that they belong to the Church prospectively, that though not forming part of the city — the Bride — during the thousand years, they are afterwards to be incorporated with it, we answer, that such a plea can never be admitted. First, because it contradicts the writer's own assertion that "the heavenly city represents the glory of the Church as a whole." Secondly, because it contradicts scripture. Is it not at the beginning of the thousand years that it is said, "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready?" But how "ready," if myriads who are to form part of her are yet unborn? And when our Lord says, not of His disciples only who surrounded Him, but of all who should believe on Him through their word, "the glory which thou gavest me I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me," to what epoch does He look forward for the accomplishment of these things? Are they accomplished in the millennial period, when the millennial world beholds in the heavenly city the proof that the Father has loved the saints composing it as He loved His Son? If so, the nations of that period are not part of the Church, for it is already "made perfect in one;" and the nations are spoken of as "the world," distinct and apart from the heavenly saints. And if it be said, in accordance with the objection we are examining, that not till the end of the thousand years will the words of our Lord be accomplished, that the millennial saints are included among those to whom He gives the glory which has been given to Him, and who are finally to be made perfect in one, where in that case is "the world of which our Lord speaks, as knowing by the glory of the Church how the Father has sent the Son and loved the Church as He loved the Son? No "such world" will exist in the eternal state, at least according to the system we are considering: and if its existence could be supposed, it would subvert the system altogether. It is, in fact, untenable. It contradicts itself, and contradicts God's word; and the writer of this second article argues as though he would conceal its inherent weakness by the severity with which he censures the views with which his own system stands contrasted.

Having misstated the point in debate, by representing it as a question between him and others as to the title of entrance into the Church, he proceeds to charge his opponents with excluding Old Testament saints from "the great result of redemption altogether,"* and asks, "And what is the ground of this supposed exclusion? Abraham and the Old Testament saints, say they, are to be excluded, because they did not receive, whilst on earth, the Holy Spirit in the same manner as we have received it who have lived since Pentecost. Such is the doctrine of the appended passage. [A passage extracted from "Plain Papers," etc.] Thus it is taught that our title to belong to the Church of God in glory does not depend on that which we are in Christ, but on that which we are in the Spirit."

{* Just as though redemption had but one result! If he had said that according to his opponents' views, the highest result of redemption is not that exhibited in the case of Old Testament saints, he would have so far done justice to their sentiments. But this would have afforded no ground for the denunciations that follow.}

Would the reader credit it, that the extract from "Plain Papers" which is thus stigmatised, is one in which the following sentences occur? After mentioning Abraham, Moses, and others, as men of faith and referring to the brightness of their devotion and obedience, it affirms,

"They were quickened by the Spirit beyond all doubt. By virtue of the foreseen sacrifice of Christ, they were forgiven and saved. They will all have part in the first resurrection and partake of heavenly glory. † There can be no question as to any of these things The church shares these things, life, justification, resurrection, and heavenly glory, with the saints of Old Testament times; but what constitutes the Church is something distinct from and beyond all these things. It is the actual living unity with Christ and with each other of those who, since Christ's resurrection, are formed into this unity by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven. Was there anything like this in Old Testament times?" (Plain Papers, p. 83.)

{† Is this to exclude them from "the great results of redemption altogether?"}

Can the reader see in this extract any justification of the charges above quoted from the "Quarterly Journal?" Will the writer in the "Quarterly Journal" himself affirm that anything like what is here described existed in Old Testament times? Will he deny that it is this which "constitutes" the Church? Cannot he distinguish between what constitutes a body, and that which entitles anyone to belong to it? Might not the same title, the will of a monarch, for instance, introduce a person both to the family of that monarch and to his cabinet council? But are both constituted alike? Because it was the will of Her Majesty which alone entitled a person to be her secretary of state, must he needs be her consort also? And if this writer in the "Quarterly Journal" has in his haste overlooked so obvious and important a distinction, ought he to make his own carelessness the ground of impugning the orthodoxy of a writer, who, in the very extract produced, (the only one, moreover, that is produced,) repudiates the charge now sought to be fastened upon him? "The sacrifice of Christ" is the alone title mentioned or recognised in the extract, and it is alike recognised for the Church and for the Old Testament saints.

Again, to confound, as the writer does, Christ's headship of "his body the Church" with that federal headship of all the redeemed, in regard to which the first Adam, our sinful federal head, was a "figure of him that was to come," is merely to evince total unacquaintance with what scripture teaches on the former subject. Are we members of Adam's body of his flesh, and of his bones, or merely his offspring? Eve was bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh. The Church is such to Christ, and not merely possessed of a life derived from Him, as is the case with all the redeemed people of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven.

The argument from Galatians is based on a mere assumption: viz., that in it "we who live in this Pentecostal dispensation, are taught respecting our own final blessings." This language is evidently used to express our own highest as well as final blessings. But where does the Epistle itself inform us that it is of our highest blessings that it treats? Many of those blessings of which it does treat we doubtless share with saints of other dispensations. But our being, in so many respects, "blessed with faithful Abraham," by no means proves that nothing special attaches to saints of the present dispensation. As to the editorial note on this paragraph, (asserting that the question discussed by the apostle was, "Are believers in Christ really to get up to Abraham's privileges and standing?") we would ask, Does the editor forget the occasion of the Epistle? Were not certain teachers pretending that it was not enough to believe in Christ, but that to enjoy the

benefits of the Abrahamic covenant the Gentile converts must become Jewish proselytes, be circumcised, and keep the law of Moses? To be children of Abraham had been held out to the Galatians by their deceivers as something most desirable, and as only to be attained by obedience to the law. "You are children of Abraham already," was the apostle's answer: nay, more, "children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." A most pertinent, blessed answer to the sophistry of those who would have subverted their souls. But certainly it is not in connection with such reasonings that we should look for a development of the highest privileges of the saints. Being Christ's we are Abraham's seed, because He is "the seed" to whom the promises were made. But has Christ no higher title than that of "the seed of Abraham?" Why say then that He has no greater or higher blessedness in which to associate us with Himself than that of being Abraham's seed.

It is of the believers at Colosse, and of their fellow-believers in the present dispensation, that Paul predicates the being "circumcised in Christ." So that whatever this expression may imply, its use by the apostles in the passage referred to can prove nothing as to Old Testament saints.

No doubt we are taught in Hebrews 7:1-28 that Abraham had "THE PROMISES." But this is an unfortunate quotation, to prove that no expression could "be more unlimited than that;" seeing that the whole drift of the passage is to show that even Melchisedec, another Old Testament saint, was greater than Abraham.

No one questions that Abraham looked for a heavenly city; but when the writer says, "that heavenly city, is elsewhere termed 'the bride, the Lamb's wife,'" we must be excused for asking some proof of his assertion. If heaven itself, as the object of Abraham's hope, is mentioned in Scripture under the figure of "a city," as well as "a country," are we obliged to identify it with "that great city, the holy Jerusalem," which was shown to John "descending out of heaven from God!" Why should we conclude, if a city be named, that it must be the one city of Revelation 21:1-27, Revelation 22:1-21? Or if a marriage, or bride, be spoken of, why must it of necessity be "the marriage of the Lamb," "the bride, the Lamb's wife?"

Against one misapprehension we must, in concluding, guard. We would not be supposed to confound individual faithfulness with corporate privileges. Many a saint in olden times, with immeasurably inferior light and privileges, walked more closely with God than many, perhaps we might say most, of those to whom the special calling and glory of the Church have been vouchsafed. The righteous Judge of all will surely know how to reward the individual, while His own rich sovereign grace is equally magnified in the blessings common to all, the blessings distinctive of each class, and the new name in the white stone for the individual, secret token as it will be of what is known only to the individual and his Lord.

The Lord keep us near to Himself, and subject in everything to His word.

Vol 01 - Criticism on the Text of the New Testament.

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Reviews

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, November 1857.

(1st. Edition, November [01 279])

* 1. A Course of developed Criticism on passages of the New Testament, materially affected by various readings. By the Rev. Thomas Sheldon Green M.A., etc. London: Samuel Bagster & Sons.

2. A Supplement to the Authorised English Version of the New Testament. By the Rev. F.H. Serivener, M.A. Vol. 1. London: William Pickering.

(1) [01 1857 275]

As reference to the chief MSS. and editors of the Greek Testament may be frequent in this and other papers, it seems desirable to give a brief sketch for the sake of those readers who are not versed in such matters. The first printed Greek Testament was that contained in the Complutensian Polyglott. It was completed, it seems, about the beginning of the year 1514; but difficulties occurred to delay its publication till (after the death of its patron, and at least nominal editor, Cardinal Ximenes in 1517) Pope Leo X. formally sanctioned its issue in 1520. Previously to its publication the celebrated Erasmus brought out his first edition in 1516. There can be little doubt that the less costly volume of the Rotterdam scholar contained a text founded on fewer and inferior MSS. and drawn up with censurable haste, when one considers that the word of God was in question. Indeed, Erasmus himself was sensible of the imperfections of the work, though it was not till 1527 that he availed himself of the help afforded by the Complutensian Bible. The MSS. examined by Erasmus remain for the most part at Bâle, where his first edition was printed; those which were used by the Complutensian editors are supposed to be chiefly at Alcala and Madrid. The last edition of Erasmus bears the date, we believe, of 1535, and this, with extremely few changes, was what R. Stephens adhered to in his third edition (1550), though he also collated, to a certain extent, some MSS. in the Royal Library of Paris, etc. A little later Beza published some five editions, which follow Stephens' very closely. In 1624 appeared the first of the Elzevir editions, and in 1633 their second was published, which presumed to give the "Textus ab omnibus receptus," as they styled it.

In England, Bishops Walton (London Polyglott, 1657) and Fell (twenty years later) made some considerable collations of various readings; but there they stopped. It was in 1707 that Dr. John Mill published his edition, which, like the Elzevir, professed to adopt the text of Stephens' third edition; but at the same time furnished about 30,000 various readings, with notes expressive of his judgement on the more important of them. Kuster's reprint, three years afterwards, furnished additions from a dozen new MSS.

The excellent J.A. Bengel took the first step in 1734 of editing the Greek Testament, or rather the Revelation, according to the best authorities then known. For it is remarkable that even J.J. Wetstein, in his celebrated edition of 1751-2, did not venture to depart from the "Textus Receptus," but set the readings which he thought genuine immediately below the text. His two large volumes are not less remarkable for the mass of MSS., in general carefully collated, than for its copious Greek and Hebrew quotations in illustration of the sentiments, phrases, words, etc. In 1782-8, C.F. Matthæi published his Greek Testament in 12 vols., 8vo., with readings from more than thirty previously uncollated Moscow MSS. But two of these manuscripts contained all the New Testament, and almost all belonged to what is known as the Byzantine family. Nearly about the same time Alter published his text, chiefly from a Vienna MS., with a valuable comparison of some manuscript copies of the Coptic, Slavonic, and Latin versions. Birch soon followed, first with an edition of the gospels in 1788, and afterwards with a collection of various readings of the rest of the New Testament, collated with great care throughout the best libraries of Italy, Austria, Spain, and Denmark.

Even before Matthæi, Alter, and Birch, Griesbach's first edition had appeared (1775-7); but it is the second (1796-1806) which has given that editor so high a place among the critics of the New Testament. He has spared no pains, and neglected no document which was accessible to him. In acumen, too, he was nearly unrivalled.

Dr. M.A. Scholz * was the next editor of importance. He published, in 1830-6, an edition which assumes that the common Constantinopolitan text, met with in the vast majority of more modern copies, is purer than that of the more ancient Alexandrine class to which Griesbach had given (*cæteris paribus*) a decided preference.

* "If the value of a production is to be estimated by the amount of labour which has been spent upon it, Wetstein alone [?] can enter into competition with this Roman divine. For twelve years he was engaged in searching the chief libraries of the continent in quest of manuscripts of the New Testament and its principal versions. He has even extended his travels to the Archipelago and the Greek monasteries of St. Saba, near Jerusalem. By these means he has nearly doubled the list of MSS. of the Greek Testament named by Griesbach and his predecessors. To the 674 MSS. which had been collated or referred to by others, Scholz has added no less than 607, which he enjoys the honour of first making known to the world. It must not, however, be supposed that any large portion of them has been carefully examined by this indefatigable editor; we ought rather to wonder that a private individual could do so much, than to murmur at the slight and cursory manner in which the great bulk of his documents has been inspected. The following table will convey some notion both of what Scholz has effected in this matter, and of what he has been compelled to leave undone.

Scholz's New MSS. CE= Collated entire GP= The greater part SP= In select places C= Cursorily MN= Merely named

CE GP SP C MN Total

MSS. of the Gospel 10 11 159 7 20 207

Evangelistaria 1 5 21 29 62 123

MSS. of the Acts and Cath. Epp. 4 14 28 10 27 83

MSS. of the Pauline Epp. 4 2 11 66 32 115

MSS. of the Apocalpse 1 3 1 20 13 38

Lectonaria 2 1 11 15 12 41

TOTALS 22 36 231 147 166 607

. . . . In truth, so far is his edition from realising his confident boast that it has rendered further investigation on a large scale more indispensable than ever." — Scrivener, pp. 16-19.

In 1831 appeared the first edition of C. Lachmann, a mere manual, without a statement of his principles or his authorities. But the omission has been repaired in his larger edition of 1842-1850. He professes to fill up the plan projected by the famous Dr. Bentley. But we are convinced that, in the two main characteristics of his system of recension, he is rather an antagonist than a disciple. The one is an utter rejection of internal evidence, on the plea that to introduce that element in judging of conflicting readings is rather to interpret than to edit. The other is a slavish and exclusive adhesion to witnesses (MSS., versions, and fathers) before the fifth century. Of course, it is not contended that the internal evidence should be abused to set aside the clear and consentient testimony of external vouchers; but surely it is a most important veto, in the rare instances where a manifest error has very ancient support, as it is an extremely effective casting-vote, where there may seem to be a pretty even balance of outward evidences. And so far was the learned and penetrating Master of Trinity from a mechanical copying of one or two old MSS., that he himself somewhere explicitly states the value of the more modern and even comparatively faulty copies in correcting the occasional slips of the most ancient and the best MSS.

Prof. Tischendorf is the last great editor, whose labours need be noticed. His first edition appeared at Leipsic in 1841; the second, of Leipsic, in 1849, a marked advance on its predecessor, not more in accuracy and fullness of research, than in moderation. In his seventh edition, which is now in course of publication, he has the moral courage and candour to correct many of his immature innovations, and to restore a multitude of ordinarily received readings which his earlier criticism had rashly disturbed. If we can say little in commendation of his first issues at Leipsic and Paris, we may add with truth that his invaluable reprints of some of the best uncial MSS., his laborious and successful collations of the weightiest documents of various sorts and languages throughout the old world, and his generally accurate, prompt, and able application of all to the establishment of the Greek text in as pure a form as possible, and carrying its own proofs in the subjoined authorities, have laid Christian students under deep obligations to him. Indeed, he furnishes in his foot-notes the means, for those who are more jealous for God's word and more cautious in judgement than himself, to set aside the conclusions arrived at in his text.

But it is high time to leave others, and to say a few words upon the works before us. Mr. Green has proved himself, in former labours, to be learned and sensible, even where one is not convinced by his reasons. Of his "Developed Criticism," we cannot speak in the same strong terms of praise as were due to his "Treatise on the Grammar of the New Testament." The tendency appears to grow in him, as in others, to give an overwhelming preponderance to a very few hoary-headed

witnesses. Let him remember that the most acute and experienced of the continental living critics is retracing many a hasty step taken in younger days. In this respect, there is a wholesome wariness in Mr. Scrivener's "Notes," published some years back, though we think that he pushes his maintenance of the common text to excess. For it is well to bear in mind that to accredit received readings, if not scripture, is dangerous, no less than to reject those which really are scripture because of a deficiency in the known extant evidence. It cannot be doubted that there are in the common Greek text intrusions from the hand of man, which must be judged if we would enjoy as we ought the perfect word of God. For the value of that word is the measure of the value of a text as immaculate as can be procured and ascertained. Details we may take up another time, if the Lord will.

(2)

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(1st. Edition, December 1857 [01:295])

[01:291]

Our object, in the present paper, is to give such a sample as our narrow limits may permit, of some remarkable changes which it has been proposed to make in the common text of the Greek Testament. For though God, in His providence, has not failed to watch over His word, yet was it entrusted to the responsibility of man, who has broken down here, as everywhere else. Man has not known how to keep the holy deposit as became him. There were accidental slips of the copyists, as even yet there are, spite of extreme care, not a few errors of the press. Words, clauses, sentences might be, and often were, omitted by oversight. Interchanges of words that bore some resemblance occurred now and then. Then, again, it was not uncommon for marginal notes, originally meant as explanations, etc., to creep into the text through the ignorance or negligence of some after-scribe. Finally, it can hardly be doubted that there are traces of intentional tampering with the copies, occasionally in the way of wholly unfounded additions; more frequently attempts at correcting terms and expressions, grammatical or other supposed errors; and, last of all, assimilations of scripture statements, as, for instance, in the corresponding parts of the four gospels. To these and other kindred causes are due the various readings of the ancient MSS. Numerous as they are, they are not out of proportion to the vast body of the copies.

But the task of correcting the Greek vulgate (i.e., of settling, in each particular case, what were the precise words of the Spirit) is one of no ordinary delicacy. And to us the matter for marvel (we must add, for deep thankfulness) has been the comparative purity, and, indeed, the substantial excellence, of that very "Textus Rec." which it has been of late so much the fashion to despise. It is fully allowed that there are faults in it which not only older and better MSS., but a more careful examination of the then extant documents, might have corrected. Nevertheless, we gravely question whether the critical results of Lachmann, and Tischendorf in his early editions, are preferable on the whole. Sure we are that, in very many instances of serious moment, their latest products are no so trustworthy as yet. For, while the editions of the sixteenth century were formed on insufficient data and were slovenly as to details; the meddling criticism of our own age has made frequent and fearful inroads on the true text. The carelessness of the one and the self-complacent confidence of the other injures to an amount which, if it be not equal in number

and weight, is at least highly discreditable to our era with all its boasted appliances.

This is strong language, but it is hardly so stern a condemnation, we submit, as strict righteousness would demand. The reader must be content with a few sheaves out of an abundant harvest. Every Christian is familiar with the parable of the two sons in Matthew 20:28-31, and with the striking picture their respective conduct afforded — the one who promised ill but afterwards repented, of the despised people who turned from their sins to John the Baptist; and the other of the fair-spoken religious leaders who were willing for a season to rejoice in his light, but soon rejected him and the truth to which he witnessed. Nothing can be clearer than the language of our Lord and its drift. The first son was openly evil and refused his father's will, but afterwards he repents himself and goes as he was commanded. The other answers well and nothing more. Can there be a doubt which of the two did the will of his father? It was "the first;" and such is the testimony of eleven old uncial MSS., the mass of the cursives, and some of the best ancient versions, eastern and western; yet, sad to say, Lachmann and Tischendorf, followed, we believe, by their English imitators, Alford and Tregelles, have boldly made the people give the absurd answer, "The last"! Now this is against the very evidence which themselves adduce. For the Vatican MS. (B) is the sole Greek witness of importance (if not, in fact, the only witness) which gives *ho hysteros* (4 exhibiting *deuteros*, and 13, 69, *ho eschatos*, supported by some versions and fathers). But then it is most unfair to base the proposed change upon this authority; because in the Vatican MS. and its reflectors, the answers of the two sons stand in inverted order; so that in effect the sense is the same as that of the common text. The Cambridge Codex Bezae (D) has the unenviable distinction among the uncials of reading *ho aischatos* (= *ho eschatos*) while it retains the usual order. Manifestly, then, these critics have slipped into the false position of rejecting the overwhelming majority of the best authorities, and of furnishing, as the real text of the evangelist, that which is the reading of not one uncial MS. in existence, for it is neither the order of B nor the text of D; and this in spite of strong and unambiguous internal reasons which fix the right word, and in opposition to their own professed and almost mechanical attachment to the ancient external evidence! It is but fair to observe that Dr. Tischendorf has long abandoned this with many burlesques (as we must call them) on scripture — the more wretched because accompanied by a vast deal of ill-founded pretension to accuracy. But the lesson of the Leipsic Professor seems to have been lost on Mr. Green, who weaves an elaborate cobweb (pp. 23-26) round this plain question. He appears to lean towards *eschatos*, a term stronger than *hysteros*, and he explains it, after a mode unprecedentedly far-fetched, as = *protos*! He takes the second son's answer as the language of a sincerity (!) inconsiderate and fruitless; and in that case, the first son was in the rear of the other, for he had not advanced as far as well-meant profession!! He might as well argue that white = black. Happily, however, such a vagary as this was destined to the ephemeral existence it deserved, if it could be said to deserve existence at all. In a revised or new version of Matthew, which Mr. G. has published since his "Developed Criticism," he has wisely returned to the king's highroad from the bye-path of a crotchety reading and a still more crotchety explanation.

But such uncertainty of sound, painful as it is, is less painful than the dishonour done to the entire closing section of St. Mark. Lachmann, usually presumptuous, did not dare even to bracket a concluding scene worthy of and inseparable from the gospel to which it belongs. Alas! Mr. Green is not afraid to sum up his judgement in these words:— "Thus does the hypothesis of very early interpolation satisfy the body of facts in evidence" (p. 53). Nor is Mr. G. alone. Not to speak of

foreigners, Mr. Alford and Dr. Tregelles will have it that the veritable Mark ends with ephobounto gar, the rest being authentic, but not Mark's. Now we agree with Mr. G.'s admission, that "it cannot be imagined that the evangelist formally brought his narrative to a close at the end of the eighth verse," save only remarking that this is just what Mr. A. and Dr. Tregelles seem to have "imagined." But what does Mr. G. "imagine?" As bad, we fear. Does Mr. G. conceive that the inspired conclusion of St. Mark is lost? or that the surviving sections were inspired and so preserved, and the close of the same evangelist not inspired and so lost? Does Mr. G. fancy that Mark never finished his brief gospel, but left a most important part to be added by another and unknown hand? To what a land of shadows and morass these gentlemen invite us, with the vain inducement of new light! Their inconsistency, too, is as egregious as their doctrine is deplorable. Thus Mr. Alford admits that the authority of Mark 16:9-20, is hardly to be doubted, and withal maintains that it is irreconcilable with the other gospels, as well as disconnected with what goes before. Singular marks, they would seem to us, of authentic scripture! But they are no difficulty to the Dean of C., who holds that the occurrence of demonstrable mistakes in the gospels (as in the Acts of the Apostles) "does not in any way affect the inspiration or the veracity of the evangelists." Assuredly, that cannot be inspired of God wherein Mr. A. can point out demonstrable error.

But we must have done with this shameless Anglo-Germanism, and have only to add that the external evidence is decidedly in favour of this disputed passage. Is the omission of B and of some copies of the Armenian and Arabic versions with a single Latin MS. — is the silence of the Eusebian and Ammonian sections, with the marks in L, etc., to overthrow the vast mass of positive testimony? It seems probable that much of this, if not all, may be accounted for by the difficulty found in harmonising the passage with others; and so the knot was cut, instead of leaving it as it was for the Lord to untie by more patient hands. As to the alleged internal difficulties, we have examined them with care, and believe that the characteristics of the passage confirm and require its reception.

Another notable piece of recent editorship appears in Luke 14:5. The common and true reading, onos, (ass,) has good ancient support, but undoubtedly huios has far more valuable extant MSS in its favour. It will hardly be credited by the uncritical reader that Scholz, Lachmann, Tischendorf, with an admiring herd, have renounced not only spirituality but even common sense, and have consecrated the obvious blunder of these early copies. They represent our Lord as saying, "Which of you shall have a son or an ox," etc. But this, as Mr. G. remarks, quite destroys the reasoning a fortiori — nay, throws the stress on the wrong side of the argument. And why, then, does not Mr. G. deal summarily with such a monster of criticism?

As to the next passages which we refer to, Luke 22:43-44, and Luke 23:34, Mr. Green, we regret to say, seems to be more sceptical than Tischendorf, who prints them without hesitation. The Christian has only to refer to his Bible in order to feel what is endangered.

It will suffice to give two specimens from the fourth gospel.

John 5:3-4, is the first considerable passage which has been improperly disturbed; and here, as in Mark 16:1-20, it is remarkable that the incredulous Lachmann rises up to condemn Tischendorf and Mr. Green. These last omit from ekdechomenon to nosemati, because of its absence, wholly or in part, in three or four first rate MSS. (pr.m.) some other authorities and suspicious circumstances confirming this. Now, to a simple mind, we think that the words of the impotent

man, verse 7, decide the question in favour of the corrected A, C, and of D, E, F, G, H, K, (L in part) M, S, U, delta, etc. They are grounded on the obnoxious statement relative to the troubling of the water, and are hardly intelligible without it. But when men get habituated to the textual manipulation of Germany, the most palpable gaps are turned into an evidence of genuineness, and the omitted words are viewed with the suspicion of being marginal glosses.

Still more blameable appears to us Mr. Green's dealing with John 8:1-59, following Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, and Tregelles. We frankly admit that the passage is wanting in a good many of the best MSS. It is contained, with some variations, in many uncials, and the mass of cursives; it has respectable testimony from versions of nearly every quarter, and from fathers. But it does seem extraordinary that Mr. G. should omit to give the weighty words of Augustine (*De conj. Adult.* 2:), not so much because they positively attest the presence of this portion in the copies of his time, but more because he gives the clear, simple, and satisfactory key to the shiftings of place, the fluctuations of shape, the stigma of distrust, and the non-recognition in Origen, Chrysostom, Tertullian, and many more, where a notice might have been looked for. Enmity to the true faith, according to Augustine, was the cause of its retrenchment. Some unwilling to go so far, would insert it with marks of doubt; others might hide it elsewhere, or more boldly leave a blank; which of itself intimates that its existence was known, but that for some reason it was omitted by those who little appreciated the glory of Christ, or the perfectness and the authority of His word. To say that "the genuineness of the passage cannot be maintained" is the conclusion of Mr. G.! Some of these editors allow it to be true and inspired, but not St. John's: evidently a mere halfway towards discarding it altogether. It could be easily shown, were this the place, that the narrative bears the indelible marks of that disciple's style, and of the design which the Holy Ghost has imprinted on his gospel and on no other book.

With these unfavourable instances of Mr. G. we must close. They will serve to show, in some measure, why we think his "Developed Criticism" superficial and unworthy of unreserved confidence. Other opportunities may offer of referring to many places in the common text where he has succeeded. They are chiefly verbal corrections, and are nowhere perhaps, so numerous and happy as in the Acts of the Apostles (e.g. Acts 1:25; Acts 3:20; Acts 4:27; Acts 6:8; Acts 8:10; Acts 8:27; Acts 9:5-6; Acts 10:6; Acts 11:20; Acts 13:18; Acts 15:17-18; Acts 15:33; Acts 16:7; Acts 18:5; Acts 23:9; and Acts 24:18, if not 6, 7, 8). In the Epistles, we think he is often rash and mistaken. Only four passages in the Apocalypse are discussed briefly but with judgement.

Vol 01 - The Dawning Light of Prophecy.

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Original Contributions.

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"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Revelation 19:10.

(1) [01 1856 014]

The first ray of hope, for fallen man, gleams forth brightly, yet strangely and mysteriously, from the curse pronounced on man's seducer, Satan. "The Lord God said unto the serpent, I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

There is no promise made directly to the fallen pair. There is no positive grace or rescue for them, even shadowed forth. A punitive infliction is pronounced on Satan — ominous of even his destruction; and the "seed of the woman," a certain person thus simply designated, should execute the predicted retribution. The damage to be done to the seducer should exceed that which he had done, and should do, unto man, so far even as a wounded head transcends a wounded heel. Yet this was retribution only, and that on Satan, not deliverance for man, except so far as Satan was concerned. Positive blessedness for the miserable race of men was as yet unrevealed. Still there was a ray of hope presented however mysteriously and indirectly.

2. But positive promise is very shortly afterwards vouchsafed; though mystery still enshrouded the revelation. "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Genesis 12:1-3. In this man, Abram, the son of Terah, of Ur of the Chaldees, there shall be in some way, at some period, the bestowment of "blessedness," that is happiness, well-being, upon all the families of man. The nature of the predicted and promised happiness is not revealed. Nothing is made known as to its degree or its duration. The mode of its accomplishment is not explained. It shall be "in Abram." How in him? Nothing further is unfolded. Yet there is positive foundation here for both faith and hope. God hath spoken, and he will assuredly perform. Man shall one day be happy again. This shall be accomplished in some way, through this certain Hebrew, Abram (not as yet Abraham), the son of Terah.

3. But not through him directly. The direct accomplisher of this wondrous blessedness should be a certain one of Abraham's seed. This further intimation comes out in connection with the mysterious record of a transaction having reference to sacrifice; in which the only son of this Abraham had

been, at God's command, virtually slain and offered up. "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, that because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore, and thy seed shall possess the gate of thine enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice." Genesis 22:16-18. The blessedness to the nations shall flow through a certain One of his seed; not through his seeds, "as of many," in the plural. But through his one grain of seed, in the singular. But through which one of all the promised multitude, innumerable as the stars, or the ocean's sands? The promise does not specify this, and faith must wait, and hope must build upon the certainty actually proclaimed. Universal happiness is once more predicted. As it had been before declared that the "woman's seed" should inflict vengeance on Satan; so now it is further foretold that "Abraham's seed" shall bring in positive blessedness. Thus dawns the light of prophecy — mysterious and extremely undefined as yet; but still sure, and full of cheering import.

There were also mystic rites and sacrifices. These had somehow obtained almost universally among the sons of men. They too, seemed certainly to denote something having reference to release from sin, and from its consequences. But of these types we do not speak; the word of prophecy being our present theme.

4. "And he took up his parable, and said —

Balaam the son of Beor hath said, — And the man whose eyes are open hath said:

He hath said, which heard the words of God, — And knew the knowledge of the Most High,

Which saw the vision of the Almighty, — Falling into a trance, but having his eyes open:

I shall see him, but not now:— I shall behold him, but not nigh:

There shall come a Star out of Jacob, — And a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel,

And shall smite the corners of Moab,

And destroy all the children of Sheth.

And Edom shall be a possession, — Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies;

And Israel shall do valiantly.

Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion,

And shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.

And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said,

Amalek was the first of the nations; — But his latter end shall be that he perish for ever.

And he looked on the Kenites, and took up his parable, and said,

Strong is thy dwelling-place, — And thou puttest thy nest in a rock.

Nevertheless the Kenite shall be wasted, — Until Asshur shall carry thee away captive.

And he took up his parable, and said,

Alas! who shall live when God doeth this!" (Numbers 24:15-23.)

How brightly, amidst all the mystery of it, does the light shine forth from this very early prophecy! There should come one, whom Balaam himself should see; yet "not now," but in the future. The prophet should himself behold this majestically announced One; but "not nigh," not, to man's eye, with near approach. The mysterious One, thus introduced, should be as a "Star," and he should wield a "sceptre." He should spring forth from Israel. He should "have dominion"; but apparently universal judgements must introduce it. Moab and Sheth, Edom and Seir, Amalek and the Kenite — in the persons of their descendants, at some un-named future period (a remote one according to the previous intimations of the prophet) should fall beneath the avenging power of the predicted potentate. And the solemn conclusion wrung from the lips of the affrighted seer, sheds further light upon the whole announcement. "And he took up his parable and said, Alas, who shall live when God doeth this!" There shall come a day, connected with the introduction of the sceptre and dominion of the predicted potentate — a day so great and terrible as to place in apparent jeopardy the lives of all the sons of men. Who shall live when God doeth this? The flood had gone over the earth. A promise, with seven-fold perfectness of repetition, had been made, * that no more should all flesh perish by a flood of waters. But here is apparently another universal — or all but universal — judgement predicted. "Who shall live when God doeth this?" God's Sovereign must assume his power in such a mode; at so terrible a crisis.

{* See Genesis 9:9; Genesis 9:11-13; Genesis 9:15-17.}

Three grand events already dawn in the prophetic page. The head of Satan shall be bruised, the families of all the earth shall one day be made happy, but there must intervene a day so fearful as to call forth from lips controlled, however unwillingly, by inspiration, the portentous exclamation, "Who shall live when God doeth this?" A certain One of the woman's seed — a certain "He" — should inflict the sentence upon the seducer. A certain One Seed, not further indicated as yet from the innumerable host which should descend from Abraham's loins, should accomplish the promised blessedness. A certain "Star" and "Sceptre" from Israel's progeny should execute the apparently universal judgement — should seize the apparently universal dominion.

5. Job, though reprov'd of God, for having "darkened counsel by words without knowledge," and having to confess with shame and sorrow at the last,

"Therefore have I uttered that I understood not;

Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not,"

yet furnishes a bright prophetic ray — more than a ray. Venturing to speak with reference to future resurrection, and giving utterance to a notion that there should be no resurrection till the end of all things — "till the heavens be no more" (Job 14:10-12), venturing thus to speak, he was remonstrated with thereon by him who only could pronounce the truth with certainty. Job said,

"Man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

As, the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up,

So man lieth down and riseth not;

Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep."

These words fell not unnoticed from the lips of the venerable, yet troubled and confused, sufferer. With other unadvised assertions, they were plainly taken up when, in the end, God himself addressed himself to Job. "Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?

Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?

Or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?

Have the gates of death been opened unto thee?

Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?"

Job 38:1-2; Job 38:4; Job 38:16-17

How then should he adventure the assertion, that:

"As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up,

So man lieth down and riseth not till the heavens be no more"?

The order of the resurrection was not as yet revealed. Only Job must not assert what would directly contradict full revelations which should be made afterwards. Yet even Job could say:

"Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!

That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth;

And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another;

Though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19:23-27.

His wondrous words were "written" — yea, "printed in a book," whatever was the meaning of Job's very words, so rendered. And truly in this case, the words of Job were words of knowledge — divinely imparted knowledge. In the subsequent light we discern this light. A "Redeemer" should one day stand upon the earth. Job knew this; and that, though his body should become the food of worms, yet in his flesh he should see God. He knew that he should die, and rise again. Yea, with the wise woman of Tekoah, he could say with certainty, "We must needs die"; or with the yet wiser writer of the book of Ecclesiastes, "The living know that they shall die." The men of that age could generally affirm that with certainty. The subsequent unfolding to christians, when the risen Christ had departed, shortly to return, — the subsequent unfolding to christians, of the mystery that they all "shall not sleep," did not affect the question as to these children of a previous dispensation. They must die. Yet those who had wisdom knew that they should rise again. Job at the least was

well assured of this. And his memorable words, written in the BOOK OF BOOKS for ever, thus furnish the first definite declaration of a life beyond the death man's sin had introduced.

6. The light breaks in upon us as the waters of a flood, when we approach the times and the prophetic ministry of David.

"David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high,
The anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,
The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.
The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me."

Such is the emphatic assertion of his inspiration. Such is the glowing language in which he tells how he was "moved of the Holy Ghost."

When his heart "indited a good matter," and "his tongue was as the pen of a ready writer," he poured forth predictions of a glorious future to be brought in by the authority and might of One who should, at some future period, arise to rule the earth (Psalms 45:1-17). When the utmost wishes of his heart were exhausted — when "the prayers of David the son of Jesse were ended," he had just rendered worship on the same account.

"His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun:

And men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.

And blessed be his glorious name for ever:

And let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen and Amen.

The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended."

Psalms 72:17-20.

And when the hour had come for him to die, his last words were employed in the most beautiful utterance of prophecy as to the same glorious person and his day of equity and mercy — a day however, in each case, announced as being introduced by solemn and exterminating judgements upon the wicked. There is much of mystery still, yet the light breaks in apace. We add only, for the present, those "last words of David:" —

"Now these be the last words of David.

David the son of Jesse said, — And the man who was raised up on high,
The anointed of the God of Jacob, — And the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,
The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, — And his word was in my tongue.
The God of Israel said, — The Rock of Israel spake to me,
He that ruleth over men must be just, — Ruling in the fear of God.

And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth,
Even a morning without clouds;
As the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.
Although my house be not so with God;
Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, — Ordered in all things, and sure:
For this is all my salvation, and all my desire, — Although he make it not to grow.
But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away,
Because they cannot be taken with hands."

2 Samuel 23:1-6.

The light thrown upon the future by the successive revelations of the book of Psalms may well furnish the matter for a subsequent meditation. A thousand such would fail to set it adequately forth to view.

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[01 1856 031]

The Book of Psalms opens with a description of the truly happy man of the Jewish dispensation — a righteous person; a Jew, obedient, and so blessed, or happy in the blessing of Jehovah upon his earthly affairs. Negatively described, he

"Walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly,

Nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

Positively,

"His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night."

Such an one, it is said

"Shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water,

That bringeth forth his fruit in his season;

His leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

There is a deep lesson for this day in all this. The source of all true prosperity, of all spiritual prosperity, is here unfolded:

"His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night."

This is the true place of never-failing fruitfulness and prosperity. This is the sure fountain of blessedness indeed. May it be ours to discern this fountain and ever to abide closely thereby.

Prophetic testimony immediately follows this introductory Psalm:

"I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me,

Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance,

And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron,

Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

Such is the announcement which introduces us to the great prophetic field of the Book of Psalms.

In the previous part of this psalm, the potentates of the earth become confederates in revolt against Jehovah.

"The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together,

Against the Lord, and against his anointed (or, his Christ), saying,

Let us break their bands assunder, and cast away their cords from us."

But,

"He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision."

And

"Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure."

But when shall this take place? The prophetic announcement already quoted informs us.

Jehovah hath "set his king upon his holy hill of Zion": in purpose this is already done. "Yet have I set my king"; notwithstanding all the heathen rage, and vain imaginings of these confederates:

"Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."

I have surely exalted him to Israel's throne. A certain "anointed one" must reign in Zion. But who is he? Hear ye Jehovah's king.

"I will declare the decree; — the Lord hath said unto me,

Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."

Wonderful progress of the dawning light! This Christ — this "anointed one" — of Jehovah, is also JEHOVAH'S SON. And here is the foundation of his sovereignty. He is the heir of Jehovah. Who then shall dispute his claim to the dominion of the earth! The potentates of earth issue their proclamations and manifestos; this is the sovereign proclamation of Jehovah's Son and King:—

"I will declare the decree, the Lord hath said unto me,

Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance,

And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

But how will the actual possession of this promised sway over the wide realms of earth be obtained? The kings and rulers set themselves in opposition to this transfer of their power. How shall it be effected? Hearken to the answer afforded in this Scripture, ye who speak and think only of peaceful, quiet progress of the truth:

"Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;

Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

It is judgement — a crisis of sudden, destructive judgement, which must introduce the reign of Jehovah's Son and King. Surely there will be conversion too; and that by the gospel. This we shall see, even in the book before us. But this dread crisis also must surely come and pass by, before the "uttermost parts of the earth" become the possession of Messiah.

How does the light of prophecy, even as the pathway of the just, "shine more and more." The "seed" of the woman shall inflict stern retribution on the serpent. The "seed" of Abraham shall restore happiness to fallen man. There shall come out of Jacob, a "star" and a "sceptre," who shall have dominion — one who shall execute such judgement as to cause the exclamation, "Who shall live when God doeth this"! A prophet, like unto Moses, shall arise, and all hearken unto him. A Redeemer shall stand upon the earth, in the latter day; and in resurrection shall Job behold him. Who is the wondrous One, in whom all these prophecies shall be concentrated? Surely, the psalm we have now glanced at seems to afford an answer:— In Jehovah's anointed one, even in Jehovah's Son. Yet how much of mystery still remained.

The Book of Psalms is pervaded by prophetic utterances such as the foregoing. The second Psalm may serve as the key to very much that follows in the book.

In this wondrous book indeed, there are poured forth the deep exercises of the heart both of David, and of the saints of his dispensation. Their loud hallelujahs also, ascend unto their own Jehovah. Whilst, in strict accordance with the principle of righteousness — enforced righteousness; "eye for eye, and tooth for tooth," which characterised their economy and age, they are heard calling ever and anon, for holy vengeance on those who were their foes.

There are also passages in many of these psalms, shadowing forth mysteriously some deep and dreadful tragedy — strangely connected with the person of the predicted future Sovereign. But who, with the light only which those psalms afford, could apprehend their import, as to all this? Scarcely could those holy men of old, by whom the Spirit spake these mysterious intimations, do otherwise than "search diligently, what or what manner of time, the Spirit which was in them did signify." But "not unto themselves" did they "minister those things." In the present age fuller apprehension is vouchsafed. Yet how much that was mysterious remained to them.

There were some grand features, however, which even then were revealed with much definiteness. Let us go on, then, to trace yet further the dawning light of prophecy.

In the well known eighth Psalm, there is one spoken of — a son of man, who is by Jehovah "crowned with glory and honour," and "made to have dominion over the works of his hands." This is one, who is "ordained to still the enemy and the avenger;" and who causes Jehovah's name to be "excellent in all the earth." "All things" are "put under his feet." This headship must be a future one. The first man cannot be the one intended here. We see not yet all things so put under any one. The succeeding psalm (Psalms 9:1-20) speaks similarly. How much of the Book of Psalms is occupied with language such as this. Who, that has applied them to the past, has not felt the unpleasant impression of exaggeration and hyperbole, on reading such magnificent announcements? But, no! they are the true sayings of God. The future day shall accomplish them in reality and fullness.

There is a further feature revealed in this majestic Psalm, even one of grace:

"They that know thy name will put their trust in thee."

There is not much said, but a bright ray beams forth. Jehovah's name shall, in that future day, be so made known, as that it shall be the object of confidence, and the place of refuge to the needy. Blessed prospect! as yet distant, and but dimly seen; but sure and never-failing, for the mouth of Israel's God hath spoken it.

Psalms 10:1-18, also, yields its tribute of testimony:

"The Lord is king for ever and ever:— the heathen are perished out of his land."

There shall come this glorious day, then, when "the man of the earth shall no more oppress." How blessed shall the day be, of the future King!

What shall be said of the mysterious course of exercise of Psalms 22:1-31.? There is One who has been "cast upon the Lord from his youth," and "made to hope in him, even from his mother's belly." He has been righteous throughout his course. Yet this One is heard exclaiming, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Sorrows and woes encompass him: they have "pierced his hands and his feet:" he is "brought into the dust of death." They "part his garments among them, and cast lots upon his vesture." Yet he is "heard" at length, and "helped," "saved," and "delivered," and, triumphantly, he then becomes the leader of Jehovah's congregation. "I will declare thy name, etc. The result is universal blessing. How much of mystery was there left resting on all this; and yet how much for faith to rest upon, and for hope to cling to! But "not unto themselves did they minister those things, but unto us." How blessed are our ears!

But the mystery is deepened by the revelation itself, of Psalms 45:1-17. The writer's heart is fired, and his tongue as the pen of a ready writer. He pours forth a strain of chastened, adoring eulogy. He "speaks of the things which he has made touching THE KING." (Psalms 45:2-7) What wondrous speech is this! The future king, of whom so many wondrous things have been predicted already, is here addressed as being GOD. And that in no such style as elsewhere it was said to some.

"I have said, ye are Gods; and all of you are children of the Most High; but, ye shall die like men."

The strain here is unqualified, and absolute: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." This is spoken to the King. Yet, it is immediately added, "God, thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of

gladness." Who can explain this mystery? Faith must wait. "Not unto themselves did they minister those things." But ponder well the glory with which this Psalm is filled. Yet further, there is a bride presented to this potentate, in this Psalm: "Hearken, O daughter," etc. This must be the daughter of Zion. She is not composed of both Jew and Gentile, as the church is. She has one people and one parentage naturally. The Gentile is "there with a gift" (Psalms 45:12); but is not part of the bride. It is an earthly, though so glorious a scene. The Psalmist thus concludes:

"I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations:

Therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever."

The Psalm which follows (Psalms 46:1-11.) is exceedingly majestic. The same splendour of prophetic intimation of a glorious future, prevails here also. But there is an additional feature in this Psalm. "The city of God," the "place of the tabernacles of the Most High," filled with his glory, is his special abode. This is manifestly David's own city, Jerusalem. Yet this scene of blessedness is to be realised only, when, at some future period, Jehovah shall have "made wars to cease to the end of the earth," and thus be "exalted among the heathen," or Gentiles; as well as in His own chosen city. There is no intimation of any heavenly Jerusalem, here. That must be the subject of some future revelation. Let us learn carefully what that is, which the Spirit really unfolds, in each successive passage.

Psalms 67:1-7 points forward to a day, when God's "ways shall be known on earth, and his saving health among all nations." It is added:

"Then shall the earth yield her increase; — and God, even our own God, shall bless us.

God shall bless us; — and all the ends of the earth shall fear him."

Israel's own God shall bless them; but all the ends of the earth, also, shall know his saving health.

Psalms 72:1-20 enters, as is well known, at great length into the same wondrous theme. There shall arise a king, whose dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth; they that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, and his enemies shall lick the dust. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him. He shall be feared as long as the sun and the moon endure; throughout all generations. His gentle sway shall be like rain upon the mown grass; and as showers that water the earth. In that day, the poor, the needy, the distressed, and him that had no helper previously, shall be cared for, rescued, relieved, and blessed. Yea, all men shall be blessed in Him, all nations shall call him blessed. The whole earth shall be filled with his glory. The Jehovah Elohim, the Elohim of Israel, shall effect this wondrous revolution. David's heart was full; his utmost wishes satisfied. Yea, it was beyond all that he could have asked or thought. His repeated "Amen" closes the strain; and we are merely informed, in the concluding verse that, "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." David's full heart was relieved; his ready utterance recorded; his uttermost desire expressed. David, himself, had nothing beyond this to say.

Psalms 96:1-13 concludes its lofty course of worship and prediction in the following strain: "Let the heavens rejoice, etc." Psalms 98:1-9 concludes almost precisely in the same words. Jehovah will come to rule the earth: "he cometh," "he cometh." There is intimation of a new mode of manifestation of his presence. He shall be present as he was not previously. Thus much is plainly

predicted. Still faith must wait, and expectation be held in suspense.

Psalms 102:1-28, sheds some further light, "Thou shalt arise," etc. Such is the theme of the Psalm. But it is added,

"When the Lord shall build up Zion. — he shall appear in his glory."

It is surely Zion the earthly — Israel's actual, literal, metropolis, that is here spoken of. No heavenly Zion was revealed to the saints of that day. The heavenly church was an unrevealed mystery then, Ephesians 3:1-10. Let this be pondered well. The heavenly Zion shall have been built up to completion before the Lord appears in glory. But here is a Zion which shall be raised up from its state of ruined stones and dust, when the Lord shall appear in his glory. This shall be the time, too, when the heathen nations, also, shall learn to fear Jehovah's name. There shall be an "appearing in glory" when Jerusalem shall be rebuilt unto the Lord, and the Gentiles converted to him. Further revelation, however, must declare what this "appearing in glory" may signify.

One other Psalm only will we cite, (Psalms 110:1-7) "The Lord said unto my Lord," etc. The future king must first be exalted to Jehovah's own right hand. Will it be from thence that he will come when he appears in glory? Without any further revelation, the thought is already rendered probable. But what increasing wonders crowd upon us! What, or what manner of time, may this mysterious spirit of prediction signify? How earnestly to be desired is further light! What unimagined events await the future day! A further intimation also is, for the first time, vouchsafed in this Psalm. The future king shall be a Priest; "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek." A further theme of wonder now presents itself. Light dawns upon yet another topic for earnest contemplation. Blessed ray of peaceful hope! Here is priesthood too, eternal priesthood. A priest is one who is ordained to offer sacrifices for the guilty. The institutions of Israel's economy had put this beyond question already. And what a priest! The great future potentate shall exercise the mediatorial office. Blessed door of hope! But for whom shall he act? What victim shall he immolate? With what success? What, or what manner of time, does this spirit of prediction signify? How earnestly is farther light to be desired. How does the burdened, affrighted, conscience of a law-condemned one yearn after certainty! "Those bulls and goats — can they take hence my heavy load?" They shadowed forth something remedial. What can that something be? Still mystery enshrouds; still faith must wait. "Not unto themselves," did those prophets "minister those things."

But there had been revealed abundant matter for triumphant worship. "Hallelujah! hallelujah!" Such is the grand burden of the closing portion of the book of Psalms. The spirit of thanksgiving prevails, more and more, as the volume draws to its close. The concluding Psalms are but one vast, majestic Hallelujah chorus. Yet the character of righteousness is still maintained; and the future day of equity set forth. Psalms 149:1-9. Only hallelujahs follow.

Such is the prophetic testimony of the Book of Psalms. The fuller and yet more specific revelations given by Isaiah, may properly engage our attention, in our next.

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The condition of Judah and Israel in Isaiah's day, was low and sorrowful indeed. The "whole head was sick and the whole heart was faint." The people were "laden with iniquity;" they had "forsaken the Lord, and provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger." And Isaiah's first prophetic mission seems to have been one denouncing lengthened period of heaviest woe against the nation.

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people,

Hear ye indeed, but understand not; — and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

Make the heart of this people fat, — and make their ears heavy, mid shut their eyes;

Lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears,

And understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered,

Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, — and the houses without man,

And the land be utterly desolate,

And the Lord have removed men far away,

And there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land." (Isaiah 6:8-12)

Here then we have a definite revelation of the judicial blindness, and the prolonged dispersion of the nation. But we have also a ray of hope, even here. "As a teil-tree and an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves, so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof." The destruction shall not be an utter one. The stock of the nation shall be preserved to germinate again when all the judgements shall be overpast. Such is one of the earliest of Isaiah's revelations.

2. In Isaiah 2:1-22 (which it would appear was of a date subsequent to the vision of chapter 6.) we have the day of future blessedness, with the great and terrible day which shall introduce it, depicted in most express and definite language. We present a few verses of this well known chapter.

"And it shall come to pass in the last days,

That the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains

And shall be exalted above the hills;— and all nations shall flow unto it.

And many people shall go and say,

Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, — to the house of the God of Jacob;

And he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths:

For out of Zion shall go forth the law, — and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

And he shall judge among the nations, — and shall rebuke many people:

And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, — and their spears into pruning-hooks;

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, — neither shall they learn war any more." (Isaiah 2:2-4.)

The procession of the "word of the Lord from Jerusalem" shall, "in the last days," constitute Mount Zion the most honoured and exalted of all the sites of cities. The religion of the God of Israel shall thence spread throughout all nations. Yet "judgement" and "rebuke" must be inflicted. Then shall the nations learn the art of war no more. The character of the predicted judgement is more definitely revealed thus:—

"Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust,

For fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty.

The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down,

And the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

For the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty,

And upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low."

And the idols he shall utterly abolish.

And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, — and into the caves of the earth,

For fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty,

When he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold,

Which they made each one for himself to worship, — to the moles and to the bats;

to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the clefts of the ragged rocks,

For fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty,

When he ariseth to shake terribly the earth." (Isaiah 2:10-12; Isaiah 2:18-21.)

Such is the introduction of the "good time" of the future. None, we presume, will allege any previous fulfilment of such prophecies as this. "The great and terrible day of the Lord," then, is already placed in fullest prominence between us and the reign of the Messiah. It is not the quiet progress of the gathering out of the nations of a little flock, which, whilst little, shall be taken up into heaven, as a whole. It is not an ecclesia — a church called out — from amongst the nations. It is a subjugation of the nations themselves. When the nations are subdued, there will be needed no ecclesia, no out-calling of the saints. The ecclesia will have been glorified and transferred to heaven at the commencement of this period. The revelations of the New Testament enable us to say this. But the prediction before us is not one of calling out, but of universal subjugation. The two things are distinct. The one cannot synchronise with the other. Let us discern the things which differ, and seek to give to each scripture we consider its genuine interpretation.

3. We now present the bright light of the revelation of Isaiah 9:1-21.

"For unto us a child is born, — unto us a son is given:

And the government shall be upon his shoulder:— and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end,

Upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom;— to order it, and to establish it

With judgement and with justice, from henceforth even for ever.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." (Isaiah 9:6-7.)

The light dawns apace. We fear to weaken, by any comments on this passage, the impression of the whole.

We remark, however, the perpetuity of the "throne of David." There shall be One who shall occupy it "thenceforth and ever." It is not a headship of the church; in which church there is "neither Jew nor Gentile." Such a place was never occupied by David. David was the sovereign of the Jewish nation. To rule over that nation is to sit on David's throne. To contend respecting any literal material throne, is but to trifle, and to degrade this theme. Even the place of the sovereign's presence is no essential of the question. Other revelations may determine that; but the thought here expressed is, that the very sovereignty which David exercised — the sovereignty over that very nation which had David for its king, shall come, in perpetuity, into Messiah's hands. Where his royal residence shall be is not in this prediction brought into question. The grand thought is, that the Wondrous One, whose names of majesty and glory are here given, shall exercise the very sovereignty that David held so long ago. Not until the nation be reconstituted, by the restoration of its scattered members, can this take place. Not until the nation, as a nation, has submitted to the true Messiah's sway, will "David's throne" be occupied as this prophecy reveals. The birth of the Sovereign is not necessarily his accession to the throne. The actual assumption of the reins of power — the actual exercise of such power — is not necessarily coeval with that which constitutes heirship and title to such power. Whatever Christ may be, or may not be, now unto the church; he surely does not now "sit on the throne of David" — he does not now exercise sovereignty over the nation of Jews. The nation is not yet subjected unto him.

4. The eleventh chapter of this prophecy is known to all. The earth is to be "filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." The wolf is to dwell with the lamb, and the leopard to lie down with the kid. There is to be neither hurting nor destruction in all Jehovah's holy mountain. But there are two portions of this chapter which are greatly overlooked by many. These we must present, yet as briefly as possible. The first is as follows:—

"But with righteousness shall he judge the poor,

And reprove with equity for the meek of the earth:

And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth,

And with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." (Isaiah 11:4.)

Here, once more, is the execution of an introductory judgement. He, with whom "a word is a work," shall pronounce a sentence of smiting upon the earth, and the earth shall be smitten. Yea; thus shall he slay a certain one — a certain person — here emphatically termed "the wicked one" (the adjective "wicked" being here in the singular number). A further element of light is here thrown upon the future. The destruction of some one grand, special opponent shall signalise the setting up of the Messiah's reign. Who this "wicked one" shall prove to be is not in this prophecy, further disclosed.

The second portion is as follows:—

"And it shall come to pass in that day,

That the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people,

Which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt,

And from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam,

And from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, — and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel,

And gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (Isaiah 11:11-12.)

Here, then, is a future deliverance of the whole nation, which shall be as complete and wondrous as the exodus from Egypt. The return of a few tributaries to Cyrus from Babylon — a few from one only of the two grand divisions of the nation — cannot have been the fulfilment of this majestic prediction. Let the remainder of the chapter be read. The return here announced is to take place in the day of the destruction of the future "wicked one." It is to take place in the day when all the ferocity of the earth shall be brought to a close. A yet future restoration is here announced.

And how affecting is the song of triumph which shall then be sung. "And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry," etc. Let this song be perused, in view of this, its legitimate connection. Read Isaiah 12:1-6 as connected with what immediately precedes it.

5. We have, in the next place, "The burden of Babylon," followed by a vast series of such "burdens," and consummated by a most solemn representation of an universal judgement.

But here a difficulty at once presents itself. The doom of Babylon is announced in terms which embrace the whole earth, and which, though the formal empire of Babylon, as well as its metropolitan city, have long since passed away, can scarcely be regarded, on any sound principle of interpretation, as having been fulfilled.

"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh,

Cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, — to lay the land desolate;

And he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light:

The sun shall be darkened in his going forth, — and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

And I will punish the world for their evil, — and the wicked for their iniquity.

Was this fulfilled in the taking of Babylon, by the army of the Medes? Surely it was not. Here then is mystery still. Further light is required. Has such light been subsequently vouchsafed?

We think that a solution has been furnished in the revelations given to Daniel. There Babylon stands as the head of Gentile power — of the power which during the "times of the Gentiles," should tread down the nation of Israel. This power is shown as a united whole, though in another respect comprising four empires. The whole image of Daniel 2:1-49. is represented as perishing at one and the same time. "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together," Daniel 2:35. Thus, though the reins of imperial power might pass from Chaldean hands, and the metropolis be utterly destroyed, Babylon would still exist. The constituents of her empire — the elements of Gentile sovereignty — elements both morally and essentially one with the dominion once exercised from the city which bore the name — these still exist. Babylon still remains: only at the period when the times of the Gentiles shall have been fulfilled will she cease to be. Let this be borne in mind, and much light will be gained as to the "burdens" of Isaiah. They comprise both the past and the future. Certain announcements therein were fulfilled in past ages, others point to the future. So, in Daniel 7:12, "As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time." Here the loss of "dominion" is expressly distinguished from the termination of existence.

The announcement of universal judgement is made formally and with most solemn definiteness, in Isaiah 24:1-23 to Isaiah 27:1-13 and again in Isaiah 34:1-17. In Isaiah 24:1-23 we have the following language.

"Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.

And it shall come to pass,

That he who fleeth from the noise of the fear, shall fall into the pit;

And he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be caught in the snare:

For the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.

The earth is utterly broken down,

The earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.

The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage;

And the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again."

(Isaiah 24:17-20)

The conquest over Satan and his hosts is next intimated: "It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones, that are on high." See Revelation 12:7-12. Then the subjugation of the powers of earth, (as in Revelation 19:19-21) "and the kings of the earth upon the earth." Read verses 21 and 22. The glory of the earthly city is next presented; whilst in Revelation 21:1-27 the heavenly one is seen. Then the millennial "feast of fat things" is declared, as is the reign in Revelation 20:4. The removing of delusion from the nations is also seen in both

places: compare Isaiah 25:7, and Isaiah 27:1, with Revelation 20:1-3. The first resurrection also is in each: compare Isaiah 25:8, "He will swallow up death in victory," (when understood as explained in 1 Corinthians 15:54) with Revelation 20:4-6. These coincidences are truly wonderful. And it is in connection with all these that we have the one decisive and solemn declaration, "When thy judgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." Let this declaration serve for the end of strife. Such is the agency which will subdue the earth unto the gospel. When these universal desolations are abroad, then, and alas, not till then, will the inhabitants of the earth learn righteousness.

We will only present, in conclusion of our present paper, two other prophecies of these judgements and their results. The first has reference especially to Israel's earthly city itself.

"Now will I rise, saith the Lord;

Now will I be exalted; — now will I lift up myself.

Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble:— your breath, as fire, shall devour you.

And the people shall be as the burnings of lime:

As thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire.

Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done;

And, ye that are near, acknowledge my might.

The sinners in Zion are afraid;— fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites.

Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?

Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isaiah 33:10-14.)

The results of this terrible interference of Jehovah are then described.

"Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities:

Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation,

A tabernacle that shall not be taken down;

Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed,

Neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.

And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick:

The people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." (Isaiah 33:20; Isaiah 33:24)

The second passage speaks of the whole world. The following call to attention follows the quotation just given.

"Come near, ye nations, to hear;— and hearken, ye people:

Let the earth hear, and all that is therein;

The world, and all things that come forth of it.

For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, — and his fury upon all their armies:

He hath utterly destroyed them, — he hath delivered them to the slaughter." (Isaiah 34:1-2.)

Let the subsequent portion of the prophecy be read, and the following beautiful passages will be found to form its close.

"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness;

The unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those:

The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon,

It shall not be found there;— but the redeemed shall walk there:

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,

And come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads:

They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

(Isaiah 35:8-10.)

Such is the dawning light of prophecy, such the bright beams which shine forth beyond all the terrible and darkening clouds of impending judgement. After the well-known historical portion, which, in this prophetic book, follows the revelations now glanced at, we have, in Isaiah 40:1-31 to Isaiah 66:1-24, a further prophecy of vast comprehensiveness and importance. But the way in which prophetic light is gradually afforded, is the point which is sought to be exemplified in these hasty sketches. We purpose, therefore, only to adduce some few instances of predictions in the subsequent prophets, which afford particulars of special interest, in the one or two further papers which will close this series on the "dawning light of prophecy." The midday splendour of revelation opens upon us in the New Testament, and from its brightness we are reluctant for any length of time to detain attention.

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There are several special portions of the grand course of prophecy comprised in Isaiah 40:1-31 to Isaiah 66:1-24, which, though we cannot quote them, we must at least point attention to in a glance, however brief, at the dawning light of prophecy.

The marvellous tenderness, and the persevering and sovereign grace, by which Israel shall yet be converted and won back to Jehovah — hardened, degraded, cold, and insensate as the Jew has notoriously become, during so many dreary ages of dispersion and unbelief — are features of this vast course of prophetic dealing, which must not be overlooked. How does Jehovah, in these chapters, seek to gain the ear, to soften the heart, to comfort the spirit, to win the confidence of

this despised and down-trodden people! Let chapters 40, 44, 45, 48, 49, 54 and 55, be read with this thought in view. The burden is this:—

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee;

But with great mercies will I gather thee.

In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment;

But with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee;

Saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

For this is as the waters of Noah unto me:

For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth;

So have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed;

But my kindness shall not depart from thee,

Neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed,

Saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

Well, Gentile reader, this Jehovah of the Jew will have mercy upon the Gentile also. In the full light of subsequent revelations, there is hope, yea, full assurance, both of faith, hope, and understanding, even for the Gentile dog that approaches Jehovah in the way of his own provision.

See how that way is set forth even in this prophecy of Isaiah. There is more than merely dawning light thereon, afforded in the well-known 53rd chapter. There is the full, clear, express declaration of vicarious expiation. It is the first formal revelation of the wondrous fact, that a certain one from amongst the sons of men — a sinless man — should be the victim of atonement between Jehovah and his people. Who this sinless one should be is not revealed; but the fact that such an one should suffer is announced with the utmost definiteness. Would that we might quote the chapter as a whole! But who knows it not? Who that has ever known the sinfulness of sin has not turned hopefully and with comfort to this wondrous prophecy!

Grounded on this announcement of atonement and justification, by the sufferings of one for all, we have in Isaiah 55:1-13, an invitation full of evangelical light and grace. There are living waters, wine and milk, offered without money and without price. The future day of judgement is not the sole topic which is connected with the introduction of the better age. It is, alas! very solemnly prominent; but grace, and penitence, and conversion are all to be vouchsafed. An "everlasting covenant" is to be made with Jehovah's people; "even the sure mercies of David." The terms of that covenant are, "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live." There is more than the mere dawn of prophetic light here also.

We have already before us, indeed, almost every element of prophetic light, concerning the Messiah in his future earthly relationship. Heavenly things remained a mystery still; but very full revelation is afforded in the remaining prophetic books of the Old Testament, as to the earthly

things of the future kingdom.

Jeremiah presents formally the making of a new covenant with the house of Judah and Israel, in connection with full and solemn announcements of most of the grand events already seen in previous scriptures. See for example Jeremiah 30:1-24 and Jeremiah 31:1-40.

Ezekiel sets forth the departure of the glory from its earthly habitation, and then its future return; showing the actings of a grand confederacy, of eastern nations chiefly, against the land and nations of Israel, at the period when the people shall have returned and settled in the land. This confederacy is quite distinct from that western one, which, under Antichrist, shall be leagued with Jerusalem, and for a time deceive the Jews. This one, of Gog and Magog, will transpire somewhat later than that of Antichrist. Composed of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, and apparently of the remaining of the nations, which are outside the beast and Antichrist, it assaults the land, after a season of quiet repose in the land, has been enjoyed by God's people. It seems to be a Russian aggression that is here predicted. It is judged of God, and then all the earth is quiet, and all commotions at an end. As to the glory, see Ezekiel 11:23, and Ezekiel 42:1-7; and respecting the confederacy, see Ezekiel 37:1-28 to Ezekiel 39:1-29.

Daniel reveals the great facts of the times of the Gentiles. Four empires should successively rule over and oppress the rebellious nation of the Jews. Yet but one grand idea is seen throughout the course of all these empires. It is man's unity of power, having its rise from Babylon, in opposition to God's unity, which must have its seat at Jerusalem. Thus all Gentile unity, whether secular or ecclesiastical, is Babylon. And both Babylon literal and secular, and Babylon mystical and ecclesiastical, will perish beneath the manifestation of Messiah's power, in the future day. The stone shall grind to powder the image; not convert it. The judgement shall sit, and the beast, with its sovereign horn, shall be cast into the lake of fire. The heavens shall rule. The kingdom, 1:e., the reign, of heaven, shall be set up. See Daniel chapters 2, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12.

In Hosea, is the Scripture apparently referred to by the Lord, in the words which were so startling to the disciples: "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him." Thus in Hosea 5:15, we have the emphatic declaration, "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence: in their affliction they will seek me early." How exactly was this fulfilled, after the Lord had uttered the solemn resolution: "Your house is left unto you desolate, for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Joel presents, amidst much else that is important, the "great and terrible day of the Lord." It shall transpire "in those days, and in that time, when Jehovah shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem." Mark this well. Then shall be the treading of the winepress, and then also the harvest. This helps to a right decision as to the same event in Matthew 13:1-58; as also that in Revelation 14:1-20. The harvest is not the end of the globe, but merely of the particular era which is concluded by it. See Joel 3:1-21.

Zephaniah furnishes a complete reply to any question respecting the kind of circumstances which shall be introductory of the reign of the Messiah. Mark the word "then" in its connection, in the following passage:

"Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord,

Until the day that I rise up to the prey;
For my determination is to gather the nations, — that I may assemble the kingdoms,
To pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger;
For all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.
For THEN will I turn to the people a pure language,
That they may all call upon the name of the Lord, — to serve him with one consent."

There is no ambiguity here as to the how the latter day shall be introduced. It shall be "then" — in connection with the terrible crisis predicted: "THEN will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

Zechariah, in the use of the type of Joshua, son of Josedek, the high priest, seems to set forth one far greater than he.

"Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying,
Behold, the man whose name is The BRANCH;
And he shall grow up out of his place, — and he shall build the temple of the Lord:
Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; — and he shall bear the glory,
And shall sit and rule upon his throne; — and he shall be a priest upon his throne:
And the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

How distinct and beautiful the truths enunciated here. This potentate shall be a priest also, "a priest upon his throne." "And the counsel of peace shall be between them both." The KING shall be enabled to enter into a counsel of peace, even with the wayward Jew, through the medium of his own priesthood. To exercise mercy, there must be priesthood. Yet the potentate might have reigned without showing mercy; and so consequently without any mediation. Mediatorship was not essential to the sovereignty of the Son of man. In order to the exercise of grace, it was necessary; but not in order to the exercise of righteous sovereignty. Whence, then, the notion of a "mediatorial reign"? There is mediatorial priesthood, and there is gracious sovereignty as the result. But the two, though united in one person, are distinct thoughts pertaining to offices perfectly distinct in nature. The one may exist, nay does exist, without the other. The priesthood is exercised now, not the sovereignty. The king indeed is born, and his title to the throne committed to his hands; but he has not ascended his throne as yet; not "taken to himself " the actual exercise of the royal power. "Mediatorial reign," then, is simply confusion. There is no mediatorial reign. There is mediatorial priesthood, and there is to be delegated sovereignty; sovereignty committed by God to the hands of the Son of man, even a millennial sway. But a "mediatorial reign," we repeat it, is simply nonsense. A gracious reign will result from mediation, but there is all the difference of cause and effect between them.

In this prophetic book we have, also, one of the most solemn pictures of the great day of Jehovah's interference.

"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh,
And thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.
For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle;
And the city shall be taken, — and the houses rifled, and the women ravished;
And half of the city shall go forth into captivity,
And the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.
Then shall the Lord go forth,
And fight against those nations, — as when he fought in the day of battle.
And his feet shall stand in that day
Upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east,
And the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof.
Toward the east and toward the west, — and there, shall be a very great valley;
And half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, — and half of it toward the south. And ye
shall flee to the valley of the mountains;
For the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal:
Yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake
In the days of Uzziah king of Judah:
And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."

We give this as a specimen, once for all, of the grand crisis which must transpire around Jerusalem. In how many Scriptures is not this "gathering of nations" predicted! It is, too, when the captivity of the Jews shall

terminate; not at its commencement. It is no past crisis that is here described. It is certainly future. And it is when "the Lord God shall come, and all the saints with him." We know, by subsequent revelations, that there will be a coming of Jehovah manifested in the flesh. Is not the coming here spoken of that same personal coming? This prophecy does not reveal the mode of the coming which is predicted. We could not from this Scripture only, determine it. But surely, in the light of subsequent predictions, we may be assured that it is none other than the second personal return of the Lord Jesus that is here foretold.

Malachi, too, furnishes testimony to the great events of the future; we can furnish one brief quotation only:

"For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven;
And all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble:
And the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts,

That it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

But unto you that fear my name

Shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings;

And ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet

In the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts."

Such is the tenor of the predictions of the Old Testament. The introduction, by a crisis of mingled mercy and judgement, of the universal reign of a king appointed by Jehovah, is the grand feature of them all. But there is a mystery yet behind. This king is to have a heavenly bride, as well as earthly subjects. This the Old Testament does not reveal. For this wondrous thought we must proceed to the New. The Church — the body of the saints of the present interval, between the departure and the return of the Lord Jesus — was not the subject of Old Testament predictions. The saints of that past dispensation shall sit down in the heavenly places of the future kingdom in the presence of the king as his friends, the "friends" of the bridegroom, and they shall rejoice to see him take his bride; but they shall not be of the bride. The saints of the future period shall be reigned over by the king, but they shall not reign with him, as the bride shall. There are spheres of glory; there are gradations in the kingdom. The "heavenly things" were a subsequent revelation. Earthly things shall be the portion of Israel, and the nations. Heavenly things, as well as royalty over earthly things, are the portion of the bridegroom, of the bride, and of their "friends." "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him."

The day succeeds the dawn. The dawning light brightens into noon-day splendour. We direct attention onwards to that "completion" of the word of God which was vouchsafed to the apostles, especially to Paul. And we conclude these very hasty sketches of a few leading features only, of God's progressive revelation, in the words of that highly favoured apostle:—"Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ; which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel; whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see, what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God." Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Vol 01 - The Kingdom of Heaven.

Vol 01 - The Kingdom of Heaven

Original Contributions

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, June 1856.

[01 1856 017]

The frequent recurrence of this expression in Matthew's gospel (for it occurs nowhere else in the New Testament), and of a somewhat similar one in all the other gospels, and through the whole of the New Testament, cannot fail to strike the careful reader of the word of God, and produce an impression of the importance of having a right understanding, according to God, of what the kingdom of heaven really is.

It is worthy of note that Matthew only uses the phrase; and the more so, as almost every other book of the New Testament speaks of the kingdom: but these invariably associate it with a person, as "the Kingdom of God," or "Kingdom of Christ."

The only Epistles where no mention appears to be made of the kingdom, are, 2 Corinthians, Philippians, 1 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, 1 Peter, the three Epistles of John, and that of Jude — and of these, 1 Timothy speaks of the "King," and 1 Peter speaks of a "royal Priesthood," which evidently refers to the thought of the kingdom.

Setting aside for a moment the enquiry as to why Matthew alone, so persistently (though not invariably) changes the form of the expression in general use in the New Testament, the expression itself at once carries us back to the prophet Daniel, where we read of the "King of heaven." — (Daniel 4:37) — and of the rule of the heavens, (Daniel 4:26).

When God in the beginning created the heavens and the earth, it was manifest that the earth was intended of God to be the scene of blessing, with reference to man; and, excepting the statement of an eternal truth by one who was instructed in divine counsels, (Melchisedec, a figure of Him who was to come after — Genesis 14:19) it is only with reference to this earth that God makes Himself known, and is known by those who walked before Him.

But trial after trial only proved the more deeply what came out at the very beginning in the Garden of Eden, that man on his part was incompetent to be the recipient of unhindered blessing flowing out from God.

Adam, Noah, Abram's seed all failed in their time and place; and when God's chosen people Israel, — chosen out of the earth to be a witness to Him — not only failed in their place of witness, but set up false gods in place of the True, God appeals to the heavens and the earth to hear the tale of woe (Deuteronomy 32:1, Isaiah 1:1, etc.), and introduces another witness, who was to come down from heaven to the earth to remedy what had all become involved in evil.

Further, when all that was outwardly connected with God in this earth, had fallen into apparently hopeless ruin, when God's Israel were captives in a strange land, when, moreover, God in judgement had taken the sceptre out of the land of Israel, and transferred it to a Gentile monarch; then it is that Daniel's prophecy comes in to tell of the kingdom of heaven, — that however God might appear to have lost His kingdom in this earth, it was still a fact that the Most High was ruling in the "kingdom of men," and that He was also "King of heaven," and so acknowledged perforce by the head of the Gentile world.

And most needful was such a testimony at such a time; for surely appearances were all against it. It seemed as if Satan had indeed wrested from man the authority committed to him as the chief of God's creation; it seemed as if he had wrested from God the real glory of His kingdom, — unhindered joy in His creatures, and His creatures' unhindered communion with Himself. But not so: the promise in Genesis 3:1-24 revealed a truth, to be more fully unfolded afterwards that in a MAN was to be found a remedy for it all; in effect, that when the KING came, — the King after God's own heart, — the kingdom should be manifested in divine glory, and in greater glory, and more intimate communion between God and His creatures than ever Eden knew.

But many counsels were to be unfolded first. The principle was made known in Eden in terms suited to the necessity of that time — the Seed of the woman, the Son of Adam, was to destroy the destroyer — but not until the flood had rolled over Eden, in God's first judgement of man's wickedness upon this earth, did the principle begin to be further unfolded; and not until another flood had rolled over that very Seed of the woman, did the full meaning of that revelation become known in another garden.

Still, in that first word itself was wrapt up the whole secret of what was necessary to introduce the kingdom in manifested glory, where everything, as far as man and Satan were concerned, only tended to banish the expectation of it for ever.

There was the eternal enmity, and the double bruising, and all connected with a Man (the woman's Seed), so that when that Man really did come to earth, the answering testimony to Him (which, indeed, embodies all this truth in yet briefer terms) is, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

And inasmuch as the kingdom could not be manifested until that first bruising had taken place, which was the means of sin being duly taken away by Him who was the true Lamb, (for surely God's kingdom cannot be where sin is), so the Lord says in John that His kingdom is not of this world, and "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and Romans 14:17 describes the kingdom of God as "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." But nevertheless it is associated with the King, as of necessity it must be, for what were a kingdom without a King, or a King without a kingdom? Hence, when the King comes, even though in humiliation, the kingdom of God is preached (an expression peculiar to Luke), and every man presseth into it, after the way has been prepared by John the Baptist (Luke 16:16). And therefore Matthew, Mark, and Luke speak of the mystery, or mysteries of the kingdom, and state that it is come nigh — wrapt up, as it were, in the person of the Son, the wisdom of God in a mystery, revealed now by the Spirit of God to the "stewards of the mysteries of God," who know the kingdom to be "not in word, but in power." 1 Corinthians 4:17.

Therefore it is said in Matthew 21:43, that the kingdom of God shall be taken from the Jews and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits of it. It is so bound up with the person of the Christ, the true King, that it goes with His rejection, and comes with His reception.

And so the Lord declares in Luke 4:43, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent." Matthew also distinctly declares His mission to be that of "preaching the gospel* of the kingdom," (Matthew 4:23, Matthew 9:35). We see then that "the kingdom" is that which is associated with Christ, or bears His name in the earth.

It is called "the kingdom of heaven" in Matthew, that being the dispensational gospel, — setting forth the One who was the Heir of the promises, in connection with that people who were to be the centre of blessing on the earth, but whose departure from God and rejection of Christ do not, nevertheless, interfere with God's rule over this earth, as Daniel showed, nor with His final purposes towards it in Christ, however much the rejection of Him may have delayed their accomplishments. When earth has failed, the resource is from above in Him who introduces the "kingdom of heaven" [now in mystery and patience, by and by in manifestation and power]. — L.

{* It is remarkable that in three out of five places in Matthew where the word "gospel" occurs, it is associated with "the kingdom" The five places in Matthew are Matthew 4:23; Matt 9: 53; Matthew 11:5; Matthew 24:14; Matthew 26:13. Mark only, besides Matthew, makes use of the expression, and that in one instance, Mark 1:14; but there it is "the gospel of the kingdom of God."}

Vol 01 - The Languages of the Bible.

Vol 01 - The Languages of the Bible.

Original Contributions

W. H. J., Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, August 1856.

(1st. Edition July, [01 1856 031])

(1) [01 1856 046]

We propose to devote a portion of our pages, to the consideration of such subjects as may help our readers in the study of the sacred volume. Very often it is found that there are expressions in the Scriptures hard to be understood, simply because we may be in ignorance of some customs and peculiarities alluded to. And the books in which these difficulties are explained, are too long and too expensive for the great mass of readers of the Bible. Or, it may be, that a man's other vocations leave him but little time to learn the languages in which the scriptures were written. And, while we may be satisfied that no part of God's will is really hard for those who are only seeking the burden of the message which declares the will; yet we have no right wilfully to neglect any part of that message. We may save well-meaning Christians from those sad displays of zealous ignorance, which occasionally bring scandal upon Christianity itself, if we give them an intelligible account of many things connected with the Bible — such as the different languages in which the Bible has been written; the distinction between the canonical and the apocryphal books; the most famous translations that have been made; the manners and customs, the history and the geography referred to; and the way in which our English Bible has reached us.

These and similar topics we shall treat in a succession of papers. We begin with "The Languages of the Bible."

It may be necessary to premise that learned men divide the whole number of languages that are, or ever have been, spoken, into several chief families. Of these by far the most important are — First, the Indo-Germanic family, including Sanscrit, Greek, Latin, and German, with nearly all European tongues. And secondly, the Shemitic, including Arabic, Hebrew, and Aramaic or Syriac.

Of this latter family, the Arabic has been the most cultivated; and, being the language in which the Koran is written, is known to Muslims all over the world.

The Hebrew, called the sacred tongue, because in it nearly all the Old Testament is written, seems to have been spoken in a comparatively small district; perhaps only in Palestine, Phoenicia, and the immediate neighbourhood. It is called Hebrew, because it was the language of the people of that name; and they appear to have been so designated, from Heber; who being the last patriarch, before the dispersion from Babel, must have possessed an authority (as speaking to an undivided people) which no succeeding patriarch could have had.

The term Hebrew language does not, however, occur in the Old Testament. There it is called the language of the Jews, as at 2 Kings 18:26, or the lip of Canaan, as at Isaiah 19:8.

Most probably this was the language of Canaan, before Abraham came into it. For we observe that his relatives on the other side of the Euphrates spoke another tongue (Genesis 31:47), and in the narrative of the intercourse between the Hebrews and the people of the land, there is no allusion to any difference of speech. Then again, the names of places in Canaan, from the very earliest times, have all a meaning in Hebrew but not in any other language; and in the few existing records of the dialect of the idolatrous part of the land, as in the Phoenician, on coins discovered at Tyre, and Malta; and in the daughter of the Phoenician, namely the Punic or Carthaginian, preserved in a Latin comedy of Plautus (Poenulus 5: 1, 2), we find a form of speech identical with the Hebrew. And lastly, indigenous to a country place like Palestine, the same word is used to denote both Sea and West.

In this language, the whole of the Old Testament is written, with the exception of parts of the Books of Ezra and Daniel. And it is remarked how little change the language underwent during the thousand years over which the composition of the book extended. This is due to the natural inflexibility of the language itself; the isolation of the people from the rest of the world; the influence of the Pentateuch in fixing it; and the general belief in its sacredness. For these reasons, the language of Moses is substantially the same as that of Malachi, in spite of some antique phrases in the former, and the gradually increasing admixture of Syrian with all the writers that succeeded Isaiah

The Hebrew died out, as a spoken language, at, or soon after the Babylonish captivity, and was replaced by the Syrian or Aramaic, which was the language of their conquerors, the Assyrians and Babylonians. This was the language in which Eliakim begged Rab-shakeh to speak to the people in Jerusalem, because they did not understand it, as the chiefs themselves did. It seems clear therefore that the language of Syria began to penetrate Israel after this time; and, when the Jews remained for two generations in Babylon, they must have lost, nearly, if not entirely, all recollection of their former speech. For Ezra seems to have interpreted the words of the Law to them, on their return. (Nehemiah 8:8) While yet from the fact of Zechariah, Haggai, and Malachi, continuing to write in Hebrew, we may conclude it had not quite disappeared; as we know it had a little later at the time of Alexander's conquests.

The language that took its place was much more widely spread: it is called Syrian in the English translation of the Bible, as at 2 Kings 18:26, Daniel 2:4. But it is usual now to call it Aramaic, since Aram is the real biblical word for Syria, and seems to have designated the country North and East of the Euphrates, from which Abraham had originally emigrated, and where afterwards arose that fierce and conquering race which founded Nineveh and Babylon. It used to be called Chaldee, but erroneously; as the only place, where the tongue of the Chaldeans is mentioned, is at Daniel 1:4; and there it manifestly means a language peculiar to a priestly caste at Babylon, not to the whole people.

At the time of our Lord, this was the native language of Palestine; and occurs in our Testaments, in the words Ephphatha, Talitha Cumi, Eli Eli lama Sabacthani, etc. This was also the language of the inscription on the cross, and of St. Paul's speech as recorded at Acts 22:1-30. Although in both these instances the Hebrew is mentioned, there is no doubt that it is the modern, not the ancient,

language that is meant.

In it are also written those parts of the Old Testament, which are not in Hebrew: viz. Daniel 2:4, to Daniel 7:28; and Ezra 4:8, to Ezra 6:18; and Ezra 7:12-26. Also the ancient Chaldee paraphrases on the Bible, and the Talmud. And to the present day it is the sacred language of the Nestorians and Syrian Christians; even of those on the Malabar coast of India.

The only other language that remains to be noticed, is the Greek, in which, the whole of the New Testament is written: a peculiar dialect of which prevailed in Western Asia and Egypt, in consequence of the conquests of Alexander the Great. Its chief locality was Alexandria, where the first Ptolemies had transplanted most of the arts and sciences which used to flourish before in Athens. This dialect is therefore called Alexandrian Greek, and is distinguished from the language of the classics, by having engrafted on it, many Hebrew and other Oriental modes of expression; no doubt partly in consequence of the great numbers of Jews, who, from an early period, dwelt in Alexandria.

Even in Palestine, although Hebrew retained its place as the sacred language, and Syrian or Aramaic was spoken in the country parts, there is every probability that Greek was the ordinary speech of intercourse; and that it stood in the same relation to the native Aramaic, that English does to Welsh in Wales at the present day.

In this Alexandrian Greek is written the whole of the New Testament; the ancient Septuagint translation of the Old; and the works of Josephus and Philo. As it was the common language of the Eastern part of the Roman Empire, it became necessarily the common language of all early Christians, who for some years were confined to that part of the world. And even when Christianity had reached Rome and the West, there is evidence that Greek (and not Latin, as might have been supposed) was, for a long time, the ecclesiastical tongue.

It is a matter of discussion whether our Lord and his Apostles spoke Greek or Aramaic; and it does not seem possible to pronounce a decided verdict on the question. It is likely enough that all the people of Palestine, except the most retired or the most ignorant, understood and used, both forms of speech. Hence the threefold inscription on the cross. In Aramaic and Greek for the people: just as public documents in Wales might be in Welsh and English:— and in Latin, because that was the official language of Pontius Pilate, and the government servants.

From the fact of some few Aramaic words of our Lord being preserved, we might conclude that he did not always speak in that tongue; and it must have been observed that when St. Paul addresses the people from the castle stairs in Hebrew (i.e. in Aramaic), they were pleased by this mark of respect to their native tongue; and had expected that he would rather speak Greek, which they understood equally well. On the other hand the question of the chief captain, "Canst thou speak Greek?" would seem to have originated the second question, "Art thou not that Egyptian?" as Greek was certainly the language of Egypt at that time; and therefore the chief captain supposed he was not an inhabitant of Palestine.

At any rate, there was certainly a distinction between Greek-speaking Jews, and others. For we notice in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 6:1-15 etc.) that some are called Hebrews and some Grecians. There is a difference of opinion as to whether the distinction consisted in the speech they used; or in the version of the Bible that they read. For while the Jews of Palestine, and

eastward of that country, constantly used the original Hebrew Scriptures, only rendered into Aramaic at the very moment they were read; the Jews of Alexandria, and generally in the countries west of the Holy Land, seem not to have known the Hebrew, even in the synagogues, and to have used only the Greek Septuagint translation.

As Greek was the tongue of their Syrian oppressors in the time of the Maccabees, the Rabbis looked upon it with aversion, as being especially a profane tongue, fit only for entirely worldly business, but never to be intruded into the synagogue. This feeling was aggravated by the fact that the Jews of Alexandria — where chiefly Greek-speaking Jews abounded, — had not only a translation of the Scriptures, which they advanced almost to the same rank as the original: but even a temple of their own, which in some respects was permitted to rival the holy building in Jerusalem.

But, anyhow, Greek was the current language of the world at the time of the appearance of Christianity:— the language with which a man might travel from end to end of the Roman Empire. And there appears a special providence in the circumstance that the Gospel was sent forth at the very time when there was thus a universal language, in which to convey it. It was necessary to the free circulation of the message, that it should be written in the speech of the Empire, not in some local dialect. And the Grecians or Hellenists, though despised by the Palestine Jews, appear certainly, by means both of their more common tongue, and also of their greater enlightenment, to have been the part of Israel that most generally embraced the Gospel, and carried it into distant lands, away from its original cradle in Judaea and Galilee.

History of the Text of the Bible.

[1st. Edition July 01 1856 48]

Most of the books of the Old Testament were committed to writing before the Babylonish captivity, when we have no contemporary literature: for profane history had not properly begun. The grounds for receiving them are, however, of the very strongest possible kind. For the original delivery of them was from men to whom Jehovah Himself had given their commission. They were delivered by prophets and seers, who spoke the Lord's message, and were regarded as those whose authority might not be questioned. Their books also, we doubt not, were held in scrupulous veneration, whenever there remained among the people a sense of the true religion.

There were, indeed, seasons, when God and His servants, and therefore their writings also, were despised and forsaken. But even then, there were faithful people who held fast to their Scriptures, and who could always restore the books, when the nation returned to its proper allegiance. The longest revolt from Jehovah was that which occurred in the reigns of Manasseh and Amon, when the nation seemed to have quite given up His service. Yet when Josiah commenced a great reform, and search was made for copies of the sacred books; there was found in the recesses of the temple, an authentic copy of the law, whose injunctions the king immediately proceeded to obey.

At the return from Babylon, a new era commences. Ezra, assisted by competent scribes, undertook the task of placing the sacred writings upon so sure a footing, that there should be no room for any loss hereafter. Situated as he was, there were ample means at hand, for securing correct copies of the several books, and of forming them into a canon, or authorised volume. The

prophets who lived at that time — Zechariah and Haggai — and who received their messages direct from Jehovah, were quite sufficient to establish the authority he required.

We have moreover, to remember that there is no absolute necessity for our investigating the condition of the text of the Old Testament, before the time of our Lord and His apostles. After all, we have only to arrive at a knowledge of what the text was in the days of the first promulgation of Christianity. For we have their, and especially His, infallible mark of approbation fixed on the Scriptures as then existing; and it is clear that no possible evidence could be stronger.

Now we arrive at a knowledge of that text, through several separate and independent channels. In addition to the original Scriptures themselves, in the Hebrew; we have many very ancient translations, some made before the time of Christ; and these reach us quite independently of the original text; so that in any point where they all concur, we have, it is plain, a proof of the most convincing nature, that we have the text, as it existed, before the separation of these several witnesses. And where they differ, as they do in unimportant respects, we have all the more reason for being persuaded of their value. We are quite sure that there has been no collusion or deceit. Joined to this evidence, we have also that which is furnished by these books being quoted in ancient writers. They supply us with an additional testimony to the words which they have used. Thus we know that the Old Testament is very frequently quoted in the New. We receive the New Testament through altogether a different source from that whereby the Old comes to us; and we therefore feel sure that if the christian books report Moses or Isaiah to have said such and such words; and we find the books of Moses and Isaiah, which have been in possession of the Jews, (the avowed enemies of christianity), saying the same words, we have no hesitation in perceiving that we could have no better proof of the fact that those words were actually used.

We leave for the present these sources of evidence, and confine ourselves to a consideration of the Hebrew text itself, which has come down to us, almost entirely from the Jews.

We spoke, in our last article, of the division of Jews into two great classes:— the Hebrews, who spoke or used Aramaic; and the Grecians who spoke and used Greek. The latter seem to have disappeared soon after the publication of christianity. Those who were not absorbed into the church, gave up all their differences with other Jews, and were in no way distinguished from them. There were two centres about which they chiefly congregated. The one was at Tiberias in Galilee, within the Roman Empire; the other at Babylon, without it. At each of these places, schools of theology and literature flourished for many generations. From Tiberias there issued the Mishna, or second law; being in fact those very traditions, reduced to writing, against which our Lord had inveighed. This Mishna being regarded as itself a book to be revered; the doctors of Tiberias by degrees collected many notes and comments upon it, which form what is called the Gemara, 1:e., supplement. And the Mishna and this gemara together, make up the first talmud (or doctrine) called the Jerusalem talmud, which was completed about the year A.D., 300.

About this time the school at Tiberias was losing its importance, and in its place rose up that of Babylon, where other and far more voluminous comments, making another gemara, were added to the mishna of Tiberias. And these make up the second or Babylon talmud — always meant, when the talmud only is mentioned — which was finished about the year A.D. 500.

Now in both these talmuds, written in Aramaic, there are a vast number of quotations from the Bible, which learned men have, with great labour, collected and compared with the Bible itself. They find the discrepancies quite unimportant.

When the Arabs conquered those parts of the world where these learned Jews were chiefly settled, and when the earlier Caliphs in the eighth and ninth centuries patronised all kinds of learning;— a great impulse was given to the cultivation of the Hebrew language and literature, and to the critical study of the Bible. A succession of Jewish doctors then flourished in the East, who are styled the Masorettes, because their collection of writings is called the masorah or tradition. They directed their attention almost exclusively to the text of the Bible, selecting the best manuscripts, and rejecting what was corrupt. The scrupulous care they took may be judged from the fact that they have counted the number of words, and the number of letters in the Bible or in any particular parts. They have left on record what is the middle word, or the middle letter of the entire book; how many words begin with a particular letter, and many other minute labours of the same kind, trifling indeed, but still showing most remarkably how careful they were of even words and letters.

When the Turks overpowered Western Asia in the eleventh century, they commenced a systematic persecution against the Jews, broke up their schools, and killed or banished their leaders. The doctors fled chiefly into Spain, where there was still a Caliph at Cordova: and to the adjoining provinces in the South of France. Here Aben-Ezra, Maimonides, Kimchi, and others, preserved the learning of the Eastern Jews. But, when the fierce persecution of Ferdinand and Isabella, in the fifteenth century, drove all the Jews out of Spain, they carried with them, into more favourable countries, the valuable treasures they possessed; and therefore in the next or sixteenth century, when learning revived, and the reformation arose, then the Hebrew MSS. of the Jews were at hand, and were soon put into print, by means of which the Bible was corrected, and brought back, as nearly as possible, to its original condition.

We cannot but admire the providential ordering of events, which overruled the cruel and iniquitous persecutions raised against the learned Jews, first by the Turkish sultans in Asia, and then by the christian sovereigns of Spain, bringing to us the Hebrew MSS. of the Bible, which otherwise we might have sought in vain.

It must be also mentioned that we do not depend solely upon these Asiatic and Spanish Jews for our MSS. There existed from time immemorial in Poland and Germany, another separate community of Jews, whose traditions and schools of learning were quite independent of their brethren; and from them we have MSS. agreeing indeed in all essential respects with the others, but still so far varying as to show they come to us through different channels.

The history of the text of the New Testament is much simpler and shorter than that of the Old. We have the concurrent evidence of churches and congregations, who were scattered over the civilised world, and who preserved the apostolic records with affectionate reverence. We have numberless quotations and references in the christian writings from the second century onwards. We have very ancient translations in Latin and in Syriac, that have a perfectly independent existence. And we have MSS. reaching up almost to the days when the books themselves were originally written. We know also, that from a very early period the church was divided into several rival factions; each of whom acted apart from the others; and in each of whom we possess

independent evidence for the text. And here, as in the case of the Jews, it is impossible not to see how wonderfully God brought good out of evil. For, by the time the dark ages came in, during that gloomy period, marked out by the ninth and tenth centuries, when learning and religion seemed almost lost, and Europe appeared to be lapsing back into barbarism; — the Benedictine and Cistercian Abbeys, founded at a previous happier season, had stored up, unnoticed and uncared for, the ancient Greek MSS. of the New Testament, which, when required, were produced by the investigation of the scholars who mainly brought about the Reformation.

When Constantinople was taken by the Turks in 1453, and the last remnant of ancient civilisation destroyed, many scholars fled to the West of Europe, and brought with them a knowledge of the Greek language, till then almost unknown, at the very time when the dispersion of the Jews from Spain was making public the Hebrew tongue. And contemporaneously with these events, that wonderful discovery of printing was made; putting machinery into the hands of men for the preparation of proper copies of the Bible, which would have been altogether wanting a few generations previously.

Since that epoch, the libraries of Europe, Asia, and North Africa, have been ransacked, and many valuable MSS. discovered which were then unknown; and the settlement of the text, as it is called, has become the subject of the attention of biblical students. A judgement has to be formed from the variety and abundance of materials that exist, and a text produced that shall be as nearly as possible like what it was when it left the hands of the original writers. And in order to accomplish this, not only have the ancient MSS. themselves to be examined, and their comparative value decided, but due weight has to be given to any differences that may appear in the ancient translations, or in quotations made in ancient authors. It frequently happens that the different sources of information vary in particulars, and then a judgement must be exercised as to which is to be preferred.

We shall, in future papers, show what these various sources of information are. In the mean time, we shall be content with remarking, that the result of these investigations has been of the very happiest nature. When they were first entered on, great alarm was felt that the faith of many would be unsettled by them; and for that reason the Church of Rome forbade any amendment of the text of the Vulgate, acknowledged on all hands to be corrupt. But, however embarrassing the differences may be to the scholar, they are insignificant to the divine or the christian. They are all really quite unimportant — and the happy result is that we have discovered them to be unimportant. Whereas had we refused to look at them, we might have been harassed by a suspicion that we had been imposed upon; and should not have been certain, as we are now, that for all practical purposes, our ordinary Bibles give us what God originally directed the prophet or the apostle to reveal.

God sent His book into the world, like all His other blessings, entrusted to human care, and liable to injury from human carelessness. We may be thankful that He has watched over His own gift, and has protected it from all real damage.

(2) The Canon of Scripture, and the Various Divisions of the Books.

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It is very remarkable in how many different senses the word Canon is used; though all these senses are traceable to one idea attached to it. Originally it is a Greek word signifying Reed, whence our own word Cane is derived; then by an easy transition, it is applied to anything in shape resembling a Reed or Cane, especially a Ruler for drawing straight lines. There is no doubt that the word Cannon, for great guns, comes from the same source; notwithstanding our spelling it with two n's. Then it is taken to signify a Rule for directing the conduct — thus a clergyman connected with a cathedral is called a Canon; because he is supposed to live according to a certain Rule. And we speak of the Canon of Scripture, meaning thereby those books which are to be taken as the Rule of faith.

Hence by canonical Scripture is to be understood, those writings which are stamped with Divine and infallible authority; and are distinguished from all others which are submitted to our judgement, and upon which we are free to pronounce an opinion. A canonical book is given to us, as containing the Word of God; 1:e., the message or command which God sends to us; and is therefore entirely beyond our doubts or our opinions.

From this it follows that every canonical book must be recommended by some one, who carried the Divine authority along with him, — some one to whom Jehovah had actually appeared, and given the commission to execute his office. It is not, of course, needed that the writer should himself have received his mission from Jehovah; but some such an one must have seen and sanctioned the work. The books of the prophets in the Old Testament are all published, as containing the words which Jehovah spoke to the Prophets. And the other books received the sanction of such prophets, before they were accepted as containing the rule of faith, or as being canonical.

In the case of the books of the Old Testament our inquiry is really enclosed within narrower limits than might at first sight appear: for the very greatest authority we could possibly have is that of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was indeed Jehovah incarnate. He frequently refers to the Old Scriptures, as containing the word of life; and as being a certain collection of books, then accounted sacred by the Jews. If we can ascertain what the recognised Canon of Scripture among the Jews was in his time, we know at once what we are to receive as canonical. Now there is no doubt whatever upon this point. We, and all reformed churches, are quite in agreement with the Jews here. It is a matter undisputed by any one, that those books of the Old Testament which we venerate as canonical, were the only Scriptures known to the Jews, when our Saviour preached in Judea.

The Roman Catholic Church receives as canonical, certain books which are rejected by the Reformers, and called by them The Apocrypha. This word signifies what is concealed, and seems originally to have been applied to those books which were not published and universally known as canonical Scriptures; but were confined to some few heretical congregations, known only to them, and concealed except from the initiated. And then it came to mean, as with us, specially those books sometimes classed as belonging to the Old Testament, but never received by the Jews as such. These books were appended to the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint, and thence transferred to the Vulgate or Latin translation made from the Septuagint. Some of these books, as Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, are in every way to be recommended, as containing wise and pious precepts, though not directly sanctioned by Divine

authority. The books of Maccabees are good and reliable history. While others are mere extravagant romances, of no value whatever.

Let it be observed that the Roman Church does not deny the fact upon which the Reformers proceeded — viz., that these Apocryphal books were never received as canonical by the Jews. It will be seen, on reference to the preface of the Douay Bible — 1:e., the English version of the Bible sanctioned by the Roman Church — that the canonicity of the Apocrypha is made to rest, solely on the dogmatic authority of the Church.

In the case of the New Testament, the whole of Christendom is agreed. All the books making up its canon were composed within the compass of a single generation; and therefore easily capable of being marked off from all other writings. Every single book of the New Testament was written either by an apostle, or in the case of two of the gospels, by immediate companions of apostles. And, as though to make assurance doubly sure, the life of St. John was extended over a long period, in order that no book might go out to the world, as canonical and inspired, but what he had sanctioned as such; and in this matter he exercised his Master's authority.

There were indeed some congregations at an early time, which had not known some of the books:— such as the Epistle to the Hebrews, the 2nd Epistle of St. Peter, the two shorter Epistles of St. John, and the Apocalypse: but, upon investigation, it is clearly seen that they never rejected these writings, but only that the writings had not at that moment reached them.

And never at any time were inferior or spurious writings allowed to usurp the place of Scripture. There are several ancient books in existence, certainly written very soon after, and some even before, the Canon of the New Testament was settled: such as the Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, an Epistle ascribed to Barnabas, and certainly of very ancient date: some Epistles of Ignatius and Polycarp, who were St. John's disciples, and a curious allegory, called the Shepherd of Hermas. These books are genuine and perhaps more or less valuable; but no one ever mistook them for Scripture. There are also extant, but very little known, certain manifest forgeries:— such as a pretended Epistle of Christ to King Abgarus, several pretended gospels, and some spurious Epistles. We call these forgeries manifest, for they abound in the most palpable anachronisms and mistakes, and never seem to have deceived any one. Some of the stories about the early life of Jesus are in marked contrast with the simplicity and truthfulness of the real Gospels, and are filled with the wildest accounts of his miracles.

Next, we may say a few words as to the various divisions and sub-divisions we find in our Bibles. The distinction into the Old and New Testaments is obvious enough; and signifies the separation between what preceded and what followed the coming of Christ in the flesh.

From an early period the Jews made a threefold division of their Scriptures: into the law, the prophets, and the sacred writings; to which allusion is made by our Lord himself. A great deal has been said as to the origin of this division: and the following may be taken as the most probable. The law of Moses stood, of course, by itself, as it contained their national covenant, which subsequent scripture writers explained and illustrated, but did not add to it. This law was read through in the synagogues once in the course of the year: a certain portion being read every sabbath morning, and constituting what we should call a first lesson. And each of these divisions was subdivided into seven portions, one of which was allotted to each of the seven readers who

read the lesson.

There arose also the custom of reading, as a second lesson, some portion of the rest of the Scriptures, which might illustrate the first lesson out of the law. The books, therefore, out of which these selections were taken constitute a class apart, under the general name of The Prophets; although the greater part of the historical books were included among them. And the remaining books constituted the third class, under the name of the Sacred Writings.

The sequence of the books in the Hebrew Bibles is clearly that due to synagogue requirements; whereas that observed in our English and in all modern Bibles, is the more natural arrangement, and is derived from the Latin Vulgate, which again received it from the Septuagint or early Greek version of the Old Testament.

Our division is — 1st, the law; 2nd, the historical books in their chronological order; 3rd, the devotional books in their presumed order; and 4th, the prophetic in order, partly of time and partly of importance.

In the New Testament, till comparatively a recent epoch, the books had no settled divisions; only running titles at the top or in the margin of the MSS, to denote what the text was treating of. The arrangement of the books has always been as we now have them.

Our present division into chapters and verses is really very modern. In the middle of the thirteenth century, 1:e., during the reign of our Henry III., about the time when our first parliament sat, a certain Dominican, Cardinal Hugo De Sancto Caro, while preparing a concordance for the Vulgate (the first of that nature extant) divided the entire Bible into chapters, which were copied from him into all the subsequent editions and translations, and have remained unchanged to the present day. He did not subdivide into verses; but placed down the margin at equal distances the letters A. B. C. D. for convenience of reference.

The introduction of verses is still more modern, being unknown for 200 years after the division into chapters; and our own earlier English Bibles, such as Wycliffe's at the end of the fourteenth century, and Tyndal's and Coverdale's in the first half of the sixteenth century, have the chapters, but not the verses.

The history of the verses is this. About the year 1450, near the time of the introduction of printing, when the Hebrew Bibles began to be much sought after, a certain Rabbi Mordecai Nathan, a learned Jew of Venice, published a concordance of the Hebrew Bible, and adopted Cardinal Hugo's chapters, which were found convenient. And he added the subdivision into verses, which, as far as the Old Testament is concerned, remained as at present. But for a century afterwards, that is till about 1550, this division into verses seems to have been unknown in the Christian Bibles. It is said to have been introduced by the celebrated French printer, Robert Stephens, who, adopting the Jewish verses for the Old Testament, added the verses now in use for the New. And this arrangement was speedily transferred to all Bibles and Testaments. The first English Bible in which verses appear, is that published by Archbishop Parker in 1568, commonly called the Bishop's Bible, and which immediately preceded our present, or King James' Bible.

There are many inconveniences attending our chapters and verses, as they appear to have been made quite arbitrarily, and often interrupt the sense. It should never be forgotten that they were

originally intended solely for concordances, and for facility of reference. And every Bible student should accustom himself to get rid of the notion that they have any other use.

It may be mentioned, in conclusion, that the word Bible is really a plural noun, meaning the Books merely, 1:e., of course the sacred books. And this plural character should never be lost sight of; for we may fall into serious mistakes if we forget the different times, and in part the different objects, of the several books making up the Bible.

It so happens that the same word in Greek, expresses Covenant and Testament. The Old Scriptures are called by St. Paul, 2 Corinthians 3:14, The Old Testament, because they contain the old covenant made with Israel. And this name becoming fixed to the first volume; it soon became customary to call, by way of contrast, the second volume, the New Testament.

(3) Some Account of Manuscripts.

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No doubt the most ancient writing material was stone. This was the substance that most readily presented itself, when men were rather anxious to preserve indestructible records than to multiply copies. Probably the account of altars being built, and of a name being solemnly imposed upon them — as when Laban and Jacob parted in mount Gilead — may refer to the inscriptions then cut on the stone, which was to serve as a memorial. At any rate we have positive information that in the oldest known documents that were intended as books, viz., the commandments received by Moses from Jehovah, were engraved on stone.

No material could have been more durable. But it was, at the same time, costly and cumbrous. There are inscriptions in Egypt of a very hoar antiquity indeed, reaching up perhaps to the very dawn of human postdiluvian history; but then they are on the tombs of kings, demanding a royal treasury for their execution, and a royal sepulchre for their place. Where stone was lacking, as in the plains of the Tigris and Euphrates, men were driven to adopt other expedients, and we find at Nineveh and Babylon, no longer inscriptions carved in rock, but impressions stamped in clay.

From a very early period — we cannot say when — leather must have come into use, as making books at least more portable than the stone or the clay. Nothing was more likely to suggest itself; and in all probability the rolls occasionally mentioned in the Bible were made of leather. Bark of trees is said to have served for books; and it is affirmed that the Latin word Liber — whence we derive many words in our own language — was originally this inner bark. Allied to this last was the better-known and more widely-used papyrus, furnished by a kind of reed that is almost peculiar to the Nile, and which certainly came into very early use. For, however fragile the papyrus books may appear, there are some in the British Museum, to which is assigned an age that reaches back to the time of the Exodus.

The export of papyrus seems to have formed a considerable item in the trade of Egypt. And the Ptolemaean dynasty boasted of being at once the patrons of literature, and the owners of the most convenient material for writing. Papyrus was probably cheap and readily obtained. But a new, a

more expensive, and a far more valuable material had come to be known a few generations before the Christian era, destined to preserve some of the most precious documents of that era. Without parchment, it may be questioned whether the Scriptures would have come to us in the abundant quantity of copies that we possess. Probably on a less expensive sheet the same pains would not have been taken to make those copies accurate.

About the early half of the second century before Christ, when the Romans were engaged in contesting the empire of Eastern Europe with the kings of Macedonia, there arose out of the ruins of some of the larger fragments of Alexander's dominions, a small kingdom in the north-west of Asia Minor, that owed much of its fortune to the favour of the Romans, and perhaps for that reason incurred the suspicion and dislike of its neighbours. It was called the kingdom of Pergamos, from the city of that name, afterwards immortalised as the seat of one of the seven churches which the apostle addressed in the beginning of his apocalypse. A town still stands on or near the ancient site, preserving in the name of Bergamo the recollection of Pergamos.

The kings who ruled there imitated the Ptolemies in patronising learning, and founding a library. They excited, in consequence, the jealousy of the Egyptian sovereigns; one of whom, Ptolemy Epiphanes, about 190 B.C., in order to arrest the growth of a library that bade fair to rival that of Alexandria, prohibited the exportation of papyrus. Thereupon, the king of Pergamos, driven to his own resources, encouraged the invention of a new writing material. And a peculiar preparation of skins became known, called, from Pergamos, Charta Pergamene, or parchment.

This is the story, which has been sometimes doubted. But at any rate, it was in Pergamos that the parchment attained its greatest celebrity, and from that city it certainly took its name. Parchment, and its finer kind, vellum, have ever since retained the renown of uniting a convenient form and surface with a tolerably imperishable nature. Nothing but the cost, ever prevented this becoming the one material for books. The story of papyrus being no longer exported from Egypt may be true. But if so, the prohibition could only have been temporary; for papyrus was certainly used in Italy, and without doubt, elsewhere also. At a later epoch, as we know from the discoveries at Pompeii and Herculaneum, and indeed down to the Arabian occupation of Egypt in the seventh century, papyrus still seems to have been the ordinary substance for writing in most parts of Europe.

The seizure of Egypt, however, by the Mahommedans, is said to have stopped the use of papyrus thenceforward forever. It is not likely that it was known at any time afterwards. Soon there came in the dark ages, when almost all records of the ancient civilisation seemed about to perish; and only the monasteries still preserved some few valued treasures of literature. Parchment became now the only material for writing, and, little as it was required, it rose in price: so that it was considered a great possession. We are told of a certain Gui, count of Nevers, presenting to the Chartreux of Paris, a service of plate, and of the monks asking for parchment instead. Now also arose the custom of erasing what was written on old parchment, and of re-writing something on it of more immediate interest. In this way, doubtless, many relics of antiquity have disappeared. While, from the imperfect manner in which the old writing was sometimes effaced, it has occasionally been recovered. A manuscript thus restored, from under the second writing above it, is called a palimpsest, and a codex rescriptus. There is, for instance, in the British Museum, one of the oldest known manuscripts of Homer's poems thus resuscitated. Recently Cardinal Angelo Mai discovered in the Vatican Library of Rome a lost treatise of Cicero de Republicâ, over which had

been written a commentary of St. Augustin on the Psalms. And one of the most precious existing MSS. of the New Testament is now in Paris, over which had been written the works of the Syrian father Ephraim.

The want of something cheaper than parchment was soon met by the discovery of paper; which seems to have come gradually, and as it were imperceptibly, into use. There is no evidence that cotton paper was used in Europe earlier than the 9th century; while that made from linen was not known before the 12th. In this case, as in many other European discoveries, the Chinese are said to have preceded us, though without ever making their inventions very extensively useful. It must be also clearly recollected that the newly-discovered material was supposed to be in the place of the papyrus which was gone: as the name of the ancient reed-made papyrus was quickly applied to the paper made from the cotton or the linen.

The quality of the material upon which any manuscript may be written, goes of course a considerable way in determining its age. The parchment of one century is not the same as that of another. Nothing written on cotton paper can be older than Charlemagne; and nothing on linen paper, than William the Conqueror. Moreover the quality of the material decided most unerringly the kind of characters traced, and so gives us a corroborating testimony to the age of a document.

The characters of every branch of the three great languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, were all originally much the same. Many of our own printed capital letters approach most nearly to the oldest known types of the Phoenician and the Greek alphabets. They were generally hard, and composed of straight lines, indicating that they had first been cut upon stone; just as the cuneiform characters of Nineveh and Babylon are precisely such as would be stamped on clay with the blunt end of a style.

From the ancient Phoenician type, two chief branches divided: the ancient Greek and the ancient Hebrew character. The former are represented almost exactly by the capital Greek letters now in use; while the latter have no living representatives, but are known by inscriptions on coins of the Maccabaeen dynasties, and on the ruins of Palmra: for the Greek small letters, and the Hebrew square characters, are comparatively modern.

All the ancient Greek manuscripts are therefore written only with the capital, or, as they are called, the uncial letters; being those which would naturally be formed by any one writing carefully on a valuable parchment. But with the use of paper, a new letter became known, viz., what we call the small letter, or which is also called the cursive character. This small Greek letter was absolutely unknown before the use of paper was discovered. Therefore every manuscript so written is certainly of a date posterior to the age of Charlemagne.

That age was one of considerable activity, and of vigorous effort to escape from the gloom that was settling about Europe. One sign of that activity was the use of paper for the quicker and cheaper writing then demanded. Whether from the use of a cheaper material, or because of the need of quickness, it is certain that men then began to write more rapidly and carelessly, and could no longer wait to form the careful uncial or capital letter, but, by making them quickly, contracted them into the cursive or small characters, which bore about the same relation to the uncials as our hand-writing now does to our printing. And these small letters were not the well-formed elegant things turned out by our modern type foundries: they were irregular, and ugly,

and illegible, differing very much in different manuscripts; so that, even when they came to be printed, it was some time before the printers made them otherwise than had been exhibited in the scrawls of the 13th and 14th centuries. We have begun to make them more regularly and carefully, and have eschewed all those abominable contractions in which the early printers delighted. But still it ought to be borne in mind, as a fact not very generally known, that our small Greek letters, now printed, are really more carefully formed from the bad writing of the manuscripts just anterior to the discovery of printing; and that this bad writing was only a hurried way of dashing through the uncial or capital letters, such as we see on the classical monuments, and in the parchment MSS.

In the case of the Hebrew letters, we have an entirely new mode of proceeding. There are no Hebrew MSS. in existence older than the 10th century, that same age which saw the discovery of paper and the use of small cursive letters. The only ancient monuments of the old Hebrew letter — such as the coins of the Maccabees — a coin of Bar Cochab — and the inscriptions at Palmra — are not the same as the present beautiful square Hebrew character.

We are, therefore, irresistibly driven to the conclusion that these elegant letters come from the schools of Babylon and Tiberias, where the doctors of the post-Christian dispersion so long congregated, and which were broken up about the 10th century — that is, about the time of the oldest document in which these square letters are found. They are precisely of the form which pains-taking scrupulous men, like the masoretic doctors of Babylon, would make out of the harder and more irregular letters hitherto used. And, indeed, the rise of these specimens of calligraphy is almost contemporary with the rise of the ecclesiastical or black letter in Europe, in the more valuable MSS. which the hardworking monks painted, rather than wrote. Formerly there was a current opinion that the Jews at the Babylonish captivity, in Daniel's and Ezra's time gave up their own letters and adopted those of their masters. And so the square characters came to be called Chaldean. The improbability and the baselessness of the story, never seem to have struck any one. But as soon as it was discovered that the Babylonians never used this letter, the story was given up. So likewise, when it is known that these square characters had no existence before what is also called the Captivity — in that period when the Babylonian Jews were governed, under the Sassanians and the Caliphs, by their own Prince of the Captivity — there can be little doubt that this period saw the invention of the square characters; and that the story of the adoption of them in the time of Ezra, really arose from confounding together the first and the second captivities at Babylon.

(4) The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament.

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[01 1856 111]

This name is given to that ancient Greek translation of the Bible which was executed in Egypt sometime before the advent of Christ, and which was called the Septuagint (that is, the seventy), because of the tradition that it was performed by that number of translators.

This version had obtained so high a reputation — in many cases quite superseding the original Hebrew — that numberless incredible stories were once extant, as to its origin. These have been

rejected by modern research: and the following is generally allowed to have been the true account.

The Ptolemies — especially Ptolemy Philadelphus — not only patronised Greek learning, and strove to make their metropolis Alexandria the literary, as well as the commercial, centre of the world; but they were also very anxious to cultivate the friendship of the Jews, whose country, consisting of a succession of natural fastnesses, has ever formed an important outpost of Egypt. Both literary curiosity, therefore, and political prudence, conspired in making those kings desirous to possess, in the vulgar tongue, the venerable law of the Jews. Hence Ptolemy Philadelphus (or his father — it is uncertain which) requested of the high priest at Jerusalem, to procure competent scribes for him, who might translate the laws of Moses from the Hebrew into the Greek. The translation, thus effected, became one of the valuable treasures he had collected in his library at Alexandria. Its composition must have been somewhere about the year 280 B.C. It seems to have been gradually followed at different times by translations of other parts of the Jewish Scriptures; and the whole, executed indeed by various hands, was completed sometime before the advent of Christ.

This is the simple account, in substance quoted by one Aristobulus, who is cited by Eusebius in his Ecclesiastical History; and it is corroborated in the Prologue to the Apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus, written (as the author there tells us) in the time of Ptolemy Physcon, rather more than 100 years before Christ. From 280 B.C. to 120 B.C. may therefore be safely taken as the period of its execution. And we may be satisfied that the law of Moses was translated by royal command, to which the rest of the book was gradually added.

This Alexandrian or Septuagint version, being thus made in the common speech of the East, was read even in Palestine, where Greek had become the ordinary language of intercourse. It alone is quoted by the philosopher Philo, and the historian Josephus: and (which is of more interest to us), the writers of the New Testament almost constantly refer to it: for at that epoch it stood in the same relation to the Hebrew as our common English version does, and was therefore used by all who wrote books for universal perusal.

On account of its celebrity, the most extravagant stories were current as to its source. Josephus says that seventy-two elders were chosen for the work, six from each tribe, and that their labours occupied exactly seventy-two days. Philo even asserts that these seventy-two men were shut up in separate cells; that each of them translated the entire Bible, apart from all intercourse with his coadjutors; and that these seventy-two independent translations were found to agree exactly, in every particular, with each other. These marvellous fables seem to have been invented, for the purpose of giving to this version the authority of the high priest, and of the council at Jerusalem. They obtained nearly universal credit, as is evident from the fact that the name of Septuagint (

i.e., seventy), arose from the fiction of the seventy-two elders. There is no doubt that these stories are fictitious, for there is positive internal evidence that the several books were executed at different times, and by different hands; and indeed there are strong reasons for believing that the translators were natives of Alexandria, and not of Palestine.

There can be little doubt that our Lord and his apostles referred to this version, when they quoted the ancient Scriptures. It was for many ages the only Bible known in the Church. Very few Christians, indeed, before the Reformation era, knew anything of the Hebrew language, or

suspected the existence of a Hebrew Bible. All old translations of the Bible were made (with the exception of the Syriac) from this. The Vulgate, for centuries the authorised text in the Latin church, was made from the Septuagint, and not directly from the Hebrew. And from the first, the Greek church has never acknowledged any other version except this venerable translation, now more than 2,000 years old.

It must be remembered that the Hebrew original, and the Greek translation, have come to us through two absolutely independent, and even hostile channels. The Hebrew we owe entirely to the Jews; our copies are simply what they have given to us. Whereas the Septuagint has reached us through the hands of the Christian church. These two guardians of the Scriptures had no intercourse whatever with each other. And their united testimony is of the strongest possible description. Where they differ, as they occasionally do, in unimportant details, we have only the firmer confidence that these two venerable recensions have descended to us by quite separate streams. And it may be observed that these differences, however embarrassing they may be to the critic, are really of no consequence to the Christian. We may hesitate in pronouncing sentence upon those points where the two versions are at variance; but every item of our faith is unaffected by them. We might cast out every passage where they do not agree, without shaking a single article out of the Creed.

Looking upon the matter, however, with the eye of the critic, opinions are divided as to which of these is to be preferred. Till the reformation, there was no doubt at all about this subject. The Latin church knew and recognised only the Vulgate; the Greek church only the Septuagint; the reformers, with one voice, preferred the Jewish Old Testament, to what was only a translation of a translation from it. They have been followed by most modern scholars. Of late, however, some among ourselves have seen reason for giving precedence to the Septuagint over the Hebrew; and they ground their judgement mainly upon the circumstance, that our Lord and his apostles quoted, almost uniformly, from the Greek version.

But, in reality, no conclusion ought to be drawn from this. The founders of Christianity, as a thing of course, quoted from the Bible in common use, which was the Septuagint at that time. And whenever this Septuagint differs from the Hebrew in an important respect (as when some point of doctrine is concerned), then it will be found that the quotation comes from the Hebrew. Thus, in the beginning of St. Matthew's Gospel, the names in our Lord's genealogy are spelled as the Septuagint spells them; for it was of no importance which way they were written. Whereas, in the second chapter, the quotation from Hosea, "Out of Egypt I have called my son," is from the Hebrew, and not from the Septuagint, which has "Out of Egypt I have called his children," and which does not convey a sense applicable to Christ.

In all probability, the Hebrew text represents the recension used in the synagogues everywhere except in Egypt; while the Septuagint was another edition, in private use, also read in the synagogues by the Hellenists of Alexandria. This supposition is corroborated by the fact, that the existing Targums, or Aramaic paraphrases (which arose from the custom of interpreting the Hebrew into the vulgar tongue of Palestine, during the synagogue service), agree not with the Septuagint, but with the Hebrew.

It seems to follow necessarily that the synagogue edition must have been the authorised copy. The Septuagint must have occupied the same place as our own English version now does; very

good and excellent, doubtless, but yet containing some faults, which at once prevent its being put into the same rank with the original. We have, moreover, positive assurance that the Jews have taken the most scrupulous, and even superstitious, care of their text; so that accidental mistakes in transcription are hardly supposable; and we are as sure that the Greek text has never been so carefully preserved, and is faulty in many places.

There are two parts of the New Testament which follow the Septuagint exactly, even where this differs decidedly from the Hebrew. These two parts are the speech of Stephen, recorded in Acts 7:1-60, and the Epistle to the Hebrews. In both of these documents we are certain that we are reading the words of men who had the Septuagint translation, and not the Hebrew original, in their hands. Stephen, we know, was a deacon of the Grecians (i.e. of the Hellenists — the very community which produced this version). And there are unmistakable marks, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, of its having been written by a native of Alexandria, the birth-place of the Septuagint. Now, in each of these two documents, the name Jesus occurs in rather an embarrassing manner. In Stephen's speech, we are told of the "tabernacle of witness, which our fathers brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles." And in the Hebrews 4:1-16, we read, "If Jesus had given them rest" In both of these places it is Joshua that is meant, of which name Jesus is only the Greek form, and is the form always used in the Septuagint.

Then again Stephen speaks of 75 people going down to Egypt with Jacob; whereas our copies of the Book of Genesis distinctly assert that there were but 70. The truth is, that our English Bible here follows the Hebrew, whereas Stephen quoted the Septuagint. Then in Hebrews 5:1-14, we find the following quotation from Psalms 40:1-17 : "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not; but a body hast thou prepared me"; and yet on turning to the 40th Psalm itself in our Bibles, we find the expression to be, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened"; which is a literal translation from the Hebrew of the Psalm in question, and different from what we read in the Epistle. But if we refer to the Septuagint version of Psalms 40:1-17, we at once see that the passage, as it stands in the Epistle to the Hebrews, was taken directly from it.

The Psalms in our English Prayer Books are taken from an older translation than the Psalms are which appear in our English Bibles; and as all modern translations started from the Septuagint (through the Vulgate), and by degrees were brought nearer and nearer to the Hebrew; so the Prayer-book Psalms, taken from Archbishop Parker's translation of 1568, lean much more towards the Septuagint than do the Bible Psalms, which were not translated till 1611. If we compare Psalms 14:1-7 in one of these English versions with Psalms 14:1-7 in the other version, we shall be able very easily to see one instance where the Hebrew and the Septuagint are at variance. In the Prayer-book, this 14th Psalm has eleven verses; in the Bible it has but seven; the former following the Septuagint, the latter the Hebrew. And we shall also find that St. Paul, when he quotes this Psalm in Romans 3:1-31, agrees with our Prayer-book version, i.e., with the Septuagint.

In some other respects we may readily perceive the influence of the old Greek edition on our modern editions. The names we give to the five books of Moses are unknown in the Hebrew Bible, which calls the books by the first words in each. They appeared first in the Septuagint, then they were transferred to the Vulgate, and from that to our modern Bibles.

There is another trace of the Septuagint, which is much more serious. The Jews, from time immemorial, never pronounce the word Jehovah, or write it in any but in the Hebrew characters. Now the translators of the Septuagint were Jews, imbued with the common prejudice of their nation. In consequence the word Jehovah does not once appear in the Septuagint; it is invariably rendered by Kurios, or Lord, which was a common title of respect between man and man. This peculiarity passed into the Vulgate, where Dominos is the equivalent term for Jehovah; and, for some unexplained reason — probably on account of the influence exercised by learned Jews over the reformers — it has been almost always retained in our common English Bibles. From this circumstance, a great deal of the meaning of the Bible is sometimes neglected; and the proper name of the invisible God does not appear where it ought to be. In our printed Bibles, it will be seen that when Lord stands for Jehovah, it consists of four capital letters, thus: — LORD.

The writers of the Septuagint were all Jews, and therefore never wrote the word Jehovah with Greek letters. The word Jehovah never once occurs in the entire New Testament. There is no kind of doubt that they used the title kurios, or the LORD, just as the Septuagint translators had done — as a well-understood equivalent for Jehovah. And when this title of LORD became, in an emphatic manner, fixed upon the Redeemer, he was thereby proclaimed to be Jehovah.

As might have been expected, the text of the Septuagint was never so carefully preserved as that of the Hebrew. From an early epoch, it seems to have been in an imperfect condition. At the beginning of the third century of the Christian era, the illustrious Origen devoted a large portion of his life to the amendment of this text; and, for this purpose, he published his celebrated work, The Hexapla (or Six-fold; containing six parallel columns of different editions of the Bible). By comparing these together, he produced an improved text, known as the Hexaplarian. It would have been of the utmost interest to have preserved this work: but, from its great size (it is said to have been in fifty volumes) transcription was, in a manner, impossible. After lying for many years in the library of Caesarea, it is believed to have perished when the Arabs took that city in the seventh century. But the amended text was preserved; and has been almost universally adopted as the text of the Septuagint, since the days of Origen.

There are two principal MSS. of the Septuagint in existence. The one, called the Alexandrian, is in the British Museum. It was sent over as a present to Charles 1 by the Patriarch of Alexandria. It is written on parchment, in four volumes: mutilated in some parts; and so old, that the ink of the letters has, in some places, eaten right through the page; it is believed to belong to the 5th or 6th century; and represents the Hexaplarian text, or the text amended by Origen. The other is called the Vatican, because it is in the library of that name in Rome. Its history is unknown, but is thought to be rather older than the Alexandrian; and it represents the text as it existed before Origen.

There is one circumstance connected with the Septuagint that must not be passed over. It was here that first appeared the books called Apocrypha; and from it were transferred to the Vulgate, where the church of Rome decided that they are to remain. The reformers rejected them from the Canon, because they had never been in the Hebrew; and did not therefore form part of the Jewish Bible, when our Saviour fixed the seal of his authority upon it.

It ought to be mentioned that the book of Daniel, as it appears in all extant editions of the Septuagint, is not the original Septuagint version of Daniel. A Greek translation of this book by Theodotion was put in its place, soon after Christ, on account of its acknowledged imperfections.

The proper Septuagint translation of Daniel was lost until the end of the last century, when it was discovered in the library of Cardinal Chigi at Rome.

(5) The Vulgate.

2nd Edition, Volume 1, January 1857.

(1st. Edition, January 1857 [01 1857 128])

[01 1857 125]

For some period after the first profession of Christianity in the West of Europe, all christian writers seemed to have used the Greek as the ecclesiastical language, and not the Latin — no doubt for two reasons, mainly. In the first place, the apostles and early emissaries from the East spoke Greek, and, in many cases, no other tongue. Respect for these teachers, and imitation of them, naturally produced a continuation of their speech. In the second place, there existed a strong and a reasonable wish to preserve the unity of the Church, and to keep it from separating into fragments.

This wish, however, was in vain. In the third century, there were many influences at work, which were fast tending to divide the huge Roman empire, and the Church along with it, into two parts. In the West, the people of Italy, Spain, Gaul, and that portion of the other continent then known emphatically as Africa, of which Carthage was the principal city, spoke Latin, and owed their civilisation and their Christianity also, almost entirely to Rome. They stood apart, therefore, from the people of the East, who spoke Greek, whose civilisation and Christianity both were of older date than those of Rome; and who, in some respects, considered the Italians as still barbarous. In consequence of this constitutional variance between the East and the West, the Greek language obtained no permanent footing in the latter, but was gradually driven back to its original seats; and Latin Christians began to discard the Greek, and to revert to Latin as their common tongue.

And as gradually, and almost imperceptibly, a Latin version of the scriptures came into notice, which soon displaced the Septuagint. It was a literal translation from that venerable document, as far as the Old Testament was concerned, and from the original Greek of the New Testament. The exact time and place when this version was made are quite uncertain; but from being called the Old Italic (*Vetus Itala*) in the 4th century, it must have been effected soon after the completion of the New Testament. It could not have been effected before that completion, because it contained the whole of the Canon; at the same time it must have come into being before the year 200, A.D., for it is referred to by the renowned Tertullian, an advocate of Carthage, who lived about that time. The age of the Old Italic may safely be placed in the first half of the second century; and its birth-place was very probably the neighbourhood of Carthage. It was here that Tertullian flourished, who was the first known christian writer who used Latin, and to the influence of whose name in the West the gradual adoption of Latin by other Christians has been traced.

For 200 years this Old Italic was the only authorised Bible in western Christendom. It was always quoted, and it obtained that veneration which once was paid to the Septuagint. Indeed by many Latin fathers it was considered faultless. As afterwards it was entirely superseded by the Vulgate, this Old Italic version, as a whole, perished. Fragments of it, however, found in various authors, have been collected and published by Flaminius Nobilius at Rome, in 1588, and again by Sabatier,

at Rheims, in 1743.

After Origen's great revision of the Septuagint, in the middle of the third century, the world began to feel the inconvenience of having a disagreement between the Greek and the Latin scriptures; for while Origen's amended Greek text became the *Textus Receptus*, the *Versio Itala* agreed with the unamended Greek; and it occurred to Jerome, towards the close of the fourth century, to introduce the same changes into the Italic, that Origen had introduced into the Septuagint. This Jerome, one of the four great Latin fathers, and the patron, if not the inventor, of monastic institutions, is said to have performed the work hastily, and even carelessly, and yet this work — the corrected Italic — remains substantially in the Vulgate of the New Testament to this day, and in the Psalters of the Roman and the Gallican Missals.

Jerome himself, even while the work of correction was proceeding, became aware of its imperfection; he resolved, therefore, to apply not merely to the Septuagint, but to the Hebrew itself, for more thoroughly amending the Italic version. He laboured diligently, with the assistance of learned Jews, to acquire a knowledge of the Hebrew tongue, and then he recommenced his revision of the Italic. That part of this version, containing the Old Testament, was completely revised and re-edited; and yet we should be in error if we supposed that Jerome executed a new translation. He only did what our English translators did, he took the old translation for a basis, and amended those parts where he thought the Hebrew ought to be followed; but in substance the new edition resembled the old, and retained, in consequence, many of those peculiarities which the *Vetus Itala* had inherited from the Septuagint, such as the presence of the apocryphal books, the way of spelling the proper names, the titles of the books, the order in which the books stand, and especially that unnecessary retention of the word *Dominus* instead of *Jehovah*.

The New Testament; of course, he did not retouch, except to bring it up to the corrected Greek of Origen, and, for the same reason, (*viz.*, because there was no Hebrew to go to) he might have been satisfied with the Septuagint version of the apocryphal books, in which version, indeed, they had originally appeared. But Jerome seems to have been so much under the influence of his learned Jewish friends, that he used certain Chaldee translations for correcting some of the books in the Apocrypha.

The improved edition of the entire scriptures, thus edited by Jerome, has been constantly styled the Vulgate (that is, the *Versio Vulgata*, or the version in common use); for during many centuries the western church knew of no other version. There can be no doubt of the importance of Jerome's labours; and yet we are told that it met, for some time, with the most decided opposition. In spite of the support given to it by Jerome's friend, Pope Damasus, people thought it was a needless innovation to alter that version of the Bible to which they were accustomed and it was not till about the year 600, (*i.e.* 200 years after the publication of Jerome's Vulgate), that it was fully sanctioned in the Latin Church. This victory it owed to the authority of Pope Gregory I, that great and good man, through whose exertions our Anglo-Saxon forefathers were converted to Christianity.

Let us remember that this famous Vulgate version of the Bible was originally founded on the Old Italic, which was a literal translation from the Greek. The New Testament and the greater part of the Apocrypha remained so, being only brought up to the revised text of Origen. But the Old Testament was corrected by means of the Hebrew, and the apocryphal books of Tobit and Judith by means of Chaldee translations.

There can be no doubt that if we could have the Vulgate, as it proceeded from Jerome, we should possess one of the most important versions of the Bible; but it is a matter of history that its text soon became corrupted. Two hundred years elapsed before it quite displaced the Old Italic; and on account of the two versions being both in use at once, they were in some places confused together, and old errors reintroduced into the Vulgate. Moreover, the transcribers, during the dark ages of Europe, were often ignorant men, who could not exactly copy what they had before them; and the readers were far too uncritical to notice or to care for any mistakes that might have crept in. Even so early as the time of Charlemagne, about the year 800, its defects were known, and the celebrated Alcuin attempted a revision of it. So likewise, in a later age, did Lanfranc, the learned Archbishop of Canterbury, in the reign of William the conqueror. But these attempts, and others like them, produced really very little result, beyond probably arresting the accumulation of errors; for none in those ages, even those accounted greatly learned, had any acquaintance whatever with either the Hebrew or the Greek, and could only compare one copy of the Vulgate with another.

Of course, all translations of the Bible, effected during those ages, were made simply from the Vulgate, as it then existed. The Anglo-Saxon version, for instance, which was gradually made during the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, was only a daughter of the Vulgate; and when, at a much later epoch, viz. 1378, at the very beginning of Richard the Second's reign, John Wickliff published his English Bible, he had no original to appeal to but the Vulgate, as commonly met with, imperfect as it avowedly was. When printing was introduced, in the middle of the fifteenth century, it was first directed to multiply copies of the Vulgate. The first printed book that issued from the press of Gutenberg was the Vulgate, now known as the Mazarin Bible, preserved in the library at Paris. As soon as printing presses were established in the various countries of Europe, they issued copies of the Vulgate, from the MSS. which happened to come to the printers' hands. And it was then that the imperfections of this ancient version became manifest; for these printed Bibles differed in many important respects: which, then, was the true copy, or how could it be regained?

It was a prominent question of the day, how to settle the text of the Vulgate; and it deeply engaged the attention of scholars in every kingdom. It was one of the concurrent causes that stirred men's minds, made them reflect on the grounds of their faith, and brought in the Reformation. By a combination of circumstances that cannot be regarded as fortuitous, the exile of the Jewish rabbis from Spain had lately scattered a knowledge of the Hebrew Bible and of the Hebrew language over Europe, while almost at the same time, the learned Greeks who fled from the victorious Turks, carried into the West their own tongue, and the Greek Testament. Scholars could now address themselves, with far greater means of success, to the amendment of the Vulgate, than they could do in the middle ages; and biblical criticism began to assume its proper place and dignity.

The Reformers did not hesitate to prefer the Hebrew of the Old, and the Greek of the New Testament, to any translation however venerable; but the Church of Rome, after a little delay, decided to adhere to what had existed for 1000 years. The Council of Trent, in 1546, took the subject of the scriptures into consideration, and finally determined that the Vulgate was the only authentic Bible, to which all other translations, and even the original itself, must conform. Still it was necessary to decide what was the Vulgate; and, after a great deal of discussion, the Popes undertook to produce a correct and an infallible, edition of the Vulgate, which should have the

sanction of the church. In 1570, Sixtus V. issued this authorised Bible, forbidding, under an anathema, any further disturbing of the text. But the errors of this edition, called the Sixtine Bible, were too glaring to be passed over; and, consequently, in 1593, Clement VIII suppressed the work of his predecessor, and published a second infallible edition, known as the Clementine Bible, which is the edition now meant by the Vulgate, the only one appointed to be read. All subsequent Vulgates are nothing but reprints of the edition of 1593, with all its mistakes reproduced and perpetuated.

The Church of Rome did great injury to the cause of biblical knowledge by forbidding any improvement of the text of the Vulgate. By preferring a translation of a translation to the original itself, she has committed an absurdity (especially as Jerome, the author of the Vulgate, wished to go back to the Hebrew; and by pronouncing both the Sixtine and the Clementine editions, each in succession, infallibly true, she herself teaches men to question the dogmatic authority upon which alone she recommends the Vulgate to the people. The consequence of this lofty opinion of the Vulgate is, that no translation can be tolerated which is not made from it. Our own common version, for example, is repudiated by English Roman Catholics, and the Douay Bible and the Rheims New Testament are sanctioned, because they have been rendered from the Clementine edition of the Vulgate.

But it must not be forgotten that the Vulgate was really the basis of ours, as of all modern European versions. [?] The originals were only used to correct what was amiss in previous versions. Hence we find so many traces of the Vulgate in our English Bibles, some of which have been mentioned. It is worth remembering that that peculiarity common to our own, to the Vulgate, and the Septuagint, of substituting kurios, Dominus, or LORD for Jehovah, is, in every case, traceable to Jewish influence. The translators of the Septuagint were Jews; the guides of Jerome in his Hebrew were Jews; the reformers received their Hebrew from the Jews also.

The confusion that exists in our translation, in the rendering of the Greek article, is easily explained when one remembers that the Vulgate was in Latin, where there is no article.

It is somewhat singular that the very arguments against endeavouring to amend the present translation (most of whose errors are from the Vulgate) appear to have been used against the Vulgate itself, until Gregory the Great overbore them. — W. H. J.

Vol 01 - History of the Text of the Bible.

Vol 01 - History of the Text of the Bible.

W. H. J., Bible Treasury, [1st. Edition August 1856]

[1856 48] Most of the books of the Old Testament were committed to writing before the Babylonish captivity, when we have no contemporary literature: for profane history had not properly begun. The grounds for receiving them are, however, of the very strongest possible kind. For the original delivery of them was from men to whom Jehovah Himself had given their commission. They were delivered by prophets and seers, who spoke the Lord's message, and were regarded as those whose authority might not be questioned. Their books also, we doubt not, were held in scrupulous veneration, whenever there remained among the people a sense of the true religion.

There were, indeed, seasons, when God and His servants, and therefore their writings also, were despised and forsaken. But even then, there were faithful people who held fast to their Scriptures, and who could always restore the books, when the nation returned to its proper allegiance. The longest revolt from Jehovah was that which occurred in the reigns of Manasseh and Amon, when the nation seemed to have quite given up His service. Yet when Josiah commenced a great reform, and search was made for copies of the sacred books; there was found in the recesses of the temple, an authentic copy of the law, whose injunctions the king immediately proceeded to obey.

At the return from Babylon, a new era commences. Ezra, assisted by competent scribes, undertook the task of placing the sacred writings upon so sure a footing, that there should be no room for any loss hereafter. Situated as he was, there were ample means at hand, for securing correct copies of the several books, and of forming them into a canon, or authorised volume. The prophets who lived at that time — Zechariah and Haggai — and who received their messages direct from Jehovah, were quite sufficient to establish the authority he required.

We have moreover, to remember that there is no absolute necessity for our investigating the condition of the text of the Old Testament, before the time of our Lord and His apostles. After all, we have only to arrive at a knowledge of what the text was in the days of the first promulgation of Christianity. For we have their, and especially His, infallible mark of approbation fixed on the Scriptures as then existing; and it is clear that no possible evidence could be stronger.

Now we arrive at a knowledge of that text, through several separate and independent channels. In addition to the original Scriptures themselves, in the Hebrew; we have many very ancient translations, some made before the time of Christ; and these reach us quite independently of the original text; so that in any point where they all concur, we have, it is plain, a proof of the most convincing nature, that we have the text, as it existed, before the separation of these several witnesses. And where they differ, as they do in unimportant respects, we have all the more reason for being persuaded of their value. We are quite sure that there has been no collusion or deceit. Joined to this evidence, we have also that which is furnished by these books being quoted in

ancient writers. They supply us with an additional testimony to the words which they have used. Thus we know that the Old Testament is very frequently quoted in the New. We receive the New Testament through altogether a different source from that whereby the Old comes to us; and we therefore feel sure that if the christian books report Moses or Isaiah to have said such and such words; and we find the books of Moses and Isaiah, which have been in possession of the Jews, (the avowed enemies of christianity), saying the same words, we have no hesitation in perceiving that we could have no better proof of the fact that those words were actually used.

We leave for the present these sources of evidence, and confine ourselves to a consideration of the Hebrew text itself, which has come down to us, almost entirely from the Jews.

We spoke, in our last article, of the division of Jews into two great classes:— the Hebrews, who spoke or used Aramaic; and the Grecians who spoke and used Greek. The latter seem to have disappeared soon after the publication of christianity. Those who were not absorbed into the church, gave up all their differences with other Jews, and were in no way distinguished from them. There were two centres about which they chiefly congregated. The one was at Tiberias in Galilee, within the Roman Empire; the other at Babylon, without it. At each of these places, schools of theology and literature flourished for many generations. From Tiberias there issued the Mishna, or second law; being in fact those very traditions, reduced to writing, against which our Lord had inveighed. This Mishna being regarded as itself a book to be revered; the doctors of Tiberias by degrees collected many notes and comments upon it, which form what is called the Gemara, 1:e., supplement. And the Mishna and this gemara together, make up the first talmud (or doctrine) called the Jerusalem talmud, which was completed about the year A.D., 300.

About this time the school at Tiberias was losing its importance, and in its place rose up that of Babylon, where other and far more voluminous comments, making another gemara, were added to the mishna of Tiberias. And these make up the second or Babylon talmud — always meant, when the talmud only is mentioned — which was finished about the year A.D. 500.

Now in both these talmuds, written in Aramaic, there are a vast number of quotations from the Bible, which learned men have, with great labour, collected and compared with the Bible itself. They find the discrepancies quite unimportant.

When the Arabs conquered those parts of the world where these learned Jews were chiefly settled, and when the earlier Caliphs in the eighth and ninth centuries patronised all kinds of learning;— a great impulse was given to the cultivation of the Hebrew language and literature, and to the critical study of the Bible. A succession of Jewish doctors then flourished in the East, who are styled the Masorettes, because their collection of writings is called the masorah or tradition. They directed their attention almost exclusively to the text of the Bible, selecting the best manuscripts, and rejecting what was corrupt. The scrupulous care they took may be judged from the fact that they have counted the number of words, and the number of letters in the Bible or in any particular parts. They have left on record what is the middle word, or the middle letter of the entire book; how many words begin with a particular letter, and many other minute labours of the same kind, trifling indeed, but still showing most remarkably how careful they were of even words and letters.

When the Turks overpowered Western Asia in the eleventh century, they commenced a systematic persecution against the Jews, broke up their schools, and killed or banished their leaders. The doctors fled chiefly into Spain, where there was still a Caliph at Cordova: and to the adjoining provinces in the South of France. Here Aben-Ezra, Maimonides, Kimchi, and others, preserved the learning of the Eastern Jews. But, when the fierce persecution of Ferdinand and Isabella, in the fifteenth century, drove all the Jews out of Spain, they carried with them, into more favourable countries, the valuable treasures they possessed; and therefore in the next or sixteenth century, when learning revived, and the reformation arose, then the Hebrew MSS. of the Jews were at hand, and were soon put into print, by means of which the Bible was corrected, and brought back, as nearly as possible, to its original condition.

We cannot but admire the providential ordering of events, which overruled the cruel and iniquitous persecutions raised against the learned Jews, first by the Turkish sultans in Asia, and then by the christian sovereigns of Spain, bringing to us the Hebrew MSS. of the Bible, which otherwise we might have sought in vain.

It must be also mentioned that we do not depend solely upon these Asiatic and Spanish Jews for our MSS. There existed from time immemorial in Poland and Germany, another separate community of Jews, whose traditions and schools of learning were quite independent of their brethren; and from them we have MSS. agreeing indeed in all essential respects with the others, but still so far varying as to show they come to us through different channels.

The history of the text of the New Testament is much simpler and shorter than that of the Old. We have the concurrent evidence of churches and congregations, who were scattered over the civilised world, and who preserved the apostolic records with affectionate reverence. We have numberless quotations and references in the christian writings from the second century onwards. We have very ancient translations in Latin and in Syriac, that have a perfectly independent existence. And we have MSS. reaching up almost to the days when the books themselves were originally written. We know also, that from a very early period the church was divided into several rival factions; each of whom acted apart from the others; and in each of whom we possess independent evidence for the text. And here, as in the case of the Jews, it is impossible not to see how wonderfully God brought good out of evil. For, by the time the dark ages came in, during that gloomy period, marked out by the ninth and tenth centuries, when learning and religion seemed almost lost, and Europe appeared to be lapsing back into barbarism; — the Benedictine and Cistercian Abbeys, founded at a previous happier season, had stored up, unnoticed and uncared for, the ancient Greek MSS. of the New Testament, which, when required, were produced by the investigation of the scholars who mainly brought about the Reformation.

When Constantinople was taken by the Turks in 1453, and the last remnant of ancient civilisation destroyed, many scholars fled to the West of Europe, and brought with them a knowledge of the Greek language, till then almost unknown, at the very time when the dispersion of the Jews from Spain was making public the Hebrew tongue. And contemporaneously with these events, that wonderful discovery of printing was made; putting machinery into the hands of men for the preparation of proper copies of the Bible, which would have been altogether wanting a few generations previously.

Since that epoch, the libraries of Europe, Asia, and North Africa, have been ransacked, and many valuable MSS. discovered which were then unknown; and the settlement of the text, as it is called, has become the subject of the attention of biblical students. A judgement has to be formed from the variety and abundance of materials that exist, and a text produced that shall be as nearly as possible like what it was when it left the hands of the original writers. And in order to accomplish this, not only have the ancient MSS. themselves to be examined, and their comparative value decided, but due weight has to be given to any differences that may appear in the ancient translations, or in quotations made in ancient authors. It frequently happens that the different sources of information vary in particulars, and then a judgement must be exercised as to which is to be preferred.

We shall, in future papers, show what these various sources of information are. In the mean time, we shall be content with remarking, that the result of these investigations has been of the very happiest nature. When they were first entered on, great alarm was felt that the faith of many would be unsettled by them; and for that reason the Church of Rome forbade any amendment of the text of the Vulgate, acknowledged on all hands to be corrupt. But, however embarrassing the differences may be to the scholar, they are insignificant to the divine or the christian. They are all really quite unimportant — and the happy result is that we have discovered them to be unimportant. Whereas had we refused to look at them, we might have been harassed by a suspicion that we had been imposed upon; and should not have been certain, as we are now, that for all practical purposes, our ordinary Bibles give us what God originally directed the prophet or the apostle to reveal.

God sent His book into the world, like all His other blessings, entrusted to human care, and liable to injury from human carelessness. We may be thankful that He has watched over His own gift, and has protected it from all real damage. W. H. J.

Vol 01 - The One Predicted Re-Awakening.

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Original Contributions

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, September 1856.

(1st Edition, September 1856 [01 1856 061])

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. etc." Matthew 25:1-13.

[01 1856 058]

Such is the one predicted re-awakening, and such are the foretold results. The cry, ("Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him") shall effect it; and the result shall be the going in of all the wise unto the marriage supper, and the closing of the door of entrance thereunto.

The slumbering church, so called, shall itself be roused from the long slumber of its apostasy, as a whole, only by the cry announcing the bridegroom's immediate approach. There was time only for the trimming of the lamps. There was no oil obtained by the foolish, who had taken none with them at the first. They were all excluded from the marriage supper. The bridegroom "knew them not," and could not admit them into his joyous presence.

Whence, then, the notion of the world's previous conversion? The church itself sleeps until the bridegroom is coming. When once the tarrying of the bridegroom has furnished the "occasion to the flesh," for worldly sloth and self-indulgence, the church, so called, awakes no more until the cry, "The bridegroom cometh," effectually arouses it. Where can there be found the remotest possibility of any intervening thousand years of universal holiness and peace? Do we need further witnesses?

But let us contemplate this great awakening. Did not our hearts burn within us, when we heard, in days gone by, of great revivals, and effusions of the Holy Ghost? Do they not now burn within us, when true tidings of such sort salute our ears? Here is represented to us then, a grand and veritable revival, or re-awakening — the grand one of the age — the final and decisive one of the dispensation. How is this wonderful prediction overlooked! How is this plain account of the consummation and conclusion of Christendom's apostasy passed over and neglected!

"THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins." What may these words, "Kingdom of heaven," be intended to denote? and WHEN shall this kingdom be likened to ten virgins?

The term "Christendom" seems a contraction of the words, "Christ's kingdom" — the precise equivalent to the expression made use of in the parable. The nominally Christian portion of the population of the earth, seems clearly that which the parable describes. The world's population, as

a whole, enters not into the question here. Those only who "had taken the lamp" are spoken of. None but "virgins" — professed attendants on the Lord's return — are included. The condition and destiny of the earth's inhabitants form the subject of a hundred other scriptures. This scripture treats only of "the kingdom of heaven"; and that not of the kingdom formally established, but merely of its state whilst its sovereign is in banishment therefrom — rejected out of the earth. There are those who own their rejected and absent sovereign — some in reality, others in profession only. These constitute his kingdom now. But the kingdom formally set up — the kingdom of the thousand years — when, leaving the Father's throne, the Son of man shall ascend his own peculiar one, and glorify his saints together with himself, subduing to himself the nations of the universal earth, this kingdom is a distinct, and certainly a yet future one. This kingdom — the one only entirely real one — must assuredly come after the mixed and slumbering condition of affairs set forth in the parable before us. Before the state that the parable describes, it did not come. During the period therein depicted it cannot come. In an age beyond the period of this parable, therefore, it will surely yet transpire.

The christianised portions of the earth, during the present era, are the subject also of the parables of the thirteenth chapter of this gospel. It is not all the population of the earth, which therein is treated of. The whole world's population cannot be included. No millennium will ever arrive, in such case. A mixed population is finally disposed of in these parables. The wheat is gathered home to the garner, and the tares are burned in the fire. The net cast into the sea is drawn ashore, only to be found filled with fish, both bad and good. The good only are gathered into vessels. The bad are cast away — "into a furnace of fire, where shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Not one word here of all the remainder of the fish, which the world's sea contains. Other scriptures treat of those.

These parables, we repeat it, speak of the "kingdom of heaven" — of Christendom only, or the (at the least nominally) christianised portions of the earth's population. "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed," etc. "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed," etc. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven," etc. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field," etc. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman," etc. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net," etc. The first of these seven parables of Matthew 13:1-58 — that of the Sower, also describes the same sphere. The chapter is a course of instruction, of seven-fold perfectness, not regarding the whole world, but such portion thereof only as shall be sown with wheat and tares previously to the end of the present age.

Such is the sphere which is treated of in the parable, specially before us. "The kingdom of heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins." It is the virgin, or lamp-bearing portion of the people of the earth, whose course is here described. Were it otherwise, and were the whole world included, there could be no millennium of universal knowledge of the Lord. For the foolish virgins doubtless are those who elsewhere as tares, or, bad fish, or wicked and slothful servants, are cast into the fire. If then these are so removed from the earth, and the wise virgins, like the wheat, or good fish, or good and faithful servants, are taken up into the presence of their Lord in glory; and if these parties constitute the whole population of the globe, where shall there be found any nucleus or basis for a millennial race? Clearly, in such case, there could be no such nucleus or basis found.

But when shall the great event of this parable transpire? "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps," etc. The division into two chapters of the grand

prophetic discourse which comprises this parable is unfortunate. Very much that is connected with a right apprehension of the parable depends upon an enlightened perception of the teaching of the discourse as a whole.

The period alluded to, in the use of the word, "Then" — "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins" — seems that which is immediately connected with the unequalled time of tribulation, rather than with the time of the execution of the foregoing judgement. The earlier portions of the discourse, and specially when the narration of St. Luke is collated with this of St. Matthew, are sufficient to place this beyond dispute.

There should come a day when the nation of Israel, brought to a state of preparation for the reception of their true Messiah, should in sincerity exclaim, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." But until that day, they should be favoured with no further presentation of himself. "Your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth." He then "went out, and departed from the temple." He went therein no more. After two days was the passover, and he was betrayed to be crucified, Matthew 26:1-2. But to the disciples, as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, whither he had gone from the temple, he proceeded to deliver this, his grand prophetic utterance.

There should transpire a period of wars, delusions, disasters, and apostasy. This period should close with a crisis of yet far deeper sorrows. Only an elect remnant of disciples, whom it should not be possible to deceive, and for whose sake those days should be shortened, would be saved. Otherwise no flesh should have been saved; in which case no millennium could have taken place. But those days should be shortened, and a chosen remnant spared. God's purpose should be certainly secured.

Then shall the true Messiah once more present himself to his own nation. Immediately after this unequalled tribulation, he shall return in glory. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other," Matthew 24:29-31. This is the period when the judgement of the quick is executed. This is the time referred to, proximately, at the least, in the word with which the parable commences. "THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins." But the precise order of events we seek not to determine now.

1. These "virgins" had previously gone forth. They had taken their lamps. They had assumed the position of expectants and attendants. They had given assent unto the truth that there should be a wedding — that a bridegroom would appear. They had faith; all of them possessed belief, such as it was. They openly professed that, by going forth all of them. Yet with very many this was but the excess of folly. "The foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."

2. The oil denotes the Holy Ghost. "God

anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power." "Ye have an unction from the Holy One." Anointing ever signified the communication of divine power, whether for official, or for private relationships or purposes — the power of the Holy Ghost. In this case, as in others, the oil was needed specially as the power and source of joy — well-founded joy. "The oil of joy, for mourning." "God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." The virgins needed the joy of hope whilst waiting, and the power of joyful recognition and reception of the bridegroom, when he actually appeared.

3. Thus the flame would seem to denote this joy — this suited tribute of homage to the bridegroom. "Go forth with joy to meet him," is the well-known stanza of a well-known composition. To this day, illuminations are the notorious commemoratives of joyous events. And the thought is scriptural. "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." "The light of the righteous rejoiceth, but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out." So it was, alas! with that of the foolish virgins. Their hope began to vanish just at the period when it should have ripened into realisation. It was ill-founded; there was no oil in the vessel — no Holy Ghost — no power of divine grace in the heart. Whilst the bridegroom tarried, and all things continued as they had been — whilst the sun shone, and the stars yet gave forth light, and the moon walked in her brightness — their hearts were the deluded subjects of a certain vain and shadowy hope; that somehow, at the last, all would prove well with them. But the fear of the righteous revelation of the Judge of quick and dead — the over-hanging hastening storm close behind the wedding supper — at once produced the piteous exclamation, "Our lamps are gone out!" Their false hope died away. Their hearts became darkened by despair. They cried out, "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out." (See margin.)

But let us now view the general instruction of this parable. There was a time when all those virgins "slumbered and slept"; this was "whilst the bridegroom tarried." The church fell into this slumber at a very early period of its history. Three centuries had not rolled away before the disastrous change had set in almost universally. The servants had begun to say, "My Lord delayeth his coming," and they had commenced "to beat the men-servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken." Cyprian, (so early as A.D. 250), declared of the church generally, "All were set upon an immeasurable increase of gain, and forgetting how the first converts to our holy religion had behaved under the personal direction and care of the Lord's apostles, or how all ought in after times to carry themselves, the love of money was their darling passion." Eusebius, who assuredly was no cynic or austere criticiser of the prevailing character of his day, did yet on one occasion pen the following passage:— "We were almost upon the point of taking up arms against each other; prelates inveighing against prelates, and people rising against people; and hypocrisy and dissimulation had risen to the greatest height and malignity." This was about A.D. 310. Cyril (the so-called bishop of Jerusalem, only about fifty years later) wrote as follows: "Formerly the heretics were manifest, but now the church is filled with heretics in disguise. For men have fallen away from the truth, and have itching ears. Is it a plausible theory? All listen to it gladly. Is it a word of correction? All turn away from it. Most have departed from right words, and rather choose the evil than desire the good. This therefore is the falling away; and the enemy (Antichrist) is soon to be looked for." But why should we refer to the Fathers? The sacred canon was not closed too soon to record, for our instruction, the commencement of the predicted slumbering and sleeping. Read 2 Thessalonians 2:7; 2 Timothy 3:1-17; specially the addresses to the churches, in the concluding

book of the inspired volume. Yes, the apostasy and the slumber set in exceeding early! The papacy is indeed an old religion. The spirit of godly protestantism, was evoked before the apostles died. The seeds of most of Rome's fundamental errors were sown and germinating eighteen hundred years ago. Why should this be controverted? Alas! how can it be denied?

Christendom, so called, is still "slumbering and sleeping." Some of the nations thereof have changed their creed, indeed, and their communion and name. The real work of God in the period of the Reformation resulted in this:— many, very many — a noble army of martyrs and of confessors, with a yet greater multitude of believers, "little and unknown," were savingly converted. The alteration of several national professions followed. But the mass of each and every single population remained fast asleep. Returning torpor ere long befell most even of those who had been savingly awakened. Christendom still slumbers. The millions eat and drink, and are drunken with the cares of this life. "Where is the promise of his coming?" is the grand echo of all their doings. Alas, who shall arouse them! When shall they awake? What shall break in effectually upon this slumber of eighteen, or nearly eighteen, centuries? The church, it is affirmed, must convert the world; but, alas, who shall arouse, if not convert the church? Who shall awaken it?

"And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. THEN all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps." This solemn outcry, then, is that which effects the great awakening. The cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh!" — that only — will arouse the slumbering church. Clearly, then, the labours of those who seek to persuade the church that the millennium must first ensue will not accomplish this. Those who boast the world's conversion by the institutions now existing will never succeed even in awakening the church. Will they bear plain dealing? They stand directly in the way of this desirable event. They impede it — nay virtually labour to prevent it. They lend their energies to thwart it. They use their influence on the other side. They say, "The bridegroom cometh not till there transpire an intervening thousand years." A faint rumour has sped its way recently across our land, to the same purport as the formal midnight cry, and some of the sleepers have been already startled. Our friends who are of the notion that the grand institutions in existence must do this work sound forth immediately a counteracting cry: Hush! hush! he comes not yet! Shall these persons bring about the predicted universal "trimming of the lamps"? Assuredly they cannot. The cry which they ("in ignorance we wot,") oppose, the cry they would cry down, the cry — "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," — this only shall effect it. Mistaken brethren! when will ye cease to set yourselves in array against the very object of your prayers and aspirations? You pray, you long for, you groan after general awakening and concern. You are hastening on by these, the very cry which you seek to cry down. Your prayers war with your teaching. Your teachings war with your prayers. Ye fight against your own holiest aspirations. Pray on! The midnight cry shall drown all other cries. Every opposing voice shall shortly pass away, even as the idle murmurings of the wind. For so this solemn revelation reads: "at midnight there was a cry made, behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps."

The verse which next ensues appears to suggest very singular application. Its import seems remarkable indeed. "And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out." Did they entertained the notion of their being in the possession of the wise some treasury of supererogatory grace. They were Papists, on this point at least. Not so the wise ones. They said, "Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you." These were Protestants to a man, at least on

this greatly controverted point. Whatever any of them, wise or foolish, had been called — whatever had had been the place of their communion, only the foolish held the false notion of supererogation grace; the wise unanimously denied it. Such, too, was the result of praying to the saints for grace. "Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." They could point their foolish companions to the true treasury of grace. So indeed can any saint minister grace to his fellow, even by the ministration of the truth — the truth which He who only can directly impart grace ever uses as the vehicle of his behests. But this was not what was requested by the foolish. Strange indeed, that this notion of supererogation — of a church treasury of superfluous grace — applicable to the case of those who need such help; strange, indeed, that this notion should in fact be held, avowedly, by the immense majority of the so-called Christians of the age.

"While they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him unto the marriage, and the door was shut." Even Christendom itself, so called, was not converted, as a whole, when the personal return of the bridegroom took place. How much less then, the world at large! This is the end of Christendom. It must be removed out of the way, before there will be a converted world. The complete ingathering comprises only the wise virgins and the previously dead in Christ. The door is shut — the door — not of conversion — but into the marriage supper. Only those previously converted — those only who had taken oil in their vessels — were ready for admission through this door. The world's conversion is a subsequent event. This is the fate of Christendom.

Whence then the notion of the gradual growth of the church unto universality? Whence the notion that the church ever will include the whole world's population? Surely not hence — not from this wondrous scripture. No; there is no such teaching in

any scripture. The church will be but as a little flock when the chief shepherd re-appears. Those alive and remaining, with the dead in Christ, complete it. The spirits of the just men made perfect, of the previous age, these friends of the bridegroom, (see John 3:29), shall stand in the bridegroom's presence, and hear him, and rejoice in seeing that he who only is worthy of the bride now has her by his side. The saints of the past dispensation, then, will be, apparently, the bridegroom's friends; those of the present dispensation will constitute his bride; whilst those of the yet future and millennial dispensation will constitute his subjects. "O the depth both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

Such, then, is the one grand predicted re-awakening, and such its result. "They that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterwards came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not." Would that the universal church, so called, could hear even now the solemn conclusion of this parable: "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour." — S.

Vol 01 - Thoughts on the Parables in Mat_13:1-58.

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Original Contributions.

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(1st. Edition, January 1857 [01:130])

The Sower

The Tare-field

The Tree

Leaven

The House

The Hidden Treasure

The Pearl of Great Price

The Net

(1) [01:129]

The rejection of Jesus as Messiah by the Jews, and their being cast off in consequence, for a season, was the occasion, foreseen by God, of bringing to pass His gracious purpose, that salvation should be offered to all men, whether Jew or Gentile. Jesus takes to Himself a new name, and fills new offices. Servants had been sent to the husbandmen keeping the vineyard, and at last the Son: we know how they were treated. "He came to his own [things], and his own [people] received him not." The miracles, which He wrought in their sight, were by them attributed to Satanic power; and the unpardonable sin was committed in blaspheming the Holy Ghost. Had they received Him, doubtless the kingdom would have been immediately established, and the Son of David would have sat upon the throne of David. But "the carnal mind is enmity against God," and they would not have Jesus to reign over them. Does judgement immediately overtake them? No: their sin opened the floodgates for the display of God's most wondrous grace. He is about to gather some of every clime, and, by the operation of His Spirit, to unite them into the Church, in which the names of Jew and Gentile should not be known, where there is neither Greek nor barbarian, bond nor free; where there is only one bond of union, but that the most intimate — Christ the Bridegroom, and the Church the bride; He the Head, she the body; each individual a member of this body, and all members one of another, where the Holy Ghost Himself, by His actual presence, and personal indwelling in each saint, is the bond. There is formed and exhibited a union such as the Lord Himself referred to when He prayed, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that

thou hast sent me." Meantime the earthly kingdom is in abeyance, — the kingdom, of which Isaiah gives the moral picture in Isaiah 11:1-16, Isaiah 12:1-6; of which Ezekiel gives the sacred and metropolitan relations in the latter chapters of his prophecy, viz., the service of the temple, etc., the manifestation of the visible presence of God in a higher degree than was effected by the Shechinah of old, insomuch that the name of the city shall be "the LORD is there." Daniel, also, gives its external relations with other kingdoms — if the term might be used, I would say the political aspect of the kingdom. It breaks up and destroys the Gentile powers. The Stone smites the image, and the wind carries away the very dust of it, and every vestige is effaced. "He shall be king over all the earth." This kingdom, we repeat, is postponed that the heirs may be gathered for heavenly glory.

How great the love of our God! He became poor that we might be made rich. He put in abeyance His glory as God, the ever blessed second person of the Trinity. He gave up His power, and dominion, and government, and majesty as the heir of David's throne, as king of Israel, and as He whose name should be honoured among the Gentiles, that there might be associated with Him, in His future glory, a Bride who is to pass through the same sufferings (save that of atonement,) to fill up that which remains of the sufferings of Christ, then to be presented perfect to the Bridegroom, free from all taint of sin, spotless, and holy. Oh, if every Christian did but know and act up to his glorious calling! How soon might we not hail His return, and the rapture of the saints!

But to return to our chapter — Christ comes not to the vine, the symbol of the Jewish nation in its religious aspect, seeking fruit, but commences a new work. He is a sower going forth to sow.

The first parable is not said to be a similitude of the kingdom. The seed is called the word of the kingdom, and the effect produced upon different characters is illustrated by the seed falling upon different ground. The opposition which the seed — the word — meets with is shown also: "Some fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and gathered them up." The Lord explains, "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he that received seed by the way-side." The truth of God makes no impression on his mind, which is under the power and dominion of the father of lies — the power of death. It is an exceedingly desperate case. The soul is completely in Satan's hands, and appears to be the farthest removed from the life-giving power of the word of God — of the word of Him who is the resurrection and the life. The second case is equally bad, though apparently not so unpromising. The seed is received into stony ground: such are they who receive the word joyfully, but yet with the mind and feelings merely. The intellect may admire the truth, so far as it is understood; the natural affections of the heart may be acted upon by the exhibition of a crucified Saviour; but it is a superficial reception. The truth, though admired, is not permitted to search the soul, and to probe the conscience, and (resting only in the affections and understanding, which are but "the flesh") no wonder that when tribulation and persecution arise because of the word, such are offended. The hindering power in the third case is equally clear. The cares of this age, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things, are all of the world, and opposed to the Father. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

There is exhibited in these three instances the antagonism of the devil, the flesh, and the world, to the word of the Lord. There was the death-stupor of the first, no feeling, no apprehension of the truth, without understanding, like the beasts that perish. There was immediate joyful acting in the

second, but the conscience was not reached. The necessity of self-abasement was not felt, and, for the time, opposition was dormant. But when self-denial was called for, when it became necessary to take up the cross, then the fleshly love of ease rose up in opposition; and they are "offended," notwithstanding the partial light and understanding, — so inveterate is the enmity between the flesh and the Spirit. The lust of the eye and the pride of life, developing themselves in the cares of this world and in the deceitfulness of riches, show their antagonism to the life-giving word in the third case. All are opposed to God; and though this opposition is manifested in different ways, yet are they all in the end fatal and destructive. Perhaps we may see, in these three cases, the opposition that is manifested to the Son, as administering the power of the kingdom against the wicked one; to the Spirit, as overcoming or detecting the workings and deceitful power of the flesh; to the Father, in contrast with the love of the world. For the way-side hearer is quite enthralled by the power of death and Satan; the stony ground hearer shows the flesh lusting against the Spirit; and the hearer choked with the cares, etc., of this world exhibits the love of the world as an antagonistic principle to the love of the Father. The devil, the flesh, and the world, combine to oppose the Son, the Spirit, and the Father — the Three-one God.

The good-ground hearer is the exact opposite of the way-side hearer: the latter does not understand, the former does. In the two other cases there is the appearance, but not the fruit. Here we have the manifestation of the power of God, by which the devil, the flesh and the world are overcome; and according to their subjection to the word sown in their hearts, they bring forth fruit, some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold, and some an hundred fold. Has this threefold division of the good-ground hearers any reference to the three powers of opposition? In the progress of the believer from the power of death to the full enjoyment of the life of God, the Son, the Spirit, and the Father all work. We do not mean that the believer progresses from knowing the Son to the Spirit and the Father; but if the believer, although passed from death to life, through the application of the atoning blood of Christ, does not in all things yield to the teaching of the Holy Spirit, is not he so far under the power of the flesh? Is he not carnal? (Compare 1 Corinthians 1:3) And if so, how can he be enjoyed, and how manifested that supreme love of the Father, which is seen only by and in those who are practically crucified to the world, and the world to them? Is it not true that the love of the world exposes us to yield to the flesh, and that the yielding to the flesh tends to bring under the power of Satan?

(2)

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[01:159]

The question may be asked, Why are the hearts of some compared to good ground, when the scripture teaches, that all hearts are "deceitful and desperately wicked?" Not because there is anything naturally good therein. Facts only are presented here; the operating cause is not; it is simply the fact of the preaching of the word, and the reception of it.

In some cases there is brutish insensibility, or cold indifference; in others, a paramount love for, or fear of, the world. All this may, in the natural man, be owing to, or at least aggravated by, constitutional and educational differences; but in all cases, without the preparation of the heart by

the Holy Ghost to receive the word, there would be unfruitfulness.

While, then, on the one hand, there is no intimation of the grace which prepares the heart (which is quite outside of man's exertion or intelligence) so that it becomes like the good ground, on the other, nothing is said as to the cause of the rejection of the word. Our Lord does say, "They had no root;" but even this is matter of fact rather than the cause. Man is responsible for the reception of the word; and his responsibility comes out prominently here. (Matthew 13:9.) That which the Spirit of God does present is first the preaching of the word, then its reception, or rejection, as the case may be; and this quite distinct from the secret spring which operates to produce reception.

(Matthew 13:24.) "Another parable," etc. In the preceding parable we have the word of the kingdom; the good seed has been sown, the gospel has been preached. The kingdom of heaven is now begun. We are carried forward in advance of the moment when the Lord was speaking. The kingdom commenced when Jesus had ascended (i.e. the mysteries of the kingdom); it will only be when He comes again, that the kingdom will be established in power. We have now presented to us three pictures of the kingdom under three different aspects, but all of them external. The stand-point whence we view it is the earth. We have had a parabolic description of the introduction of Christianity into the world. A new order of things was then about to take place, a new dispensation, where the visible glory of God would not be manifested as it had been in the holy of holies within the veil of the temple, but the establishment of a kingdom on the earth to be under the rule of Christ Himself dwelling in heaven. But this kingdom would be marred and spoiled by the enemy; yet would men profess to have Christ for their king. MYSTERIES truly! — man, calling himself a Christian, in league with the world that rejected and crucified the King, condemning the world that did it, yet loving the world, and denying the right and the truth of the King coming again to take what is His own. "Why speakest thou . . . in parables?" Because it is not given to the multitude, to those outside, to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

And in the present hour the kingdom of heaven is a mystery to the world. Only those inside, in the house, can know them. Before the multitude our Lord proceeds to give an account of the kingdom, a parabolic and prophetic description of it, right on to the end, when the mysteries will cease, and there will be the open and visible establishment of it in power. The Lord does not speak of the Father's purpose in permitting such an anomalous state of the kingdom to exist. Of this He spoke to His disciples in the house, when the multitude were sent away. There He speaks to them anticipatively of their future position and calling while yet on the earth, viz., destined for heavenly places. They were told of their existence in the purpose of God before the world was, that they in their corporate capacity were a treasure to Him, yea, "one pearl of great price." It is only when we are in the house with Jesus, that we can enter into the views of the kingdom unfolded in the last three parables contained in this chapter. But previously (Matthew 13:1-33) the Lord sits by the sea-side, outside for the multitude, and He gives them three distinct pictures of the kingdom of heaven, the first of them terminating with the end. It is worthy of notice that the Lord gives us the plain teaching of two of His parables, which is a divine assistance to a right understanding of the others. In the parable of the tares and the wheat, the distinction between the real and the merely nominal professor is preserved. There are real disciples in the marred kingdom, as well as in the field there is wheat. Their entire separation takes place only in the end. In the parables of the tree and of the leaven, this distinction is not noticed; it is the general character of the kingdom. It would seem as if the wheat, the children of the kingdom, bear so small a proportion to the tares, that they

fail to give a general character to it: they are apparently lost sight of. In fact the tree exhibits the kingdom of heaven as a great earthly power, and the leaven presents us with its doctrinal character. The position of the children, even their existence, is not noticed in these two.

Let us look a little at the tare-field. The good seed is sown by the Son of man, and the field is the world, 1:e., it is the place where the kingdom is established. All that is good is the work of the Son of man; all that is evil in the work of the enemy. The tares do not represent all the evil that is in the world, but all the evil in connection with the kingdom. They have been brought into the field (the world) among the wheat, by the arch-foe, for the very purpose of marring the work of the Lord. But although the outward aspect of the kingdom be spoiled, yet the purpose of God in permitting it, — nay, strange, but sweet truth, the very purpose of God which was (to speak as men) contingent upon the rejection of the King, and the mysteries of the kingdom, — was entirely beyond the reach, if not the ken, of the enemy; for the word of God cannot fail, — "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied." Let the external character of the kingdom be ruined, yet in it, though hidden, there shall be found those who are in reality "the children of the kingdom." But it is a solemn truth that the character which the kingdom takes is from those "who profess and call themselves Christians;" and of these professors so outnumbering are the tares, that the entire aspect of the kingdom is spoiled, and no longer exhibits that which it ought to have exhibited, viz., that which would correspond to the Sower and to the seed. The term professor is used in its most extensive application. The true disciple is symbolised by wheat, evil men by tares. These evil men are not at first visible, but by and by they are developed. "When the blade sprung up, then appeared the tares also;" and this state of things is to continue, for the tares are not to be gathered up, they are to grow with the wheat, until the harvest. So long as the present dispensation lasts, so long will there be evil and wicked men found in connection with Christianity, enjoying the outward blessings and privileges which it confers, and even in some instances professing actual discipleship to Christ. How very soon the tares appeared even during the lives of the apostles! What a character is theirs, as portrayed by Peter, by Jude, and by Paul, who tells us that the mystery of iniquity was working in his time! In the end there will be the full development of it, after the hindrance is removed (2 Thessalonians 2:1-17). It is not intended to assert that "that wicked" will arise out of the professing church, although it may be so, but out of that confused and heterogeneous mass, resulting from the unholy union which now subsists between the world and the professing church.

True, there is a company of real disciples — the children of the kingdom. They are warned of the tares: the doom of Christendom is made known to them, a doom far more fearful than that of apostate man in any other dispensation. The tares will be bound in bundles for the fire. But there is a hope for the children of God, the good seed. They shall escape, and be out of the great tribulation.

These, however, as distinct from the mere professor, are not under consideration in this parable. The territory embraced within the limits of the kingdom, is that which is called Christendom, and it is those dwelling within those limits that give character to the kingdom. It is a mixed character, and such it must remain. The servants to whom the keeping of the field was entrusted fell asleep; and meanwhile the enemy sows tares: when they awake, they essay at once to remedy the evil which had crept in by their unwatchfulness. Nay, says the Lord, "lest ye root up also the wheat." Behold, here, the tender care that the Lord takes of His own! Rather than one single ear of wheat should

be injured, or pulled up before it was ripe, let the tares grow; rather than the little body of true believers should be broken up in its infancy, ere the Bride be ready for the Bridegroom, let the judgement upon the wicked be suspended. The true sons of the kingdom must be perfected, whose names were written in the book of life before the world was. The Lord could not come in judgement before these are all secured. Therefore the servants are not allowed to act in judgement.* Let the tares alone. The children of God now stand in grace, and only grace must they exhibit; they have nothing at all to do with earthly judgement. Let the tares alone. If they could not keep the tares out, when the field was free from them, much less can they root them out now — "Lest ye root up also the wheat."

{* If it were a question of the Church, as such, discipline would be obligatory. "Why do ye not judge them that are within?" God judgeth those without.}

Is not this same care for His people seen in the long respite vouchsafed to the antediluvians? Not only is the long-suffering of God seen, who bore long with the sinners before the flood, and gave them space for repentance, when even every day that Noah worked at the ark, and every plank, and every nail, and every stroke of his hammer, was a warning, and a threatening of the impending judgement; but God could do nothing till Noah was safe in the ark, after He Himself had shut him in: even then there was a respite of seven days (perfect forbearance). But if Noah had been as long again, until he was shut up safe in the ark, so long would judgement have been delayed.

So also in the case of the five cities of the plain. Lot must be provided for before the fiery storm could descend. The Lord said He could do nothing till Lot was gone out of the city, and the little city Zoar was spared for his sake and at his entreaty. For the sake of the righteous the wicked are spared. "Ye are the salt of the earth." Had there been ten righteous men found in those five cities, they had been spared. And the world is now preserved because the children of God are in it, for "he is not willing that any should perish," and all these; the true Church, must and will be taken out of it before judgement descends upon it. Then will the tares be not bound merely, but burnt; but the wheat will have been secured in the barn.

We have, then, this fact, that whatever phase the kingdom may present to the world, there will be some good in it. Nothing is here said as to the amount of good or evil — simply that both are there; that they are really distinct the one from the other; but that this distinction will be made fully manifest only in the harvest.

(3) The Tree.

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[01:171]

In the parable of the tree, we have the representation of what the kingdom of heaven becomes in worldly greatness. That it is not what God intended is evident from the enemy's work recorded in the preceding parable. It must be borne in mind that the kingdom was presented to the responsibility of man; but he failed here, as everywhere else, where responsibility is in question. He slept; and while he slept the enemy sowed tares. Doubtless, it is for wise purposes that God

permitted it, and all must result in the exaltation of His own grace; while at the same time, the fact that "men slept" proves the utter ruin and hopelessness of man in his natural state, and also that where anything depends upon his faithfulness, nothing but loss and condemnation can follow. Tares being found sown among the wheat must necessarily alter the appearance of the field, and in God's judgement it is spoilt. The servants perceived the altered appearance, and wished at once to remedy the evil. But it was wholly beyond their power; and lest in the endeavour to remedy this evil, they should commit a greater (i.e., root up some of the wheat), they were not allowed to attempt it. It no doubt is matter of sorrow and deep humiliation to those who are instructed in the kingdom to see it thus marred; but, knowing the will of God concerning it, they are not to meddle with it, but to be separate from all that bears the form of evil. The tares will be bound in bundles to be burnt. Man may not deem them to be offensive — rather are they pleasing to him, for he naturally loves all that is hateful to God. Possibly he may imagine them pleasing to God, for his understanding is darkened. But they are the work of the enemy. The dispensation of the kingdom, then, as a whole, awaits the judgement of God; and the same doom awaits it as befell the dispensation that preceded (Romans 11:17-24). It is already been observed that these similitudes of the kingdom are prophetic; and what is presented in the tree is the picture of the kingdom as it becomes subsequently to, and in consequence of, the presence of the tares among the wheat. "Kingdom of heaven," and "Church of God," * do not signify the same thing precisely; they contain distinct ideas. But the calling of the Church takes place while the kingdom exists in mystery; and all the professors who are found in the field claim to belong, in some sort, to the Church. This greatly modifies the position of those comprehended within (if we may so say) the boundaries of the kingdom. Many things are true of God's Church (real members we here speak of) which cannot be predicated of the subjects of the kingdom, as such simply. The being members of Christ's body, the Church, or bride, involves privileges, and responsibilities too, which are beyond those of the kingdom merely; but, seeing they assume this position, they lie under increased obligations. More than this, it follows that the professing body is here under the similitude of a tree, and whatever the character, of the tree before God, such is the character of the nominal Church.

{* The Church of necessity supposes one only body of persons, believing Jews and Gentiles, united on common ground, by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven and united to Christ there and by the Spirit in each. The kingdom does not necessarily, not at all in itself, imply this union, but it is a display of government on certain given principles. Before this kingdom comes in power, Matthew 13:1-58 shows us the mysteries of its present form owing to the rejection of the King and His exaltation in heaven, and not yet on earth, as far as manifestation goes. This peculiar phase of the kingdom gives room for our blessed privileges as sharing the sufferings of Christ, to be joint-heirs and to reign with Him, when He takes His great power, and, having received the kingdom, returns. The kingdom does not rise above individual privileges and responsibility.}

(Matthew 13:31.) "Another parable put he forth," etc. The kingdom of heaven is symbolised by a grain of mustard seed, which becomes a great tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. We have not the explanation of both these symbols given us in this chapter; but we have them in God's book, which therefore alone furnishes the key by which we may unlock the meaning of this parable. To look elsewhere is to dishonour it and the Spirit of God. Every symbol in His word has also its meaning there. However contrary it may be to any cherished human theory, it behoves us to accept His explanation, and to reject every other. We find, in

Ezekiel 31:3-9, the Assyrian power compared to a great tree, a mighty cedar in Lebanon. His branches are fair, his boughs cast a broad shadow, in them the fowls of heaven make their nest, under them the beast of the field bring forth their young. "I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches: so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him." It is evident here that Assyria is a vast power, for great nations dwelt under his shadow. It is under the similitude of a tree; and the fowls that nestled in his branches, and the beasts that sought protection and shelter under them, are, according to the word of God, the surrounding nations. We do not enter into the moral character of the antitype. All that is necessary now to observe is that the tree typifies a towering earthly power.

Again, we have the prophecy of the Lord's kingdom established in power, under a similar image, (Ezekiel 17:22-24,) and here also is a place for fowl of every wing. This is the millennial kingdom described in Isaiah 11:1-16 — the Lord's earthly glory, when He will reign in righteousness and power, giving forth His law from mount Zion, and holding in subjection all nations. "All the trees of the field shall know that I am the Lord." That the trees are here mentioned (i.e., the earth's grandees and powers) in connection with the tree of the Lord's planting is evidence that this prophecy looks forward to the millennium, when every power and Gentile dynasty shall recognise the superiority of the kingdom of the Son of David. In a word, this is the kingdom established in power (and not the mysterious form of the kingdom of heaven, which is the subject in the parables). But here, as in the former case, setting aside the moral character of the kingdom, it is a great power over the earth that is foretold. Turn now to Daniel 4:1-37. Here is Nebuchadnezzar himself under the similitude of a great tree. All the power of the kingdom was absolutely vested in his own person. More instances might be adduced; but these are sufficient to show that a tree in scripture is used to typify an earthly power, for good or ill.

Hence we conclude that the kingdom of heaven has assumed the aspect and the position of an earthly power; that is to say, the result of bringing in the Christian dispensation has been that men have availed themselves of Christianity, and have used the name of Christ, for the development of a vast hierarchical power, for the establishment of a kingdom, which as represented by the tree, has shot forth its branches and extended itself far and wide. Shelter, protection, and a habitation are given to the birds of the air ("they lodge in the branches thereof"); and this is dignified with the name of the "Church of God." *

{* "It was the church, with its institutions, its magistrates, its temporal power, which strove triumphantly against the internal dissolution which convulsed the empire and against barbarity; which subdued the barbarians themselves, and became the link, the medium, the principle of civilisation, as between the Roman and barbarian worlds."— Guizot on Civilisation, Lecture 2.}

And if we take ever so cursory a view of Christendom, (which we take to be the wheat and tare field,) the connection between the nations and powers of the world, and the nominal church, is plain. The so-called church lends her influence and authority to the rulers of the world, and they use the name of Christ to further their own political views; to extend their own power, and to crush that of their opponents, whether these opponents are professed enemies to the name of Christ or not. Does not history furnish abundant proof? Has not the pathway of the nominal Church, ever since its first union with the world in the person of the emperor Constantine, been a systematic grasping at the things of the world, seeking for power, for wealth, for worldly influence, for

connection with the rulers of the world; yea, to hold even them under authority! What do we see now in Europe? The last was originated in a dispute about the so-called "holy places" in Jerusalem. The pretensions of the Emperor of Russia to the protectorate of Christians in Turkey are well known, as is the claim of the French Emperor to represent the Latin Church. All are agreed that the ruling motives were aggrandisement of self and extension of empire. Need we allude to things nearer home — the pronouncing of blessings upon soldiers, and arms, and banners? What is this but using the name of Christ for mere political purposes? A mighty engine it once was, and may yet be, to move the populace, and to make the desires of ambition popular. But in the sight of God, of Christ, whose name is thus dishonoured, how awful! That which calls itself by the name of Christ is extending its branches, seeking to be identified with every movement in the world, inviting the birds of the air to take shelter in its branches, and saying, I sit as a queen, and shall see no sorrow. There may be no necessity for supposing that such an earthly power as a tree represents is wicked in the abstract. Other circumstances will determine whether it be a good or an evil. But when the Church, whose calling is not earthly, but heavenly, whose city is not formed by hands but built and made of God, which is called to be separate from the world — it crucified to the world and the world crucified to it, then we perceive that connection with earthly power becomes a positive departure, an apostasy.

Alas! the professing church is a part of the world, enjoys its power and ease, seeks its emoluments and honours. To say nothing of Romanism, which is a professed ruler over secular powers, do not the Protestant bodies covet and contend eagerly for the prizes of the earth? Do we not see the means and appliances of the world brought to bear upon the extension of what they call Christianity? True, we are told that the "silver and gold," which Christendom boasts in now, is gathered for the extension of the gospel; but is this the divine way of spreading the good news? When the Lord commissioned His disciples to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, did He mean them to raise funds from the Gentiles? Doubtless, it is the duty of the Church of God to provide for the wants of those who preach and teach, if needy; but does the going about and begging of the world a maintenance show faith or love? Is this the teaching of Galatians 6:1-18, or 1 Corinthians 9:1-27, or 3 John? And then what a complicated machinery! How full of earthly contrivances! Past history and present facts confirm the prophetic view given in the parable.

(4) Leaven.

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[01:186]

In the parable of the grain of mustard seed becoming a great tree, we have the kingdom of heaven as a power in the earth subduing other powers, and as such seeking prominence in the world. The rulers in it have had for their professed object the extension of the name of Christ, but this name in their hands was a means merely to exercise their own ambition. They sought to enlarge the bounds of Christendom, and succeeded in the attempt. In the prosecution of their design they have displayed the greatest energy and the most untiring zeal, they have evinced a readiness and aptitude to use all the appliances that the world could afford. The most astute policy has

characterised the measures, framed by some, followed by most, which had for their aim the bringing of the temporal power to acknowledge the superiority of the spiritual. Sovereigns have been urged to oppress their subjects; subjects have been incited to rebel against their sovereigns; divide and conquer was the secret maxim which governed all their proceedings. The lust of earthly grandeur is discernible long before the secular power of the empire allied itself to the professing Church when Constantine made Christianity the religion of the empire. But this alliance once made, the corruption which adversity and persecution had in some degree held in check showed itself boldly; and flattery and intrigue, and all the arts that men use to obtain influence, were employed by those who claimed to be followers of the apostles, and to have the care of the Church. The kings of the earth were courted by the servants of Him whom these kings took counsel together to destroy. What a change came over the profession of Christianity! Christians are called to suffer NOW that they might reign THEN. But instead of suffering, the high places of the earth were coveted and obtained. Satan offered the glory of the world to Christ if He would worship him — "for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it." (Luke 4:6.) Jesus would not have glory from the devil. But Christians have had this glory, Christians still enjoy and seek it. Who gave it them? By what means did they possess it? "To whomsoever I will I give it." Solemn thought! the power and the glory that Christ rejected the professing church greedily covets. We have societies composed of some real Christians, but for the most part of nominal christians and worldlings, for the avowed purpose of propagating Christianity. They yield a something to each other. The one has civilisation for his object, the amelioration of the world; the other yet professes to aim at christianising the world. But is civilisation the (yea, an) object of the christian missionary? Does he not call to separation from the world? "Let the dead bury their dead," etc. To spread the gospel and the truth is the work of the Christian, and of him alone; the means and the agencies employed should be Christian and not worldly. If the tares and the wheat join to promote Christianity, alas for the wheat! How can such concord exist? How can these two walk together? Is it not that the place and calling of the Church of God has been forgotten, and the kingdom of heaven has rather become in men's apprehension a kingdom of the earth? If any ask why God permitted such confusion, there can be but one answer: the enemy sowed tares in the field; the work of the sower for the present was spoiled, and judgement was certain. But though known to God, it was not manifest to men, and the worldliness, the effect of the presence of the tares, must be made manifest; for it is the way of God to make evil manifest before punishing it. The persecutions which the early Church suffered were lessons of God, and might have shown the antagonism of the world; but when these divine teachings were disregarded, and the spirit of the world still infected the professing body like an incurable disease, God gave it up to follow its own will, allowing it to fall into the world's arms — to become a mere vine of the earth, doomed to destruction. The true position of the Church, as the body and expression of the glorified Christ, was very soon lost. The Holy Ghost, as the animating and directing energy, was grieved, hindered, and practically denied; and by degrees earthly hopes began to displace the waiting for Christ from heaven. The barrier which the Lord had established to prevent the influx of worldliness being broken down, there was nothing to prevent the professing body, as a whole, from becoming thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the world; and the consequence was the substituting of a religion made up of Jewish ceremonies, heathen rites, and worldly principles, for the faith once delivered to the saints. This seems to be the leavening of the lump.

"Another parable spake he unto them, The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven," etc. Here we have the kingdom presented, not as a secular worldly power, but as a principle or doctrine which thoroughly pervades all that is submitted to its influence. There are some who conceive this parable to be descriptive of the grace of God in the soul. But while the kingdom of God is said to be "righteousness and peace," etc., it is never so said of the kingdom of heaven, which is always dispensational, and not moral merely. The kingdom of heaven is ever the kingdom of God, but the expression "kingdom of God" does not always mean "kingdom of heaven." This parable, too, be it remarked, in common with those preceding, was spoken outside to the multitude, giving an external picture of the kingdom which sets aside another idea, viz., that the leaven is symbolical of real christianity, spreading universally until the whole world be converted. But there is no such prediction respecting the gospel in the whole book of God; on the contrary, in the very first parable in this chapter, out of four classes to whom the word is preached, there is only one class which brings forth fruit. It is inferred that the word will not be universally received. In the field the tares, as such, continue to the end; they do not become wheat. In the parable of the net, there were caught both good and bad fishes. All exhibit the same truth, that evil men will be found in every age up to the end. There are many passages in the Old Testament which foretell a time when all in Israel shall know the Lord, from the least even unto the greatest; a time of all but universal blessedness. But nowhere is it said that this will be the effect of preaching only; other and far different means besides will be used to accomplish this. The unprejudiced mind may easily know that all these passages predicting future peace and happiness for the world refer to a future age, to be ushered in by judgement upon those that have not received the gospel. Another reason for rejecting the above interpretation is, that it gives to the symbol "leaven," a meaning which it has nowhere else in scripture. Leaven never suggests the idea of anything good. Wherever used, it is symbolical of corruption. In the Mosaic economy all the types which have an especial reference to Christ were free from leaven. Where the worship of the saint was shadowed forth, there was leaven, as denoting the presence of the flesh, which though mortified, and by the energy of the Holy Spirit kept under, yet will ever be present while he is dwelling in this present world. It will only be when the mortal and the corruptible shall be changed into the immortal and the incorruptible, that worship shall be free from the effects of the flesh. So in its most virulent and worst forms, as exhibiting the extreme enmity of the unrenewed heart against God, the hypocrisy of the Pharisees is called leaven. We read too of the leaven of Herod. The apostle Paul speaks of the unleavened bread of sincerity, and here, by implication, leaven symbolises hypocrisy. It may be remarked also, but with no desire to press it beyond its legitimate import, that the hiding of the leaven is not the act of the Lord.

The parable, then, presents the universal diffusion of the Christian religion within certain limits — not the growth of faith or the communication of life, which is rather represented by the wheat which took root in the ground; not the rise and progress of an ecclesiastico-secular power, "a great tree," resembling the symbols of an Egyptian or Babylonish dynasty; but a definite sphere filled with the profession of Christ. It is the state of the kingdom which will bear a resemblance to the act of a woman who hides leaven in three measures of meal until the whole be leavened. To all but God the distinction between good and evil is lost. Outwardly it is an indiscriminate mass which bears the name of Christ. God simply shows us here the historical fact; and the external appearance is a lump thoroughly leavened. As the tree represented Christendom aspiring to power in the earth, so the leaven, spreading over the three measures of meal, sets forth Christian doctrine professed and

propagated throughout a given sphere. It does not appear to be the design of the Lord to pronounce a moral sentence in these early parables to the multitude. Of course the spiritual man ought to judge of all things; but here the object is to represent such facts as meet the eye and mind of men outside. Nor have they failed to be observed, as will appear from the following passage of Guizot's History of Civilisation in Europe:—

"The Church was a society regularly constituted, having principles, rules, and discipline of its own, and actuated by an ardent desire to extend its influence, and to vanquish its conquerors. Among the Christians of that epoch [when the barbarians broke up the Roman empire], in the ranks of the clergy, there were men who had pondered deeply upon all moral and political questions, who held fixed opinions and energetic sentiments upon all things, and strove strenuously to propagate them and render them paramount. No society ever made such efforts as did the Christian church, from the fifth to the tenth century, TO EXTEND ITS SPHERE, AND SMOOTH THE EXTERNAL WORLD INTO ITS OWN LIKENESS. When we study its particular history, we shall perceive the full extent of its labours. It attacked barbarism, as it were, on all its sides, to civilise by subduing it."

This was just the leavening process going on under the hand of the "woman." Alas! we know it was but the spread of corrupt christianity; so that here, as elsewhere, the leaven had, in fact, its usual counterpart. Nor does even doctrine remain sound where there is the mere unhallowed desire of spreading profession, and where the heart is not subject to God, and purified by faith. Thus, throughout Christendom, systematic judaizing became the rule, mingled with not a few accommodations of heathen rites and practices, in order to please the multitude and facilitate their so-called conversion. The Church was regarded as an improvement and complement of the Jewish polity. Israel's restoration and future hopes were denied, and so the ruin was helped on; because the Gentiles began to regard the forfeited place of the Jews as their own. Thus becoming earthly, they rose in their own conceit, liable and sure in God's time to be cut off. (Romans 11:1-36)

(5) The House.

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(1st. Edition, July 1857 [01:228])

[01:224]

The multitude are sent away, and Jesus goes into the house with His disciples. They say, "declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field." They, had asked, (Matthew 13:10) "why speakest thou unto them in parables?" and the Lord's answer shows the awful position of the Jews. They were become a rejected people. Lo-ammi was written upon them. They had been a people separated to God. They had been a vineyard planted in a pleasant place, walled in and kept apart from the surrounding Gentiles by rites and ceremonies of God's own instituting, by a law and ordinances of His giving, and righteousness was demanded of them. They failed in producing righteousness. God looked for grapes, and behold wild grapes. Prophets, the messengers of God, were sent to them; but like the husbandmen in the parable, (Matthew 21:33) they "beat one, killed another, and stoned another." Promise and threatening, blessing and chastisement, entreaty, expostulation, and reproach were all used, but in vain. The tenderest appeals were made by God. He reminds them of all that He had done to draw them to obedience, but they will not hear. What

anxiety, if we may use the word, is seen in the messages sent through the prophets, that they might escape impending judgement! Everything necessary was there to maintain them in their exalted position, had they been obedient. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God " (Micah 6:8). But the kingdom must be brought to them, that their rejection of it may be made public to the world. John the Baptist cried, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Repentance, confession, and baptism were the means pointed out by him for an entrance into, or preliminaries for, the kingdom. But him they beheaded. Jesus comes and preaches the advent of the kingdom. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He comes with His hands full of blessing; He gives numerous instances of His power and goodness; He went about "healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people," casting out devils and banishing them from the land, samples of the blessing and the power of the kingdom, brought for their acceptance, but by them rejected. They would not have the kingdom with Christ. His citizens hated Him, saying, "we will not have this man to reign over us." They ascribed His power, in casting out devils, to Beelzebub, the prince of the devils (Matthew 9:1-38). But Jesus still works in grace: it is not quite over with them yet. He sends His disciples to herald the coming of the kingdom in all their cities, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, forbidding them to go in the way of the Gentiles. Though they had rejected Christ, they had not yet publicly rejected them. But whether one lamented to them, they mourned not, or piped; they danced not; that is to say, in whatever way the testimony of God came, there was no response. The testimony of God was ever rejected by them, save by a remnant. The Pharisees seek to kill Jesus, and He hides Himself. They put the seal to their iniquity and condemnation in again ascribing His work to the prince of the devils (Matthew 12:24). Now they are judged.

The Lord decidedly breaks with them. Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, neither in this age nor in that to come; and Jesus severs the natural tie which connected Him, as the Messiah after the flesh, with them, and only acknowledges the relationship of obedience to His Father. They tell Him that His mother and His brethren desire to speak to Him. But who are His mother and brethren? He points to His disciples — "Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." This rejection of Jesus and the consequent destruction of Jerusalem cut short all God's dealings with them as a nation for the time. They were set aside, and a new work, as we have seen, was entered upon. Meantime judicial blindness is sent upon them, and the saying of Esaias the prophet is fulfilled. Therefore He speaks to them in parables. (See Matthew 13:11-15). Before this the Lord had not spoken in parables, but now that He is the rejected One, now that Israel is cut off for the time, He speaks in parables — none understand but they whom He instructs. And the disciples take the place which Jesus had marked out for them. He called them His mother, and sister, and brethren, and in the holy nearness and confidence of this position, they say not, "Why speakest thou in parables? but "Declare unto us." etc. They are now within the house in presence of their Lord — alone with Jesus — happy place! — the multitude, or world outside. The separation is marked and distinct. Now there is communion. And where else can the Christian enjoy communion, save in the presence of Jesus? But this is the Christian's place, and he may ever be in the house with Jesus.

Even when the outer man is necessarily occupied with the things of this life, with the bread that perisheth, the inner man may be enjoying secret communion with God. The question of sin settled, the conscience at peace, and the heart at liberty, then is God able, and delights as a Father, to commune with His children. He hides nothing from them concerning the glory of Jesus. He tells them the thoughts and counsels He had concerning Jesus and His Church before the foundation of the world. He opens out before their eyes the prospect of future glory, which He gives to Jesus, and which Jesus gives to them (John 17:22). Even concerning the judgement of the world, He reveals to them His purpose — "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" (Genesis 18:17.) "I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." (John 15:15.) Dear reader, if you are a Christian, then, through the amazing grace of God, Jesus calls you His friend. He points to you as to His disciples of old, and says, "Behold my mother and my brethren." To them, to us, it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Mark the care of the Lord to instruct them fully, and to unfold the meaning of His parables. His world has its theories concerning the present age, and is forming plans for the future amelioration of its citizens, but how contrary to truth! Is not judicial blindness settling (as it certainly will) upon apostate Christendom, as it did upon apostate Israel? May we not say, on contrasting the prevailing doctrines and opinions of the mass in Christendom, what the Lord said of rejected Israel, "To them it is not given," etc.?

But it is given; and accordingly the Lord not only explains the parable, but gives additional information. "The harvest is the end of the age;" and then at that time "the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire. There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." The parable speaks of "good seed." The Lord's explanation tells us the "good seed are the children of the kingdom." There we read of "tares," here "the children of the wicked one." There, "an enemy hath done this," here "the enemy is the devil." Then there are "reapers," here "the reapers are the angels." The servant wished to do the reapers' (the angels') work. Not so; the angels are the executioners of God's wrath. So does this teach us that it is not the province of the disciples of Christ, during His absence, and the time of His rejection, to do the work of judgement. We are not taught to extirpate heresy and evil men by the strong arm of the sword; to do so is to depart from the proper place of the Christian. To bear testimony to Christ and against the evil, most assuredly; but to leave judgement in the hands of God, in the hands of Jesus; for, mark, He does not give up His title to the kingdom. Now He is patient and forbearing, but by and by He will send His angels, and they shall gather out of His KINGDOM all things that offend, and them that do iniquity. It is His kingdom yet, though an usurper reigns in His place. But He is coming, and will show "who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." Then the world, delivered from the thralldom of the oppressor, shall cease its groanings, and shall enjoy the rest and repose consequent upon the manifestation of the sons of God. (Romans 8:19.) "So shall it be at the end of the world." The phrase "end of the world" is frequently misunderstood. We are not taught that the harvest is the end of the world, the earth, but that it is the end of the dispensation or age which is characterised by the preaching of the kingdom (the true king, Christ, the Son of man, being rejected and absent, till He returns and establishes it in power and glory on the earth).

But the fact here communicated to the disciples was not given the multitude. In what was said to them everything took place in the field, in the world, excepting only the fact that the good seed would be taken out of it, and placed in the barn. It is a view of the present age. But in the house the Lord goes beyond the bounds of the present age, and we get a peep into the future one. There is the binding of the tares, the gathering of the wheat, the closing scenes of this age; but the curtain is lifted, and we have the terrible result of the judgement of the tares in the weeping and gnashing of teeth. On the other side, we behold the righteous shining as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. These are not established in the marred kingdom; it is in the kingdom of their Father that they shine; and this is the reason why there is no question of purging the field. There were better things reserved for us; and so we have now a new principle of the kingdom manifested, a principle with which the world outside has nothing to do. We have had the effects of the sowing, the facts of the mixing and the separation, and the consequent form of the kingdom. But now we have the hidden motive, a principle which is fully developed in the hearts of the "children of the kingdom," and which Jesus brings out in the two next parables.

The Lord, though rejected by His own, would have a people, and He secures the object of His desire at the expense of all besides. So it is a principle with him who acts according to the understanding of the purpose of God, that he will esteem nothing in comparison with Christ. The principle of giving up all for Christ would not have existed if Christ had not been rejected: the taking up the cross and following Christ was the necessary result of rejection. And accordingly we do not get this principle in the parables to the multitude. But Christ, for the sake of the wheat in the field, suffers the rejection of the mass which rejection serves to bring out a new light upon the kingdom, and a higher glory upon them that are His. They shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The use of the term "righteous" marks the saints of God in their individuality before and after the sowing of the seed. Deborah sang of this glory (Judges 5:31), "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord, but let them that love Him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might." Daniel speaks of it also (Daniel 12:2). It was a thought common to Old Testament saints. But no saint before was ever in the house with Jesus, none was before called "my brother, and sister, and mother;" and Jesus goes on unfolding more and more of the principles and purpose which actuate God during the present state of the kingdom. To us it is given to know them. May we be kept from our own thoughts about them.

(6) The Hid Treasure.

2nd Edition, Vol. 1, October 1857. (shown in error, as Sept.)

(1st Edition, October 1857 [01:269])

[01:265]

"Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field," etc. (Matthew 13:44). The teaching of this and the following parables is for the disciples alone; they only are addressed. Here we have displayed the motive of God in giving His Son to die for the world. We discover that in the "hid treasure," and in the "pearl of great price," the field — the world — is bought for the sake of the treasure, and the "pearl of great price" is secured in the same way; the man in each case sells all that he has, in order to be possessed of the object of his desire. The hid treasure is the Church of God; not the nominal, professing, but the true Church, composed of regenerated men. For the

sake of these the field was bought. The Christian dispensation was brought in that a people might be brought into such a position and state of glory as they could not possibly be brought into under the former dispensation. Not God's people merely, but predestinated to "the adoption of sons" (Ephesians 1:5), by Jesus Christ to Himself.

The pearl of great price may, perhaps, refer rather to the individual glory of the Redeemer, as the head of the Church, "who, for the joy set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame." For when the kingdom is established in power, the Lord Jesus will not only have glory as God, one with the Father — that glory He has eternally; He will not only as Son of man have glory, as the King over all the earth; He will not only, as Son of David, have glory as King of the Jews, — for His glory as King of the Jews is distinct from His universal supremacy over all the earth, — but He will have another glory which we believe to be far more precious to Him, the glory that He will have as the head of the Church, when the Church shall be glorified with Him.

This will be, we may, perhaps say, the glory of His grace. The parables of the "treasure" and the "pearl" are intimately connected and reflect upon each other; for it is by the grace of God, through Christ, and the transforming power of the indwelling Spirit, that the Church becomes a treasure to Him; and it is because the Church is thus indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and thus made capable of reflecting His image, that He is glorified in it; and this glory, the especial result of the perfecting of the Church (which will be by and by), is the "pearl of great price;" the glory most prized by the Lord. These are the things kept secret from the foundation of the world. The reign of Jesus, as Messiah, the King of the Jews, as King over the whole earth, was a theme continually dwelt upon by the prophets; but it was a secret with God before the foundation of the world, that the Lord Jesus should have a heavenly bride; that a church, His body, should be formed, out of Jew and Gentile alike, to show that new glory above; for even as He has received of His Father, so shall the Church receive (Revelation 2:26-27).

Here the kingdom of heaven is not the outward external form, such as it appears to the world, but is the position and the estimation by God of those who are said, in Matthew 13:38, to be "the children of the kingdom;" not those who are nominally subjects in the kingdom, but are really the children thereof. The Lord is speaking to His disciples alone, enters more deeply into the mysteries of the kingdom; not only gives the reason why the kingdom exists in mystery, but affords room for (without developing) the further and higher thought of the mystery of Christ and the Church. Away from the world and the multitude, none are noticed but the wheat — the children. They are said to be a treasure hid in the field; and for the sake of the treasure — or the heavenly saints — the field, or the world, is bought. The field is not bought for its own sake. It is not here a question of the universal offer of the Saviour to the world; not of the declaration of the Lord, that He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; but it is the elect of God who are taken up, and considered distinct from all others. This treasure was present and distinct from the field to the mind of God, before the field was bought. For its sake alone the man sold all that he had to purchase the field. The treasure in it could be possessed in no other way; or rather the purchasing of the field was the best way, in the wisdom of the man, to possess the treasure hidden therein. God, for the sake of those whom He foreknew, gave His only begotten Son, that by His death the treasure might be secured. The Church was chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4). Why was the Church chosen? It is according to His good pleasure. For the sake of the Church the world was bought. * The great original purpose of God was the new

creation of the Church; and all other creations are and were subordinate to this. God foreknew that Adam would fall. He foreknew all the dreadful consequences of that fall, the sin, the misery, the wretchedness of mankind. Why then was such a state of things allowed to continue? Why was not the contaminated and polluted world swept away into its original nonentity? Because it was the will of God, "his good pleasure," from out of this so unpromising material, to gather souls and make His Church, — and to make it pure and holy, through and in Christ; that it might be to the praise of the glory of His grace; wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved.

{* The purchase of the world shows forth the glory of God in many ways, the Church is one result of redemption; but as it is the greatest, it is here put for the whole; as in the parable, the field is bought for the sake of the treasure. After being purchased, the field may be made good use of for the owner's glory.}

Here is the secret why the Church is called a treasure; not that it is anything in itself, but because it is to the praise of the glory of His grace. Every member of that Church is originally as vile and worthless as others; but they are washed and sanctified, renewed in mind, separate from the world, called to reflect the image of God, builded together as His habitation, through the Spirit, raised to the brotherhood of Christ, nay, to union with Him, as well as to be the sharers of His throne and kingdom, constituted kings and priests for ever to God. And all this is by the exceeding riches of the grace of God; and the Church, composed of purged and sanctified men, is the manifestation of this grace, is the effect of the working of His mighty power to us-ward who believe. How could such grace be shown to us? Because of Christ dead, risen, and glorified. God could have created beings far beyond the capabilities and powers of man, and have established them in their holy state beyond the possibility of sin. He could have endowed them with wisdom, power, and intelligence beyond the power of human conception; and such would have been to the praise and glory of His wisdom and power. But that any should be to the praise of the glory of His grace, it was necessary that infinite love should be manifested to creatures utterly unworthy, yea, deserving of everlasting punishment, and eternal banishment from His presence. How could this be done consistently with the claims of divine justice? God devised the plan. Blood was shed. The Son of God became Son of man, and died to satisfy and establish divine justice, and the way was clear for the exhibition of grace. "Redeemed not with corruptible things, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ." But it is not merely redemption — this the Church shares in common with all other saints, past or future, Jewish or Gentile. The baptism of the Spirit, uniting with a glorious head in heaven, is that which gives the peculiarity to the saint of this dispensation; and upon this baptism, as the means, depends the Church's union with Christ, in the sense of being His body; and it is thus that being brought into the heavenlies, the Church exhibits the wondrous power and riches of divine grace, is the object of the Father's love, for the sake of Christ; is the fruit of the love of the Father for the Son; is the Father's gift to the Son. (John 17:9.) Here, then, is the treasure. No other could so abundantly show forth the riches of His grace; and because the Church does so glorify Christ, the Father loves and gives Christ to be head over all things to it. Not because the Church is anything of itself, but because it is the exhibition of God's grace, it is a treasure to Christ. The cross of Christ laid the foundation, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost is the means, by which the Church becomes the greatest result of redemption. Christ and the Church are one — "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." The highest glory, the nearest place to the person of Christ, in all heaven's hierarchy, is for the Church. It is by grace

Christ's treasure, as He is, in every sense the Church's treasure.

But if the Church is a treasure hid in the field, only God could discern it. From other scriptures we learn that the manifestation of the Church (i.e., in its perfect state) will not be in this world, or age, or rather, the manifestation will take place in the new age; for this will have closed when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven, taking vengeance, etc., but then the Church will be revealed also (Colossians 3:4). The manifestation of the sons of God, the Church, is an event for which all creation, animate and inanimate, are represented as earnestly waiting (Romans 8:19-23.) But this manifestation of the Church refers to the future glory, and is the term put to this hiding of our life in the passage above cited, viz., Colossians 3:4, "Our life is hid with Christ in God," etc. We hear in our day about an invisible Church, as if it were the will of God and the Church should be hidden now; but there is no scriptural warrant for such a thought. It is a sad and solemn fact that there are many of God's children who walk not as children of the light, and the Church corporately is not known as a distinct and separate body from the world. There may be a few here and there who endeavour so to walk in separation from evil, and to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; but alas, how few comparatively! But it does not appear from scripture that God designed the Church to occupy such a position, in which it could scarcely be distinguished from the world, but on the contrary, it does appear from scripture that the word "hid" refers to the past. Nowhere do we find the idea of an invisible Church as God's intention and desire. It was set up in broad day, in the face of all the languages assembled in Jerusalem, and in an instant the tongue of the unlearned was loosened, and gave testimony to the grace of God in the various languages to the astonished multitude. Enemies reviled, and said, "These are full of new wine." There was no invisibility here. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye love one another." God designed that unity and love, after Christ's pattern, were to be the evidence to all men that they were his disciples. This is quite inconsistent with invisibility, save as the result of man's sin; for alas! here, as in every other position in which man has been placed, is failure. The Church as a body visible, is ruined; it is broken and split up into sects and parties, and in many cases the bitterest enmity exists between the rivals. Surely this is not what was intended. This cannot be the effect of the presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church, but because that presence has been denied, and human authority has usurped the place of the Spirit. The natural, necessary consequence is, that, till Christ comes, the lusts of the flesh and the power and subtlety of Satan have broken up and for ever marred the visible unity of the Church upon the earth. "From whence come wars and fightings among you?" etc. It was the secret purpose of God before the foundation of the world, that from the race of men living in the world, and irrespectively of His governmental distinctions, He would at the proper time form His Church. This purpose was intimated when Christ came, and developed by the Spirit afterwards. "On this Rock I will build my Church." At the day of Pentecost God put his plan into execution. He began to build His spiritual house when the Holy Ghost descended upon the saints (Acts 2:1-4). For the Church is not merely an assembly of believers, but an assembly formed into one body corporate, by the actual and personal presence of the Holy Ghost, who is just in the same sense present, as the Lord Jesus is now absent. This is the Church. It is evident that such a body could not exist previously, because that Christ had not ascended, and the Comforter could not come till Christ had gone up (John 14:1-31, et seq.) It is true, that many things in the old economy typified the Church, or rather, Christ's members, in certain respects; but it is equally true that the Lord revealed His assembly as his purpose, and that Paul was the chosen one to bring it fully out. Ephesians 2:1-22, Colossians 1:1-29.

If the above view of the "hid treasure" be scriptural, it follows that a very prevalent idea as to its import must be incorrect and unscriptural, viz., that it signifies the religion of Christ in the soul — the effectual inward working of the Holy Spirit in the individual, and that it avers merely the fact that the communion existing between God and the believer is a thing utterly unknown to the world. Most certainly it is unknown to the world; but this is not what is contained in the parable. Doubtless too we have Christ as our Pattern and Exemplar; and as He gave up all for us, so we have the great principle taught us that we should give up all and every thing for Christ; not in the way of quid pro quo, but "we love Him because He first loved us." But this is not so much the direct teaching of the scripture before us, as it is impressed upon the mind by the Holy Ghost as a result which should be produced in us by the fact that "He sold all that He had and bought the field."

The treasure, in the word, is not the Christianity of a soul, but the christian body; not the treasure that the Church possesses in Christ, but the treasure that Christ has in the Church.

(7) The Pearl of Great Price.

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(1st. Edition, November 1857 [01:288])

[01:284]

"Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls" etc. (Matthew 13:45-46.) The glory that the Lord Jesus will have as the head of the Church in glory is more precious and desirable than any other glory that He possesses. Of course His glory as God — one with the Father before the worlds were formed — is excepted. Official glory is here alone referred to. For as the saints are the treasure most prized by Him, so the glory of being the head of the Church, of being the author and maker and possessor of it, is a glory for which He was content to set aside for a time all His other glory. Even the essential glory of the Godhead was veiled for a time by the covering of humanity. There was that in the pearl which so attracted the Lord that "the word was made flesh." What is it that makes every attribute of the Godhead to stand forth so broadly marked — that makes His truth, His holiness, His love, to appear so infinite? Is it not that the Son of man, who was the Son of God, endured the full wrath of God due to our sin and thus vindicated the holiness of God, and at the same time and by the same means gave full scope to the mercy of God? A vent was thus afforded for the outflowing of that love which otherwise (shall we say) must have been for ever pent up in the heart of the Father. Jesus has done all this. The glory of doing it is His — He has declared the Father. He shows what thoughts were in the Father's heart concerning us; how that all through the long, sad, dark history of man's rebellion, there was the cherished thought with God, that soon there would be such a tide of abounding grace to poor sinners as would satisfy His heart. With what infinite complacency the Father must ever have beheld the Son! What manner of intercourse there was between the Father and Son before the incarnation, is not for us to say: but we do know the different occasions when the voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son." Well there is a glory for all this which belongs exclusively to Jesus. The Church is a treasure, because, when perfected, she will be the brightest and greatest result of redeeming grace, and next to the Lord Jesus will hold the highest place in the coming glory and in the Father's heart. The Church has been made this by Christ. Christ Himself alone possesses the honour and the glory of it. He is the head of the Church, and the pearl of

great price seems to have especial reference to the new thing in its unity. True it is "the kingdom of heaven which is likened," etc., but, as we have seen, the treasure and pearl are pictures, the one of the real children of the kingdom in their aggregate capacity as individuals, and the other of their unity — "one pearl." And while in the treasure we saw the kingdom under the aspect of the saints glorified, so now in the pearl we see them in the light of their precious united glory. It will be in the coming kingdom of heaven that it will be made manifest to all.

Had it been the will of God, the Lord Jesus could have established His kingdom in power at His first advent; the rejecting Jews could have been crushed, and the little remnant exalted into a nation; but there would then have been no church; no treasure, and no pearl; the kingdom of heaven would never have assumed these phases. It was for the joy set before Him of bringing many sons to glory, that He gave up all that He had, that He did not take the kingdom, the power, and the glory, and reign the sovereign potentate of the earth. To bring peace and righteousness upon the earth, to rescue as the second Adam from the grasp and thralldom of the enemy all that the first Adam lost, delivering the whole creation now groaning from its bondage, to bind the foe and cast him into the pit, to be hailed as king by Israel, to sit upon the throne of His father David: all these were pearls in Messiah's crown; but to bring many sons to glory — nay, more to bind them into one body corporate by the power and presence of the Holy Ghost, to bring them into such union with Himself that they and He should be but one, even as He and the Father are one — to do all this, to be Himself the Almighty divine reason why the Father should manifest such superabounding riches of grace, THIS, THIS, is the pearl of great price.

He gave up all that he had. Every other pearl for the time was sold in order to possess this priceless one.

But there is more than this. As the great Atoner, He stands alone in an incommunicable place. The Church will share His glory as Lord and King, etc.; and as the suffering of the atonement were all His, so also the glory. But there is a glory as Head of the Church which is peculiar. In all that He is to the Church, all that He is for her, there are treasured up the riches of wisdom, love, and glory; and in the bringing out of these and using them for the benefit of His Church, shines forth the brightness of the Lord.

He has overcome the power of death, and is consequently the author of life. The sentence of death had gone forth upon man; there was a righteous necessity that man should die; where there is sin there must be death. Justice could not otherwise be maintained in its integrity. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." Therefore is it "appointed unto men once to die." This is the general lot of mankind. But Christ by His death has obviated this doom and the still more awful judgement for those who are His; for as it is declared that "we shall not all sleep," so it is equally certain that death, as a penal consequence of sin, is moved from the Church of God. True, some have died, and we who are alive now may also die; but it is equally true that all shall not die, and that we who are now on the earth may be of the number who "are alive and remain" at the coming of the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:1-18). "Behold I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:51-52). And here do we see the glory of Christ. He can and does meet the demands of justice upon us, satisfying all claim by the shedding of His own blood; so death has no more dominion

over us. Death may be permitted to serve us, never to be our ruler (1 Corinthians 3:1-23). Death can be only by the will of our Lord and Master, who is for us and to us the "resurrection and the life." He gives eternal life to His own, the life such as He now has as the risen and last Adam. It is resurrection life, against which there is no question of death. Natural life precedes and in us is the precursor of death because of sin. Resurrection-life comes after death and is eternal; nothing can touch it. It grows out of the death of Christ, after he had put away sin; and we who have died with Him are also risen with him, and the life which he took when rising from the tomb, He communicates to us; so that to touch our life would be to touch His life. But He is the conqueror of death, and cannot be subject to it: we are conquerors with Him, and cannot be subject to the power of death; "as he is, so are we."

No other life could be shared by Him and the Church. There was no sentence of death against His life as man perhaps, indeed, we may say that it was a miracle for Him to die, as much as for any other man to rise from the dead; and He could have entered into heaven, into the presence of the Father in His own name and right. But He would have been alone. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." Resurrection-life can be and is imparted. It is past human thought how God could become man; how such a man could die. God tells us it is so. He gives us power to believe it, and with joy and gladness we feed upon the precious truth. But it was conceivable that after He had become man, and had died, the life He then took would have been His own only. To communicate that life, so that it is possible that there could be a life which is shared jointly by Christ and the Church, is indeed wondrous. There might have been given a new life, and eternal life might have had been communicated, which yet would have fallen short of the glorious life actually given. The saints of former dispensations have eternal life; for all who see and enter the kingdom of God must be born again: they will be raised when Christ comes, and will enter into Christ's kingdom. But we have much more, even life in resurrection. It is the risen Lord's life that we share. He gave up His life for us. He rose again and takes life in this new condition to share it with us. What power, what wisdom, what love in God! How secure the Christian is! His life is above. Let him be ever so buffeted down here, let him be ever so trampled upon by the world, and the object of ever so much enmity of the world's god, yet he is safe. "None shall pluck them out of my hand." "Our life is hid with Christ in God." Chastisement may come, and will come upon the erring Christian, but this is in God's faithful care, and for his blessing. His life can never be cut off; it is eternal.

It may be asked, why do any of the Lord's people die? Death is ever a dread and a terror; why are not the bought, the precious ones, thoroughly delivered from it? We answer, the death of the body touches not the eternal life which is the gift of God; and although some Christians die; all will not die; and if but one passed into heaven without death, it would establish and confirm the truth, that death, as a consequence of sin, does not happen to the Christian. If the cause be removed, so also is the effect; if sin be put away, so also is the penalty. The Christian's death is beautifully represented in scripture as sleeping in the Lord — of course as far as the body is concerned. Then it is not death, properly so called, but the spirit departing to be with the Lord (which is "far better") a little while, before He comes in the air to take all His redeemed ones to Himself. But the Christian is entitled to have the fullest joy in the thoughts of the Lord's coming. If He does delay, it is not that He is slack concerning His promise, but because He is not willing that any should perish etc. (2 Peter 3:1-18) The long-suffering of the Lord is salvation, as if He were seeking to gather as many

as possible unto His Church, before He descends in judgement upon a godless world.

He is head over all things to the Church. Death is subject to him, and if the Christian dies, it is not because he is a sinner, but because it is the will of God. Therefore we say it is but slumbering till the Lord wake up the body. To say that the believer, when he dies, pays the debt of nature, is false, for death is the debt of sin; to say that it is paying the debt of sin, is equally false, for Christ paid the whole debt, to the uttermost, on the cross.

He is Ruler over all circumstances and afflictions, all and everything that can possibly happen to the believer. He can and will cause all things to work together for good to him (Romans 8:1-39) Such is Christ to the Church now; for what He is to the individual, He is also to the body. But how much more lustrous will His glory appear in the coming age, when from the whole body, and "perfected in one," praises unsullied by any infirmity, which now so insinuates itself into our worship, and stains it, shall be ascribed to Him for ever and ever!

To gather up the few thoughts about these two parables, — and how very far below the mark they are! — this parable, the pearl, represents the merchant-man as seeking for goodly pearls, as if the Lord Jesus, in seeking to glorify the Father, John 17:4, (and it was His joy and glory so to do,) chose that which would bring out, in profoundest characters, the riches of His grace. And in glorifying the Father, the Son is equally glorified, for "all mine are thine and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." The kingdom of heaven, as it now exists in mystery, is likened to such a merchant-man. The treasure is not yet, de facto, complete, and the headship of a holy, glorified Church is not yet enjoyed and manifested. But the work of bringing many sons to glory is going on, the number will soon be complete. Then, and then only, will Jesus enter into the full possession of this "pearl of great price." As far as Christ is concerned, all has been sold, whether for the field and its treasure, or for the pearl and the object He prizes; in either case it is secured.

The pearl is not identical with the treasure. There is this difference in the parable, that the one is found hid in the field, the other is not; the one shows where the treasure is found, so that its preciousness is relative, not intrinsic. The other, I judge, to refer to Christ Himself, as the discernor of goodly pearls. He was seeking such. And it was the beauty of the new thing in God's love and purpose, which attracted His heart and search. In the antitype He has so beautified and adorned the Church, that it is to Him, indeed, one pearl of great price.

Commentators, in general, appear to give a similar explanation to this parable as to the hid treasure, viz., that it is illustrative of the divine energy imparted, when the Christian gives up all for Christ. Certainly the child of God does willingly give up all for Christ, or perhaps we should say that the Christian must be brought to this, before he can fully enjoy fellowship with Christ. (See Php_3:1-21) But this is a secondary application, and is a line taught us by the Spirit, from the fact that Christ gave up all for us. The pearl is peerless, the price also is beyond compute; and Christ is the true merchant-man who estimates. Christ spilt His own blood and endured the agony of the cross; more than this, He bore the fierce wrath of God in the very contemplation of which He cried out in the garden, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But the cup was drained to the dregs, and in His deepest woe He cried out, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" Then the last farthing was paid. But He was heard in that He feared. He says, "Father." "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit." He "went and sold all that He had and bought it."

(8) The Net. — Conclusion.

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[01:300]

Matthew 13:47. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind," etc. In this last parable the kingdom is again presented as comprehending the whole of Christendom, not as in the parables of the tares, the tree, and the leaven; but as it is in its effects and purpose in the eye of God. We know it is His purpose to gather out of the world a people for Himself, and the means used for this is likened unto a net cast into the sea. The net is evidently the preaching of the cross of Christ — to the Jews a stumbling block, to the Greeks foolishness. The world's religion, Pharisaism, has ever stumbled at the cross of Christ. The world's wisdom and philosophy have ever deemed it folly. But to the simple, humble believer it is the power and wisdom of God. The sea is the symbol of the inhabitants of the earth in a state of tumult and lawlessness. And such is eminently the state of the world. And it is into such a world, into such a sea casting up mire and dirt, that the gospel net has been cast, and fishes of every kind are enclosed. Within the bounds of Christendom, and under the name of Christian, are to be found, not the greatest good only, but the greatest wickedness in the earth. There are real and false disciples of Christ.

What a different view is taken of the kingdom, according as we look at it from the earth, or from the heavenly places! — standing outside with the multitude, or, in the house with Jesus. From the former we get only its external features — a great wheat-field, but the cross mingled and spoilt by tares; a great tree, with its vast branches shooting out on every side; and a certain mass of meal with leaven working till the whole was leavened. A system adapting itself to the peculiarities and characteristics of the different nations among whom it is established, as if its propagators would make a perverted use of the apostle's words, "All things to all men." A system which possesses enough of native energy to give a certain distinctive feature to all who are in it; while yet affording room for the development of all the shades of difference comprised in Catholicism of east or west, in nationalism or dissent. The aim and intent of Satan is to bring such men under the control of a priestly, quasi-spiritual bondage, compared with which no yoke is so heavy and intolerable; and this in utter contravention of God's purpose in establishing His Church in the world. God calls to separation from the world, and the taking up of the cross in practice as well as in principle. His enemy's system pursues union with the world, and, by means of this, promises ease and honour. But it is only when in "the house," and our minds under the tuition and guidance of the Holy Spirit, that we see the extreme contrariety between the true position of the saint and that which is assumed by the professing world. The net is cast into the sea, and its purpose is to separate those within it from the mass outside. In the parable of the tares the reason is given why, or how, tares came to be mingled with the wheat. Men slept, and during that time the enemy sowed his tares. Here we have no reason given why the net encloses bad fishes as well as good ones; it is simply the fact — such is the case. The world sees only what unfaithfulness and worldliness have made of it; viz., the Church-world. The TRUTH shows us that the net is God's means for gathering out His own. That may be seen by the multitude; this only by the disciple in the house.

So when the four empires were symbolically presented to the Gentile king, they had their worldly aspect. There was the similitude of a great image, majestic in its proportions, composed of the most costly, durable, and useful of metals: there was in it that which recommended itself to the world, the splendour and richness of gold and silver, the strength and serviceableness of brass and iron. True, there was clay also, but that was down low in the feet and was comparatively overshadowed by the beauty and brightness of the head and breast of gold and silver. Here is the world's estimation of imperial power and successful ambition; and they bow down and worship; but when these same empires are shown in symbol to the saint, they are characterised by unclean and terror-striking beasts, beasts greedy of blood, ferocious, untameable, and indeed the last one had such pre-eminence in those qualities, that no animal known to man was able to set forth its character; and so a nondescript monster a terror naturæ was held up to the prophet's eye to symbolise the fourth empire. This gives us God's judgement about these empires, and shows us what value His saints should put upon their splendour and power. That which is pleasing to the natural man is an abomination to God.

This parable and that of the tare-field bear this resemblance, that they both present to us the mixed character of the kingdom; but they differ in that the latter brings more prominently to view the kingdom during the continuance of the present age; the former most discloses that which takes place at the end. The one is the final separation and the other the co-existence of the two characters found in the world which owns Christ externally. In the explanation given by our Lord to the disciples, the issue in blessing and misery of the wheat and the tares is made known; but in the parable itself the principle thought is, "let both grow together." But in the parable of the net, the great thought is seen in the act of the fishermen selecting the good and putting them into vessels, and in rejecting the bad. The fishermen are not represented as being the active agents in punishing the bad: they simply leave them, casting them away. The angels here, as in the parable of the tares, are the executors of God's vengeance. We have not the true saints considered distinct from the mass of professors, as in the "hid treasure" and in "the pearl," nor is it an external view of the kingdom as presented in those parables spoken outside to the multitude; but a picture of the whole as it appears to God, and as He would have His saints view it, and the means He has adopted in calling out His people from the world. It is the winding up of the present age. The great net which was let down into the sea, when Christ was first proclaimed, is now drawn to the land. The sowing and ripening of the field are at an end, and the sifting time is come. The floor will be thoroughly purged, the wheat gathered into the garner, the chaff burnt with unquenchable fire.

The good are first taken care of, and put in vessels by those fit for that work; after that selection, (how long is not said), the angels do their work. The parable gives only the putting of the good into vessels, nor is this confined to one act, but rather, we apprehend, gives the character of the time (so far as the good are concerned) which will elapse from the first separation to the establishment of the millennial kingdom. And we know that the rapture of the Church will take place before judgement descends upon the wicked. For when the Son of man is revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance upon them that know not God, the heavenly saints will appear with Him, and, consequently, must have been gathered to Him before (Colossians 3:1-25). Be the interval then between that rapture and the revelation of the Lord Jesus with these saints in flaming fire, long or short, the two events cannot be at the same moment. The dead saints will be raised and the living saints changed, and both shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:1-18).

This is a very different scene from the time when He and His armies shall be revealed to His enemies. It is a great mistake to confound these distinct parts of His coming or presence. The Church of God is ever directed to expect the coming of the Lord Jesus at any moment. His disciples are always to be waiting, always expecting. This is the true position of the Church of God. There is no event given which must precede His coming to receive us in the air. There are many prophecies which must be fulfilled before His and our appearing can take place. We know that the letting thing must be taken away and the lawless one revealed, whom the Lord will destroy with the breath of His mouth, and with the appearing, or shining forth, of His presence (2 Thessalonians 2:1-17). There are signs given which shall usher in the great and terrible day of the Lord. There are times and dates given, days, and months, and years, which must pass before that event. (Vide Daniel and the Revelation).

We do not enter into the questions, whether the days be symbolical or natural, whether we can compute and fix the precise date of their commencement or not, etc. We simply say that the giving of any time to elapse previously, or of any sign to precede, is incompatible with the position of waiting for Christ continually. And that this is the true position of the Church of God, has been fully proved in another paper of this periodical (p. 210), and which we need not now enter upon. When the Lord descends in the air to meet His Church, this peculiar phase of the kingdom (which we may call its Church aspect) ceases. It is the kingdom of heaven as a whole which we have here. There are other saints, outside the Church, which have a share in the kingdom and in the first resurrection. The heavenly saints, symbolised by the twenty-four elders, are in heaven before that tremendous drama of the Apocalyptic judgements begins; and, while we see them in heaven, there are saints, Gentiles, as well as Jews, on the earth, passing through great tribulation, whom afterwards, yet previous to the great catastrophe, the prophet John sees with white robes (Revelation 6:1-17; Revelation 7:1-17; Revelation 14:1-20 etc.) But during that terrible time, the kingdom takes again the same character it had before the day of Pentecost (i.e., it is not strictly the Church character). The principles of this time are found in the earlier chapters of the Acts; for, although the Church was formed, yet her peculiar position and privileges were not as yet brought out; the message or preaching of the kingdom, although extending to the Gentile through the blood of a slain and risen Christ, was particularly addressed to Jews, and in the wisdom of God it was necessary that the Jew should entirely reject it before the full development of His amazing grace could take place. It was when the testimony of Jesus on the earth, and also of the Holy Ghost after the Lord's ascension had both been rejected by God's own ancient people, that the super-abounding grace of God to the lost Jew and Gentile indiscriminately, came fully out.

The gathering of the good fish into vessels by the fishermen is, evidently, a distinct act from the separation of the wicked from among the just, which last term is a very common designation of Old Testament saints and but seldom applied to the saints since Pentecost, except when the Holy Ghost applies Old Testament scripture to them, as for instance, "the just shall live by faith." But again, the action of the angels differs in character. The fishermen gather the good into vessels, to take care of and preserve them — an act of interest and value. The angels sever the wicked from among the just. It is the contrast of those who sought out the good;

these seek out the bad for punishment, and "cast them into the furnace of fire," — an act of vengeance and wrath. The "just," then, we think, comprehend more saints than those standing in full Pentecostal privilege; some of them slain, and having a share in the first resurrection, and

some, perhaps, who are not slain, but preserved to form the living nucleus of the millennial kingdom. At the very end of the trouble, when antichrist is judged, the angels come forth, and sever the wicked from the just. The honour and glory of the victory is the Lord's; it is His arm which strikes down the usurper. The beast and the false prophet are cast alive into the pit. Then the angels come forth, and go through the length and breadth of the kingdom, and gather out all things that offend. Then will the floor of the kingdom be purged; earthly friendships, sex, and association will be unheeded by these messengers. Two men shall be in the field, and two women at the mill: the one shall be taken and the other left. Whether abroad or at home, the angels shall sever the wicked from the just.

One remark more, in comparing the two parables, (viz., tares, field, and net), which bring before us the end of the age. The former is spoken to the multitude outside, and accordingly it is the doom of the tares which is made prominent in the parable, visible and felt by the world. "Bind the tares in bundles and burn them." The explanation gives the glory (Matthew 13:43), and is given to the disciples, and the parable gives the care for the good as the prominent thought. The explanation (Matthew 13:49-50), reveals the doom of the bad.

To sum up, we have in these parables, an epitome of the history of the religious world, from the Lord's first advent to His second, given under two general aspects. There is the gift of salvation by grace to man, and then what man has made of it. There is also what God has done, in spite of the perversity of man, and the termination of the whole, bad and good. The sower goes forth to sow, and a general view of the reception of the truth follows, illustrated by the different nature of the ground into which the seed was cast. Man is looked at here in his individuality and in his responsibility. In the remaining parables the state of things is considered. The kingdom being set up (in mystery), six similitudes follow. We stand at the starting point, and look through the scene right up to the end; having, if we may so say, a bird's-eye view of the whole. Man and the enemy having to do with it, the character of the kingdom soon degenerates; the tares spread, and give character to the field. The crop is spoilt, though the Son of man had sown! But though the tares have ruined the work of God, the wheat are there also. These two co-exist until the end, when the great separation takes place. In the parables of the tree and the leaven, the evil is developed; in the hid treasure and the pearl, the accomplishment of God's purpose appears, notwithstanding the baneful influence of Satan. The tree (earthly exaltation) precedes the leaven of doctrine, and this spreads over the permitted space. But God does not forego His design. The treasure is found and secured. All is given up for the pearl, which shows forth His grace and love, and He is glorified.

Here are two threads of history, in a sense parallel to each other, and probably, also, successive; the one giving the eternal form of the kingdom, and the other the development of the purpose of God. The last parable, the net, brings out conspicuously the time of the end.

We may arrange them in the following order:

1. Introductory parable. A sower went forth to sow — the new work by Christ, when rejected as Messiah by the Jews; man before us tested by the seed of the word, and responsible for the reception of the truth.
2. Parable of the wheat and the tares. The kingdom from first to last. Men careless, and so evil introduced where Christ's name is named, and no remedy but judgement by and by.

3. The application of the two things, the wheat and the tares, in four other parables, two showing the evil, and two the good:—

The Evil.

1. The great tree, or the ecclesiastico-secular body, which man had made of Christianity; and
2. The leaven showing the spread of nominal Christian doctrine over a given mass.

The Good.

1. The treasure, which Jesus finds, and really has made in His people; and
2. The pearl, or His people viewed not only as severally precious, but as one precious jewel.
4. The termination of the whole in the Net.

The two parties in the kingdom are seen together again, but only to be for ever separated, when the end of the age comes, and judgement falls upon the wicked. The history of Christendom is over; the millennial kingdom begins. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." — R. Beacon.

Vol 01 - Second coming of the LORD

Vol 01 - Second coming of the LORD

Original Contributions.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, July 1857.

(1st. Edition, July [01 1857 230])

[01 1857 226]

It is thirty years ago and more since I first saw the doctrine of the second coming of the Lord. I saw it as the only solution of a thousand and one difficulties which man's mind had created, by attempting to limit the predictions about a glorified Messiah down to the range and circumstances of earth, while in man's hand and responsibility. It threw heavenly hopes and promises open, and also gave consistency to God's past and future dealings with the earth.

I took it up energetically and whole heartedly — what banner better for pilgrimage and conflict than coming glory? — I held it as a choice and chosen banner, and was ready to suffer and endure for the hope's sake, and did so.

Thirty years are past: and where am I now as to it? Well, I will speak the truth. Thirty years of wilderness and conflict have made a change, a great change. After the experience I have had of self, and circumstances, and of God, I should sum all up in these few words:— It is a very different thing to have the coming of Christ as one's choice, one's own self-welcomed tomorrow, and to find oneself where all is ruined within and around — failure upon failure — but in the presence of the God who has chosen the return of His Son as the time when He means fully to introduce us into the glory. He has prepared for us, as for those of whom He has said, I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. I have less movement in the feelings of joy and hope, more calmness of repose and anticipation, less thought about the contrast between the thing hoped for and the circumstances which are present, but more sense of the wonderfulness of God's ways, who should, through the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, have prepared such an end, in which many a sinner under Adam the first, and myself among the number, will find ourselves shortly caught up to be for ever with the Lord, and in the Father's house. I trust that (in the weaning from self and circumstances in the wilderness, which I have in measure had) tastes, habits, ways, as well as affections and thoughts in accordance with those of the God of glory have been formed by Him in me. — W.

Vol 01 - A Few Remarks on Prayer and Praise.

Vol 01 - A Few Remarks on Prayer and Praise.

Original Contributions

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(1)[01 1857 237]

Titus 2:7-8, "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine (showing) uncorruptness, gravity, SOUND SPEECH that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. We read, also of "wholesome words" (1 Timothy 6:3); of the form of sound words" (2 Timothy 1:13); of "sound doctrine" (Titus 1:9; see also 1 Timothy 1:10; 2 Timothy 4:3); "of things which become sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1); of "being sound in the faith (Titus 1:13, and Titus 2:2) — as things which are greatly to be sought after by the Christian.

I would desire to act under a sense of the weight of these instructions whenever I attempt to communicate thoughts derived from God's written word; and I would also study that word as remembering that the present and future correction of oneself is far more important than the seeing where either oneself has in time past been wrong, or where others around us may be so still.

There is great accuracy in the Holy Spirit's use of words — though it be accuracy without laboured effort; for He, who is God, does nothing save perfectly. His use of words is perfect; it must be so — for He is God. When therefore any habitual difference in His use of words exists, we may be sure that some distinction is intended by Him to be marked.

Now, in the New Testament there is such a difference between the gospels and the rest of the book, as to the way in which the Saviour is commonly spoken of in the terms used to designate Him.

In the gospels He is commonly named as "Jesus;" in the rest of the book generally, with some title of honour superadded; for instance, as, "the Lord," — the Lord Jesus Christ," — "Jesus the Christ," — "the Christ," — and He is comparatively rarely named merely as "Jesus." This is all quite natural and consistent. He is but one; but when He is presented, as in humiliation, in the days of His association with the children of men, then He is spoken of as the Son of man. When, earth-rejected, He has been received up into glory, it is both natural and consistent that He should also be spoken of as accordingly, and that some title or other of glory should be connected with His name when He is mentioned. No one can carefully read through the gospels, and then through the Acts and the Epistles, and not see the difference; and how, also, the mention of a title is in the Gospels the exception, (though a reason may generally be seen in the context for the exception),

and, on the other hand, in the Acts, together with the Epistles, the omission of all title is the exception; and the exception is generally in this case also fraught with meaning and reason. If I said that the name of "Jesus" occurred in the Gospels about 605 times without any title, and about 14 times with a title, and in the Acts, etc., about 30 times without one, and about 300 times with a title, I should not be far wrong.

To neglect so marked a contrast, and to speak of Him now, that He is exalted, in the language in which the Spirit spoke of Him, when He was in humiliation, would be a mistake, and mark, at all events, defectiveness of instruction in him that did it.

The following may serve as illustrations of the exceptions in the first case:

Matthew 1:1. The book of the generation of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 1:16. Of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

Matthew 1:18. Now the birth of Jesus Christ * was on this wise.

Matthew 16:20. Tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

Matthew 27:17. Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ. (In Pilate's mouth).

Matthew 27:37. This is Jesus the king of the Jews. (In Pilate's mouth.)

Mark 1:1. The gospel of Jesus Christ.

Mark 5:7. Jesus; Son of the most high God? (In the mouth of one that had an unclean spirit.)

Luke 24:3. Found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

John 1:17. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

John 11:21. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou, etc.

John 17:3. And Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

John 19:19. Jesus of Nazareth the king of the Jews. (From Pilate, but probably under divine ruling.)

John 20:31. Believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

{* The reading here is disputed, but the Christ, without Jesus, seems preferable. Ed.}

They are all the exceptions in the first case, which I know of.

The meaning of the name of "Jesus" is deep — "Jehovah a Saviour," and faith lays hold of those glories as being His: personally JEHOVAH, — in action, the SAVIOUR. Yet the name (as we see in Acts 7:45, and Hebrews 4:8) was a name not uncommon among the Jews, but rather one of their national ones — "Joshua."

Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the One anointed of God, the Messiah, the root and offspring of David, the king of Israel, the seed of Abraham, in whom, and in whom alone, all the promises given to the patriarchs were secure. He came as such for the earth. But He had and was far more than these names presented. He had titles for heavenly glory, and was and is personally Jehovah

and God. He had made the world, upheld it, and was to redeem it and a people for God — sons and daughters for the heavens, and a people for the earth — and to put down Satan and those that adhere to him; and therefore, He came not at first in such a form, and with such a manifestation as would have secured to Himself certain glories at once, but He came meek and lowly, in order to make good God's claims over the people. And the form in which He came was such as left the people free to show whether they desired God and His glory, or an evil world and their own ways. In the very act in which the full iniquity of Israel and the Gentiles was proved, the counsel of God provided a ransom for a man and the blood of atonement.

But if the King, meek and lowly, had passed through Israel's land, and after tarrying there a little while, had been rudely thrust out of it, this same blessed One must needs be testified of in the value of His atoning blood — He sitting in patience at the right hand of God.

He Himself gone on high — the testimony of that God of heaven's estimate of Him (as set in contrast with man's) was to be preached, with the Holy Ghost sent down from Him. And this faith's recognition of God's estimate of Him in heaven is now salvation, and the walking therein is the power of Christian life. Jesus of Nazareth, the virgin's son — that very Jesus who had taught in Jerusalem, etc. (Acts 1:1; Acts 2:22, whose mother was Mary (Acts 1:14); who had been betrayed (verse 16); whom the Jews had "taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain," — that "Jesus" had been raised up from the dead (Acts 2:32), and, taken up into heaven (Acts 1:11), had there been owned as "Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

If God "raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God" (1 Peter 1:21), it is clear that the recognition of the glory in which He is, and the glories which belong to Him, are now of the utmost importance; still, He whom God has raised and glorified is the very one whom man rejected — the same Jesus. This will account for the list of the exceptional passages in the Acts, Epistles, and Revelation (in which He is named as "Jesus" without any title being added), being small in comparison with that in which His titles are named.

I have already noted some of them (as Acts 1:1; Acts 1:11; Acts 1:14; Acts 1:16; Acts 2:22; Acts 2:32; Acts 2:36), and I may notice a few more of them in detail, ere closing; but at present I would look at some of the passages which speak of Him in glory, and endeavour to trace, however briefly, some of His actings toward us, and of our actings in faith towards Him.

Acts 1:24-25. "And they prayed, and said, Thou Lord, which knowest the hearts of all (men), show whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place."

Again Acts 2:21. "And it shall come to pass (that) whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord * shall be saved.

{* Quoted from Joel 2:32, where the word Lord is Jehovah, the incommunicable name of God.}

Again, Acts 2:32. "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord (Jehovah) said unto my Lord, † sit thou on my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath

made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ."

{† Adonai, my master.}

I may observe here that, the Greek word kurios represents two Hebrew words; 1st, Jehovah, which is one of the most sacred names of the Jewish scriptures a name never given save to Him who is personally God in the highest; 2nd., Adon, master, lord, proprietor. The expression, "hath made," proves that the word kurios, lord, here means master; and the contrast is between the past humiliation and the present glory of Jesus. Crucified by the Jews on earth, Jehovah hath made Him universal master and Christ. In the authorised version the translators rendered the Hebrew word Jehovah by LORD in the Old Testament, and the word (master, Adon,) they rendered Lord. Jehovah, or Lord, is a sacred name, never, as I have said, applied, save to the most high Himself. To talk of making any one Jehovah would be nonsense. The term is justly applied to the Lord Jesus (Isaiah 6:1, compared with John 12:41). Read the context, John 12:20-41; and this may be seen also in Zechariah 11:12-13, "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord." Here Jehovah, or Jesus, was prized at thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:15). So again, Zechariah 13:7: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." This likewise was the blessed Lord (Matthew 26:31). To none from among men could the name of Jehovah be applied save to Jesus — He alone is so — in Him, too, dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. But "Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord" (1 Peter 3:6).

(2)

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Personal and essential glory (as of Jehovah), and official glory (as of Lordship conferred), however high, are very distinct things.

It is of all-importance ever to remember the personal glory found in Him who, as a servant, became obedient unto death, the death of the cross; and therefore was highly exalted, and had a name given to Him above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; "and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Universal lordship belongs to the faithful servant — the Father will force all to bow before Him, one way or the other. But He before whom all must bow is not only the Nazarene, made ruler over all, but He is personally Son of God in the Highest. No service, no position, however low they might be, could ever undo the deep personal glory of the Son of God — of Him who, humble Himself as He might, was still ever essentially Jehovah.

And it should be noticed how, in connection with God's display of redemption, the practical recognition of the Lord Jesus by the soul is salvation — not to recognise it is to be in a lost estate.

2 Corinthians 4:3-6. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This gives God's display of Himself in redemption . . . "the light of the glorious gospel of [the] Christ, who is the image of God; . . . the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Its shining into a heart is by divine power and is salvation. But the salvation, how is that marked by the actings of the individual? merely by light? No, by a great practical change also, as a result of the light. Such call upon the name of the Lord; such believe in the Lord. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:13; Romans 10:9). "No man can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Corinthians 12:3). Jehovah of Hosts, God the Son, who humbled Himself, and as Son of man died on the cross, is now, as Son of man, glorified on the throne of the Father, and in the majesty of the Highest in heaven. The soul's being apart from fellowship with Him is its perdition, the soul's being brought into subjection to Him is its salvation.

I do not now speak of acts of prayer or praise to Him, but of the posture of a soul toward Him. Acts of prayer and praise may, as we shall see, be modified by other things; but the right position, the right condition, the right dependence and bearing of a soul toward Himself can never be but one. A redeemed soul now knows Him as Jesus the Christ, as Jehovah, as the only-begotten Son, and knows Him so always. Obedience, entire personal surrender to Him (of all that, we have and all that we are), to Him through whom divine glory has shined forth, and by whom it is to be established in redemption, is our part. If a first ray of light shining in bids me call upon Him that may be saved — "Behold he prayeth," "Who art thou, Lord?" "What wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:5-6), were Saul's first two addresses; if a disciple in severe trial find His presence in sympathy, then again he prays as did Stephen, "calling upon * and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" and again, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:59-60.)

{* God, in the authorised version, is wrongly put in; it is not in the Greek.}

These things show the devotional dependent bearing toward the Lord, of souls divinely taught. So does another truth. The baptising in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, (Matthew 28:19) is the same as the baptising "in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:38, etc.) So at least I judge. The glory of the display of God as Jehovah was one name; the glory of the display of God as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost was another name; but this name was made in and by Jesus Christ, earth rejected and heaven-honoured. To believe in Christ, (John 14:1) to be baptised in His name, to receive remission of sins and the Holy Ghost from Him, all mark a speciality of position in man, as well as a speciality of glory in Him. Faith makes men own Jesus of Nazareth as Son of God and as Jehovah — Lord of all.

I have adverted to Stephen's and to Paul's experience as similar conduct, but in one respect they are contrasted. Stephen's saw Jesus [that is the Nazarene who had been known by that name] standing on the right hand of God — "the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." He

addresses Him as "Lord Jesus" and as "Lord." Son of man, the Lord, Jehovah, were revealed to him. To Paul it was Jehovah, Jesus, the Lord, Son of God; and that "he is the Son of God" was first preached by Paul (Acts 9:20).

I again refer to Stephen's prayer to the Lord Jesus (in Acts 7:59-60), to Paul's addresses in prayer to the Lord Jesus (in Acts 9:5-6), and I refer also to the burst of praise from John, "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Revelation 1:5-8); and to the declaration (Revelation 22:17), "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and to the closing cry (verse 20), "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." This is the continuous cry of every soul that is converted, and has light from the beginning of its course to the end; and not only so, but of the whole chain of Christians, from the hour Christ went on high until the hour of His coming again. Yes! this cry to Him, "even so, come, Lord, Jesus," is faith's voice, heard though the whole wilderness course But I refer to these passages (and I might add other similar ones) that it may be seen that I recognise plainly the passages in scripture for the practice of the faithful making addresses, both in prayer and in praise, to the Lord Jesus.

God has given to us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; the recognition, by faith, of Him puts us into the position of calling on Him, becoming subject to Him, and discovering in Him — the Lord Jesus — not only Jehovah and Son of God, the Lord of all, but the very name of the Father, and the power of the Spirit as the Holy Ghost the Comforter. A life begins in the wilderness, its every acting owns Him to be thus the object of our worship; and when the wilderness is past, we shall in the glory worship God and the Lamb.

I thought it well — due to the Lord Jesus, and through mercy due to oneself — to put these remarks forward, before returning to take up a matter previously adverted to, where I said that the actings in prayer and praise toward the Lord Jesus might be modified by other things — though the soul's posture and position toward Him never varied as to its being one of worship, subjection and dependence. Eternal life, the knowledge of the possessing it, and the modes of its acting are distinct. Every member of the household of faith must have had life, though life and immortality were only brought to light by the gospel — not by the law. Now the mode of action depends upon the position in which Christ is looked at at any given time, and what, when He has placed and holds us in that position, we have to render. Is He teacher in Israel? There are His twelve apostles and His seventy teachers through grace associated with Him. Is He risen from the dead, and in Jerusalem is it declared that He has been proclaimed Lord and Christ on heaven's high throne? The Holy Ghost has come down, and there are the twelve witnesses of the resurrection, and there is the company in their fellowship. Has He set Himself for a testimony among the uncircumcision and the Gentiles to the uttermost parts of the earth? Paul and his yokefellow have their labour, and they that are scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. When looked at in this connection, not prayer and praise, but labour, had to be rendered: not, of course, that they ceased to recognise Him in His personal and essential glory, or to know the sweetness of their relation to, and connection with, Him as being such.

Hereafter, even in glory, when the Church shall be the tabernacle of God, when the time for glory and for unmingled joy shall be come — when prayer shall cease together with the want and need and the feebleness that now provoke it, when praise and glory shall be unhindered — still, even then, as servants, we shall serve Him as much as we shall worship Him as worshippers.

But there is another thing I must speak of as in another way modifying prayer and praise as directly addressed to the Lord Jesus. Personally Son of God, essentially Jehovah, He in grace holds a position and the place of being the medium through which all flows out from God, even the Father, through whom alone there is any access to God. If not personally God the Son, if not essentially Jehovah, He could not be the revealer of God and of the Father — that is clear. But being thus able to do so, and through His work as Redeemer able also to present that light in a way suited to man as a sinner, He, in grace, holds this position of being the medium through whom what has to shine forth — of life, light, and love, — may shine forth — and through whom the way of return for that which the revelation, applied in power by the Holy Ghost to us, creates in us, may be secured and maintained. Love divine has formed a system for associating God and us together: the Lord Jesus in that system is the medium, as the Holy Ghost is the power. Nothing can proclaim the personal and essential glory of the Son and of the Spirit more than this — nothing ought to humble our hearts more thoroughly than the truths:

1st, that grace has brought us into a system with every part of which God in the highest is associated and every part of which is associated with Him; and

2nd, that this might be so, this was mediately through the Son of God — Jehovah — the Redeemer and Saviour, and by the power of the Holy Ghost.

It in no wise derogates from the personal glory of the Son, as God and as Jehovah, that having come forth from God to make known the mercy and compassion of God, He should jealously direct the affections and the thoughts of the souls He saves to the God and Father from whom He came forth, to whom He leads back those whom He saves. It does tell of living grace still active in Him who thus mediates.

If any one looks at the more formal prayers and praises of Paul, etc., in the New Testament, they are generally and habitually addressed to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; as for instance, the prayers in Ephesians 1:1-23 and Ephesians 3:1-21 etc. and the doxologies, Romans 11:25-27; Jude 1:25, etc. etc. So again, if the instances in which the various Greek words which are rendered in English, thanks, worship, pray, prayer, praise, etc., are looked at in such a book as the Englishman's Greek Concordance, the same is the general rule. All our springs are in God, though the water gushes from the Rock that was smitten.

The double use of kurios Lord, at times for Jehovah, and at times for lord or universal master, leads a simple mind into no error; because He who is the universal master, the lord, in honour and office, is essentially Jehovah, and personally God. It is important to notice it, however, in order that the simple mind may both perceive the double glory in Him, and may be able to answer the corrupt and perplexed reasoning of minds unlearned and unstable in the truth.

Heathen idolaters have "gods many and lords many" — a god perchance for every virtue and for every vice too; and a lord for every separate place. To the Christian there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods

many and lords many,) but to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him (1 Corinthians 8:4-6).

That there is but one God, and that worship may be offered to God alone, was taught among the Jews as concerning Jehovah. But to them the glory of the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost was not known. The Lord Jesus claimed to be God (John 5:1-47 and John 8:53-58; John 10:36), and as such never repudiated worship when offered to Him in the days of His humiliation (Matthew 8:2; Matthew 9:18; Matthew 18:26; Matthew 28:17; John 9:38, etc.) See in contrast with this Peter, Acts 10:26; the angel, Revelation 22:9, etc.

Because in the revelation of the heavenly bearing of the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it appears that the Son officially holds in heaven the place of Lord of all, and the Holy Ghost fulfils services in us down here — am I to deny that the Son or that the Spirit is God? Most surely not; but rather am I, with adoring heart to own the grace, which, for the sake of revealing what we need to know, planned and has executed a work which needed that the Son of God and the Spirit of God should stoop to, and sustain, offices, without which it had been impossible that we could have known and enjoyed the glory of God even the Father.

If any one could say, "I know not what it is to address the Lord Jesus in prayer, in praise," he would dishonour his own self. He is not of the company of Stephen, Paul, John, the faithful, nor of the number of those that know the true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. On the other hand, not to know, not to acknowledge, not to act upon the grace which leads the Lord Jesus to retain and to use the mediate place for us, is something very like alas! dishonouring His highest honour and richest fullest grace.

As to the rest of the passages in which, after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, He is spoken of simply as Jesus:

Notice, 1st,

Revelation 22:16. "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify to you these things in the churches."

Revelation 20:4. The souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus.

Revelation 19:10. I am fellow-servant of thee and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Revelation 17:6. The woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

Revelation 14:12. The faith of Jesus.

These five passages are very worthy of consideration in the book of "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which gave God unto him to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."

1 John 5:1; 1 John 5:5. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God (Cp. 1 John 2:22). Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God (Cp. 1 John 4:15).

2 Peter 1:2. The knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

Hebrews 13:12. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood suffered without the gate.

Hebrews 12:24. To Jesus the mediator.

Hebrews 12:2. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

See also Hebrews 10:19, the blood of Jesus, Hebrews 7:22; Hebrews 6:20; Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 2:9.

1 Thessalonians 4:14. If we believe that Jesus died, them also which sleep in Jesus, etc.

1 Thessalonians 1:10. Whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus.

Php_2:10. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.

Ephesians 4:21. As the truth is in Jesus.

2 Corinthians 11:4. He that cometh preacheth another Jesus.

2 Corinthians 4:14. Shall raise us up by Jesus.

2 Corinthians 4:11. Delivered unto death for Jesus' sake; that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

2 Corinthians 4:10. That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

1 Corinthians 12:3. No man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

Romans 8:11. The Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead.

Romans 3:26. The justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

Acts 28:23. Persuading them concerning Jesus.

Acts 26:9; Acts 26:15. Contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest (Cp. Acts 22:8, Acts 9:5).

Acts 25:19. And of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

Acts 19:13; Acts 19:15. We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?

Acts 18:5; Acts 18:28. That Jesus was the Christ.

Acts 17:18. He preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection (verse 7, another king, one Jesus).

Acts 17:3. This Jesus, whom I preach unto you is Christ.

Acts 13:33, (32). In that he hath raised up Jesus again.

Acts 13:23. A Saviour, Jesus.

Acts 10:38. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power.

Acts 9:27. Boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

Acts 9:17. Brother Saul, the Lord (even) Jesus.

Acts 8:35. Philip. . . preached unto him Jesus.

Acts 7:55. Stephen saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

See also Acts 6:14; Acts 5:40; Acts 5:30; Acts 4:30; Acts 4:27; Acts 4:18; Acts 4:13; Acts 3:26.

The simple perusal of these passages as the only exceptions after the resurrection and ascension in which He is spoken of simply as Jesus, and no title, (as Lord, the Christ, etc.,) immediately added, may suffice for most. They are not above thirty at the very outside, even if we accept the many I have inserted in the list which have no title immediately annexed, though one be in the immediate context, and are the exceptions to a rule which is sustained by upwards of 300 examples at least. Some of these exceptions are very interesting, however, when the reason for the usage is weighed. Jesus is a name the sweetness and power of which endures for ever.

The subject is too boundless a one for such an article as this; but for the present I must close, feebly and faintly as I have traced it. L. N.

Vol 01 - Melchizedek.

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Original Contributions

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, November 1857.

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[01 1857 276]

The Melchizedek priesthood, in its order being eternal, and in its actings millennial, is full of precious truth about Christ, from beginning to end.

When that wondrous stranger met Abram, he met him as in the kingdom. He met him with the fruit of the vine which, as we know, is to be drunk in the kingdom (Luke 22:18). He refreshed Abram with a feast after the warfare was accomplished, and gave him a blessing from the possessor of heaven and earth. His acts, therefore, were those of one who was standing in the kingdom, or in the days of millennial glory.

But this was a feast upon a sacrifice. It was brought forth by a priest; and such a priest as had already secured or dispensed righteousness and peace, as his name and royalty signified: and this he was, and this he had done (I speak of him only as a type of the true priest, while still hidden in his temple, ere he met Abram). He had then dispensed such provisions as a needy sinner wanted; he was now dispensing what a weary conqueror after the toil of battle wanted. It had been already "righteousness and peace," and now it was "bread and wine," and "blessing from the possessor of heaven and earth."

Genesis 14:1-24 lets us know this, but does not carry us farther back than this. It shows us the feast of the kingdom after the warfare, and it intimates that such a feast had been preceded by the exercise of an efficacious priesthood. Hebrews 7:1-28 resumes the mystery, affirming this suggestion of a previous efficacious priesthood, and then instructing us in the character of the sacrifice which that priesthood used, and in which all its efficacy rested.

But this is addition of a truly profound and wondrous kind.

Melchizedek, in Genesis 14:1-24, appears at once and abruptly, without any record of himself, in his parentage or ordination. The Spirit, in Hebrews 7:1-28 uses this as an intimation of the person of the true Melchizedek. But it is a very faint one — justly so in so early a time as the days of Abraham. But still this is enough to make Melchizedek an image of the Son of God, in whom is "the power of an endless life."

Thus there is intimation of the person of this priestly king in Genesis 14:1-24. But there was no intimation there, that it would be Himself whom the royal priest, the true Melchizedek, would offer up. There was no hint, whatever, of this; and yet, it is on this that the efficaciousness of the

priesthood altogether depends — a truth which the epistle to the Hebrews largely and distinctly teaches.

So that however refreshing the feast was to the weary warrior, and however blessed the dispensation of righteousness and peace is to a weary sinner, all this rests on the value of that sacrifice which the disposer of peace and of royal refreshings had to offer and did offer, and of which Genesis 14:1-24 gives us no hint, but which the epistle fully and powerfully discloses.

"Himself" was the sacrifice, as this epistle again and again tells us. (See Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 7:27; Hebrews 9:14; Hebrews 9:26.) And this was the sacrifice that entitled the priest to dispense righteousness and peace, and then to spread a feast for the heir of the promise, when the kingdom had come, and the warfare was accomplished. For this "Himself" was "the Son," the one who had "the power of an endless life." Death, thereafter, found itself abolished, the moment it touched Him. The captive was the spoiler. The gates of hell could not prevail. He that had the power of death was destroyed. Sin was put away when such an one met its demand. He, "without spot," offered Himself to God, "through the eternal Spirit." How could it be, but that sin must be satisfied? The wages of sin was paid; that which was the sting of death was exhausted. The resurrection was the witness of all this.

The altar is thus revealed in this epistle, and only here. Genesis 14:1-24 had given us no sight of it. And this is the profoundest of the mysteries; and we might well expect to wait for New Testament days to have it thus set forth.

The throne, the sanctuary, the altar, — these we get in the combined visions, so to speak, of Genesis 14:1-24 and Hebrews 7:1-28. The feast of the kingdom depends on the efficacious services of the sanctuary or priesthood, and they depend on the value of the altar or sacrifice.

It is this last point that is indeed the great sustaining truth. If the altar be not sufficient, all is gone: the sanctuary will confer no righteousness or peace, the kingdom no refreshing feast of bread and wine. But the altar is gloriously displayed in this epistle. Life is contemplated here, as being in Jesus, but it is life on the other side of death, and therefore the sacrifice or the death is proved to have been equal to its business of putting away sin, which is the sting or occasion of death. Jesus is displayed as One who, having gone down under the penalty, could rise up from thence in victory.

Vol 01 - Thoughts on Romans

Vol 01 - Thoughts on Romans

(not in the Collected Writings of JND)

Original Contributions

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(1) Romans 1:1-32; Romans 2:1-29; Romans 3:1-31; Romans 4:1-25.

To the end of Romans 3:1-31 it is a question of man's state, Jew or Gentile, before God, and of God's answer to that state by the blood of Christ. In Romans 4:1-25 we see man justified by blood, being set by grace in a new position, by virtue of resurrection. Romans 5:1-21; Romans 6:1-23; Romans 7:1-25 present the application of this life to justification, to the conduct of the justified man, and to his deliverance from the law. Romans 8:1-39 opens out the Christian state founded on this deliverance — the state of man set free.

Romans 1:1. "Paul, servant of Jesus Christ." Paul addresses the Romans according to the apostolic authority he possessed. He had no title with them, because of his labours; he had not yet laboured at Rome. He names himself alone. We may see elsewhere that, when he wrote to a church in which he had wrought with others, he named them with him in the introduction of the epistle. "Called apostle:" these two words must be read without separating them (not "to be" an apostle). The sense is an apostle called, an apostle, not by succession, etc., but by calling. We find again this form of expression in Romans 1:7, where we have "saints called" "the gospel of God;" elsewhere it is said, "the gospel of Christ," "the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and usage has, so to speak, chosen this last appellation. But if it is good to see the gospel in its acts, it is good also to see it in its source. Here we have God's gospel, an expression which shows in God Himself the spring of grace, and which rejects the common idea of an angry God appeased by Jesus Christ. If it was necessary for our happiness that the Son of man should be lifted up on the cross, it is His own Son whom God has given. Such is the sovereign grace which God has communicated to us by the gospel.

Paul was "called" by the Lord on the road to Damascus; he was "separated" by the authority of the Spirit at Antioch. (Acts 9:1-43; Acts 10:1-48; Acts 11:1-30; Acts 12:1-25; Acts 13:1-52.)

Romans 1:2-4. There are two things to consider in this gospel: the accomplishment of promises (not of the promises) and the power of God in resurrection. "According to the spirit of holiness, declared Son of God in power, by resurrection of the dead." The spiritual power which was manifested in the person of Christ during His life was manifested in power in resurrection. The reference is not to promise merely, but to the power of resurrection; it is the abstract expression, but demonstrated in a fact. If I lift up this table, it is by power that I do so, while it is, at the same

time, the act of lifting the table which proves this power. "By resurrection of dead [persons]," not that of Christ alone; it is by the resurrection of others, as well as by His own, though this was the great proof, that Jesus was marked out Son of God. It will be remarked how the apostle fully owns the previous order of things and revelations, and the relation in which the gospel stood thereto. It was promised before in holy scriptures (so Jesus is presented, first as David's seed, and object of promise, and next as Son of God in power), the grand subject-matter of God's gospel.

Romans 1:5. "Grace and apostleship." In Paul the two things were bound together, in a particular way. He had, at the same time, received grace for himself, and apostleship (mission) for others; and this from Jesus, the Lord of the harvest. It was a mission received by grace, the object of which was the obedience of faith among all the nations, — not the obedience of the law, which was the responsibility of Israel. It is the mode of the obedience, not the object.

Romans 1:6-7. Among these Gentiles were the believers at Rome, saints, not by birth, nor by ceremonial institutions, but by divine call. The Jews were born a holy nation relatively to the Gentiles. The Roman Christians were saints by calling of Jesus Christ, and beloved of God.

Romans 1:8-17. Next follows the apostle's thanksgiving for their faith; also the expression of his desire to see them for blessing. "First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you." (Romans 1:8-10.) The apostle served God with or in his spirit, in the glad tidings of His Son. It was ministry in communion with the source whence it took its rise. Indeed there is no real power of God otherwise, though there may be much activity. But it is a poor thing if only rendered as a duty. Accordingly, there is amazing interest in the saints as belonging to God. "Without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, making request" etc. "For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift unto your establishing." It is not that Paul forgets the privilege of his apostleship; but how tenderly he adds that it was to their finding comfort together in their mutual faith, "both of you and me!" It was not a new thought. Often he purposed to come to them, but hitherto had been hindered. He was indebted to all the nations, and was ready to announce the glad tidings to them also that was in Rome. For he was not ashamed of his message. The gospel is God's power. The law would have been man's strength, if he had been able to accomplish it. "For * God's righteousness is revealed in it by faith unto faith." The law demanded righteousness from man. The gospel reveals God's righteousness already accomplished in Christ, and justifies, instead of condemning. Hence, being not in man but of God, it is for faith; because it is by faith that a revelation is received. This righteousness was exercised against sin on the cross, of which Christ knew the suffering; afterwards it is revealed in the gospel. The cross was not the revelation of righteousness (for Jesus Christ the Righteous ought not justly to have died); the cross is the execution of righteousness. When God executes righteousness, He strikes; when He displays His righteousness to man, He justifies him. The meaning of the phrase, "by faith," is properly on the principle of faith. This righteousness pertains to faith, not to the law; consequently it is revealed where there is faith. The gospel was the intervention of God accomplishing a salvation which was from first to last His work. Hence man enters into it by faith — the only means of sharing blessing which was wholly from God. The law proved that man has no righteousness for God. The gospel declares that God has His righteousness and gives it to

man, to the believer, Jew or Gentile; for being of faith, and not of the law, it was opened by grace to the Gentile, as to the Jew. The Jewish prophet confirmed and proved this: "the just shall live by faith." (See Habakkuk 2:1-20)

{*It may be useful to observe here that St. Paul habitually employs the word *gar*, "for," to connect several thoughts, which pertain to the same stock. This manner of employing the word differs thus from what is followed in ordinary language, where the word "for" in general serves to connect a proposition with that which precedes it immediately.}

Romans 1:18. From verse 18, of chap. 1: to Romans 3:20, we find an exposé, in which Paul, before showing the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel, begins by establishing that all men are under sin and judgement. Verse 18 gives the thesis on this point: "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth [while living] in unrighteousness." The heathen, who are first considered, are seen in this state of culpability. Nor is it earthly judgements (so familiar in Old Testament history) but divine wrath, which is now revealed. Not that it is revealed in the gospel, which unfolds divine righteousness: nevertheless it is revealed from heaven, in connection with the grace which delivers from this very wrath — revealed against every sort of impiety and especially where the truth is professed along with the dishonour of God, whether in Jews or Christendom. God is now fully revealed in Christ; and all sin, whatever and wherever it is, being set in the light of heaven, is insupportable.

The unfolding which is here given of men's state reveals in them beings fallen into profound degradation, at the same time that it manifests the serious responsibility under the consequences of which they lie. For their fall and their progress in evil were not accomplished till they had slighted the testimonies of the truth of God. First, by the works of creation, God had set before their eyes the witness which makes known what cannot be seen of Him — His eternal power and godhead (Romans 1:19-20). This should have rendered them inexcusable. But, besides, they had originally known God. Noah's descendants, doubtless, had known Him; for after having caused the old world to disappear by a terrible judgement, God had recommenced the present world by a family in which He had placed the deposit of the knowledge of Himself. But men had not kept it; nay, they had perverted it; they had abandoned the Creator to worship the creature (Romans 1:21 and seq.) And God, in righteous retribution, had turned their own perversion against themselves. They were left to themselves to degrade against themselves. Yet more — to abominable lusts, and a mind void of moral discernment. Giving up God's honour, they dishonoured themselves, and had sympathy with the vileness of others.

Romans 2:1-29. Behold now a class of individuals which differs from the preceding, in that they judge those disorders. Philosophers, moralists, etc., well discerned such a state of things. Were they changed themselves? In no way. Could God accept such things? Assuredly not. If they judged evil, it was not to avoid it; they judged it with others only; and God classes even them among those who possess the truth in unrighteousness. Here the pagan philosopher (Romans 2:1-16) and the Jew (Romans 2:17-29) find their place. These last occupy, in respect of those who went before, a more elevated moral position. But these outsides of wisdom and knowledge do not suffice to escape God's judgement, which will be according to truth, and which cannot be deceived by man's disguises.

In this chapter, the position is not viewed, as in the foregoing, in connection with God's government. It is not the Gentile under the consequences of his conduct towards God, running in an open way into gross wanderings; nor the Jew with special privileges set apart in the midst of the nations. The title which describes this class is very general, "thou, man, that judgest whoever thou art." * Moreover, man stripped before the justice of God, is judged according to his light and his real moral condition. None who does evil shall escape God's judgement. His mercy and long-suffering, which ought to lead the evildoer to repentance, will never lessen that judgement which man forgets as easily as he despises His goodness. The issues of a life far from God, and a godly one, are equally certain (Romans 2:6-11). Men as such will be dealt with according to their true character morally, and according to the advantages enjoyed. God will judge the Gentile by conscience, the Jew by law, in the day in which the secrets of the heart are judged, according to Paul's gospel (Romans 2:12-16). There will be no preference for the circumcision; for that, without fidelity, is uncircumcision in God's estimate (Romans 2:25), for there is no respect of persons with Him. He will have realities; and His judgement here spoken of is a judgement of the secrets of the heart, not exterior and earthly. "But if" (for that is the true reading, and not "behold" in Romans 2:17) one had the name of Jew and behaved evilly, it was but blaspheming the name of God among the Gentiles, as it is written, and such an one's circumcision became uncircumcision. On the other hand, righteousness in an uncircumcised state would be reckoned for circumcision. The true Jew is so, not in outward show merely, but hiddenly and in spirit circumcised (Romans 2:17-29).

{*"Whoever thou art," be thou Jew, Gentile, philosopher, Pharisee, professing Christian and even real Christian, — the last considered in his responsibility and not in the position which God's sovereign grace makes and keeps for him. Whatever may be the favour that God accords to man, the great principles of righteousness and judgement are never enfeebled by His goodness.}

Romans 3:1-8. Here is the proper consideration of the Jews and their state, such as it was in fact, whatever might be the great privileges with which God had honoured them nationally. Christian doctrine, though it reduce the Jew to the level of the Gentile when it is a question of sin, in no way despises the distinctive advantages of the Jew. It owns them, particularly that of being entrusted with the oracles of God. It owns them, even in presence of the faithlessness of many in Israel. For God is faithful, who will judge the faithless, and keep His people faithfully.

Romans 3:9-20. But those same oracles, whose deposit is one of the great privileges of Israel, declare, and this in a solemn manner, that the Jews are under sin and judgement. On their own showing and boast, the law was theirs, and it addressed them. But if so, it declared that God could find not one righteous, with yet more terrible descriptions of their state outwardly and inwardly. Such were the Jews according to their own psalms and prophets. Thus every mouth was closed and all the world brought in guilty before God. No man should be justified before Him by works of law; for those who had the law were so much the more guilty in that they had transgressed it. Law gives knowledge of sin, not power against it, nor justification from it.

Romans 3:21-31. Man has no righteousness: judgement is already pronounced upon him. But when it is proved that every kind of righteousness is wanting in man, then the gospel discovers the boundless riches of grace and shows God revealing His righteousness in saving lost man. Yes, it belongs to the glad tidings of Jesus Christ to reveal in God a righteousness which saves man.

"Now, without law, divine righteousness is manifested, being testified of by the law and the prophets — divine righteousness by faith of Christ Jesus towards all, and upon all who believe." Thus by faith, man is delivered from judgement, and put at ease with God. Evidently, if God's righteousness, according to which men shall be judged, becomes our righteousness, our deliverance is ensured, and we have perfect security for the judgement. If the righteousness whereby justification comes were man's own, it must be by law — the law given to the Jews; but it is God's righteousness, and therefore is towards all men, Gentiles as well as Jews. But it takes effect only where there is faith in Jesus. If it is unto all, it is only upon all that believe, Jew or Greek; for there is no difference: "All have sinned and are come short of the glory of God." What then is to be done? "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth a mercy-seat, through faith in his blood." It is God who justifies; and He justifies in virtue of His own grace, established on the value of Christ's blood. Instead of bringing into judgement, He had passed by sins of Old Testament saints (which is the meaning of "sins that are past" or that had taken place before). But now it was not only the forbearance of God: the atonement was accomplished, and this vindicated both His pretermission of sins in past time, and His showing His righteousness in the present time, so that He should be just and justify him who is of the faith of Jesus. God abides in this character (i.e., just in justifying sinners).

There are two things to remark as to the righteousness of God. Justice was first exercised in vengeance on the victim, after that in acceptance. The Christ whom God smote on the cross He has accepted by receiving Him near Himself. And our condition answers to these two things: "we have redemption through His blood," and "we are accepted in the Beloved." But this last feature belongs more particularly to the following chapter.

Boasting is thus excluded by this law, or principle, of faith of Jesus, which justifies without law-works of any sort. And the God who acts thus in grace is the God of Gentiles no less than of Jews, since it is one who justifies Jews by faith (*ek pisteos*), not by law, and Gentiles through their faith (*dia tes pisteos*), if they believe. Justification flows from faith and nothing else; and the man who believes is justified. Also (Romans 3:31), this doctrine of faith establishes the authority of law instead of weakening it. Faith supposes man's ruin under law, but receives another righteousness, even God's. Law is made void by him who pretends to stand under law without being condemned.

Romans 4:1-25. Up to the end of chap. 3 the apostle has developed the sad state of man, and presented the blood of Christ, as answering to this state. In Romans 4:1-25 he opens out the new position which the resurrection gives us. In this way holiness of life cannot be severed from justification by grace, because from Christ one receives, at the same time, both righteousness and life. There are three thoughts in this chapter.

First, Abraham believed God.

Second, when Abraham entered into the blessings of faith, he was not circumcised.

Third, his faith embraced the power and life of resurrection.

It is clear that Abraham's case sets us on the same principle of faith. If justified by works, he would have had ground for boasting, which can never be before God. James speaks of justification before man, and hence speaks of what Abraham did when tried long after. Scripture says that his faith was reckoned to him as righteousness. And such is the principle now — not to him that

works, as a debt, but as of grace to him who believes on Him who justifies the ungodly. Abraham, then, exemplifies justification by faith. In perfect accordance with it is the language of David in Psalms 32:1-11. For he speaks of blessedness, where the man was not righteous but a sinner. The happiness of such an one is, that God does not impute his sins, but covers them, and reckons to him righteousness without works. Incontestably, also, Abraham was uncircumcised when God thus dealt with him — an overwhelming consideration for the Jews, who looked up to Abraham as the beau idéal to which all their notions of excellence and privilege were referred. Circumcision, then, was only the seal of the righteousness of faith, which he had during his uncircumcised state.

It may be observed here, that we are instructed in redemption, but redemption is not given as the object of faith. Our faith has for its object God, Christ. We are justified by faith in Jesus Christ. Abraham believed God. He believed the God who quickens the dead, and we believe on Him who has raised up from the dead Jesus our Lord. Another thing should be borne in mind, that we are before God according to all the worth of the acceptance of Christ. Not only is sin taken away, but, moreover, we have a righteousness, which has glorified God, and we are accepted according to this righteousness, received "safe and sound" to be before God. To receive from God the wedding garment is more than to be simply stripped of our rags; it is to be clothed. Christ, independently of the putting away of our sins, has done a work which gives Him a personal title before God. Were there none saved, still Jesus would have the position to which He is entitled by this work in which God has been glorified by Him. In coming here below, the Saviour found man lost, and the glory of God tarnished by the sin of the creature. He undertook to serve man, and to retrieve the glory of God; and success crowned His work. In this respect, God receives from man (in Jesus) for His glory, as he received from him (in Adam) for his dishonour. In Jesus, on the cross, God recovered all His rights in justice, and has been fully manifested in love. In fact, there is more glory on the cross than in heaven. We may share the heavenly glory; but as for that of the cross, none but Christ could sustain it.

It follows thence, that in virtue of righteousness Jesus is before God, according to all the value of the work in which He glorified God. And there is the righteousness which is imputed to us. By faith we share with Christ this blessed portion. "We are as He is;" and such being our condition in this world, we have confidence for the day of judgement. Christ will judge the world in righteousness; but the righteousness with which He will judge is ours: the Judge is our righteousness. Observe, that in this case, righteousness supposes a spiritual life. It is never said that we ought to be what He was, but that we ought to walk as He walked. The life that we receive from Christ, who is now in heaven, renders us capable of walking as He walked. We could not be what He was; for we should be under responsibility before righteousness, and, besides, we have lusts, etc., which He had not. We are so as He is now; and we should walk as He walked, when He was here below.

Romans 4:12 should be thus translated: "father of circumcision not only to them who are of the circumcision, but to those also who walk," etc. Abraham is here called father of circumcision, or of true separation to God — father of this separation, as the person in whom began this order of separating man for God. It was in him that God introduced this new principle of His intervention, in the midst of evil, by setting man apart for Himself. From that time, in the subsequent ways of God with man, this principle of separation has been much developed. Abraham is the father of circumcision in the same sense as that in which science has made Hippocrates the father of medicine.

Romans 4:13-16. The promise of itself does not raise the question of sin. God has promised; He will accomplish. But all must be accomplished by grace; and in the interval between the promise given and the promise fulfilled, God brings in the law by which the question of sin and righteousness is awakened, and this furnishes occasion for grace. It was not by law, then, that the promise of being heir of the world was made to Abraham, or to his seed. It was by righteousness of faith. Clearly, then, if those who took the ground of law were heirs, faith is made vain, and the promise null and void. But it is not so: for the law works wrath, and not the enjoyment of the promise; as, on the other hand, there is no transgression where there is no law. The apostle does not say sin; for that there might be where no law was, sin being lawlessness, as St. John says, (1 John 3:4), and not merely "the transgression of the law," according to the erroneous rendering of the English version. Here the meaning is most plain: there could be no violation of the law, where there was no law; and where law is given to sinners, it works wrath of necessity. But the inheritance was promised to Abraham, and certainly he to whom a promise is given is not the one who has accomplished it. Therefore it is on the principle of faith, that it might be according to grace (not man's desert), in order that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to that which is of the law, but to that also which believed like Abraham. That is to say, faith, and not law, being the title to the inheritance, even the Jews could inherit in no other way, and the door was open to the Gentiles; as it is written, I have made thee father of many nations (Romans 4:17).

But this is not all. Abraham, not yet circumcised, was justified by faith, without the law and before it. Upon what did he rest? Against hope he believed in hope, and trusted in the resurrection-power of God, fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform.

We may here remark the difference between the Old Testament saints and us. Abraham believed that God had the power to accomplish His promise, and we (Romans 4:24) believe in Him who has raised up out of the dead Jesus our Lord. If we were in prison, and the authorities gave us the promise of setting us free at a certain time, we might, doubtless, enjoy this promise with assurance; but how different would our condition be, when we were actually at liberty!

The Apostle here speaks not of believing in Jesus, but in God, in Him who has entered in power the region of the death in which Jesus lay because of our sins, and who has lifted Him thence. The resurrection whether of Christ or of His people, is the fruit of the mighty activity of God's love, who has taken from under the consequences of sin Him who had already borne all the penalty of our sins: so that believing in God who has thus raised Him from the dead, we embrace the whole extent of the work on which resurrection has put the seal, as will the grace and the power which are displayed therein. God has thus made an end of our sins once for all, and has set in Jesus us who believe, fully justified by what Jesus has done, since He has done it for all who believe in Him.

But why the future — "to whom it shall be imputed?" Paul here considers man as being in question: "What will then become of man?" He will be justified. We meet several times in the epistle this employment of the future. In this case the future has no reference to the time, but answers to another expression in the phrase. Romans 6:5 furnishes an example. There we read, "for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." "Shall be," though future, clearly points out in this verse a thing which we now possess; for it is said a little farther on, (Romans 6:13), "yield yourselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead." It is the same with the words "shall be imputed" at the end of Romans 4:1-25.

The principle of resurrection established in this chapter abides in the following, applied in chap. 5 to justification, in chap. 6 to the life of the justified, and in chap. 7 to the law.

(2) Romans 5:1-21; Romans 6:1-23; Romans 7:1-25; Romans 8:1-39.

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Romans 5:1. There is a slight difference between justification and peace, though in simple souls these two blessings go on together. Peace is the consequence of justification. "Having been justified, we have peace with God."

Though it be by faith alone that we are justified, God, in justifying us, sets the soul in connection with the grace received. One must take account of that in evangelisation and the care of souls. Experience, it is true, is not faith, — we are not justified by experience; and yet if the state of the soul rests outside what faith has received, true peace cannot be enjoyed.

Romans 5:2. But not only is the work done and he who receives God's testimony (i.e., the believer) justified. Three privileges follow justification by faith. 1st, as we have seen, we have peace; 2nd, we are in the grace or favour of God; and 3rd, we boast (or rejoice) in the hope of His glory. Peace is the end of war; grace goes farther; we are actually in the enjoyment of God's favour. As regards the past, (the old man and his acts,) we have peace; as to the present, we are in favour before God; for the future, we await glory. In a certain sense the entire Christian position is given in these three things — peace, grace, and hope. Nevertheless, there is more, for we find farther on, and twice, the expression, "And not only so" (Romans 5:3; Romans 5:11).

Romans 5:3. "We boast (or rejoice) in tribulations also." The ways of God towards us during the crossing of the wilderness are designed to mortify the flesh, to break the man, and thereby to form us for the knowledge of God. The flesh is a veil which hides heavenly things from us. God acts in our interest, as to this veil, and afterwards we see better throughout. In this verse 3 it is in view of the subjective fruit, which results from the tribulation that we boast. In Romans 5:11 we boast in view of the objective blessing — we joy or boast in God. By objective blessing is meant the blessing which specially belongs to faith, as the knowledge of God, His work of grace accomplished outside us in Christ, etc. Subjective blessing is said of the effects of grace produced in us.

Romans 5:4. The result of tribulation is experience, and that works hope. While experience in affliction is an inner thing and productive of experience, it is not on this inner feeling that one can lean. The sole support given to our faith is the love of God, that love which He showed in Christ toward us. It is there that experience and faith meet. Accordingly there are two aspects in which Paul presents the love of God:—

Romans 5:5, His love in us, as a subjective thing; and

Romans 5:6-8, His love for us, objectively.

As soon as the apostle has named the love of God in us, He immediately goes back to God's love for us, the first spring of every blessing. This is the inverse of the human mind. Man is so quick to

put himself at the centre and to seek in God only what may correspond with the order of things where he finds himself placed. But if we have such a privilege as that of knowing the love of God, it is because God first loved us, even when we were only worthy of his hatred.

Romans 5:9-10. The Holy Ghost reasons not from what is in man, but from what God is (the only certainty for man), and shows us the consequences of the work Christ has done for the believer. Having been justified in the power of His blood, we shall be saved from wrath. For if, while enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved in the power of His life — that endless life in which the Son lives eternally.

Romans 5:11. The consequence is that we boast not only in this full and assured salvation, but in God Himself. If we boast in the things received, we also boast in Him who has given them. We enter thereby into the blessed ocean of the knowledge of God.

Romans 5:12. It seems that this verse, which introduces us to a new subject, is linked with what precedes, by the fact that it is by our Lord Jesus Christ that we have now received the reconciliation. Since it is by Him, we are thus carried back to Christ, and to Adam by contrast, beyond the limits of a question of law, Jews, etc.

Romans 5:12-19. The general idea in these verses is that, as Adam introduced sin into the world, Christ has brought righteousness therein. The apostle takes up the subject in Adam at the beginning of the ways of God with man. What he says amounts to this: it is no longer a question of you, Jews, only, but of man, of sin, and consequently of grace. Nor is it you alone who are to be benefited by Christ's work, but Gentiles, — sinners. In Adam sin entered the world, and it is for sin committed then and since that Christ came. The work He accomplished is as valid for others as for you.

The meaning of these verses is not that people are condemned solely by the imputation of Adam's sin. It is true that his sin is imputed to his race, but there is also the personal state of the individuals, who are condemned for their own sins. We are under the consequences of Adam's sin in two respects, as to position and as to nature. We are born far from God, and we have borne a nature at enmity with Him. The son of a man given up to dissipation is found in this double misfortune, that he is born fortuneless, and that he has a nature disposed to dissipation. As another comparison, suppose the Czar, for example, sends a man to Siberia because of rebellion, and he has a son born there, and of course fallen from the rights of a Russian subject. There, however, is the limit of the penalty he endures for the conduct of his father. But if he happens to show the enmity to the Czar which brought his father to exile, the Czar leaves him also in exile: this son of the proscribed abides in disgrace because of his personal enmity. Just so, we are born under guilt, but we cannot be guilty without sinning. The apostle avoids separating our fall in Adam — our state under the fall — from the state of the heart estranged from God. He does not sever guilt from the presence of sin in the individual. In the mystical sense employed about Levi in Hebrews 7:9-10, there need be no difficulty in saying that we sinned in Adam. However, this is evidently not the sense of the passage. Exclusively understood, it is contradicted by such scriptures as Ezekiel 18:20, and Jeremiah 31:29-30. Further, remark that there remains nothing to guard the conscience, the moment we make the sin of Adam the sole cause of our condemnation; for if we die for that sin, our conduct matters little!

Paul mentions here, as an existing fact, the presence of sin in the world. The twelfth verse gives the positive proof of the existence of sin in the world by the fact that death is there. Death is the sign of sin for which man is condemned, law or no law. The following verses appeal to the early inspired history which no Jew would dispute. Until law sin was in the world. There was then something more than Adam's sin. It is true that sin is not put to account where there is no law: still death reigned from Adam to Moses; and this demonstrated that sin was there, for death is the wages of sin, and not only of transgression. If man is under a law given by God and infringes it, his death is the necessary consequence. But without that, without law, when there was not this rule whereby God, in His government, imputes sin by virtue of a given law, it was clear that death reigned equally — that it attacked individuals who were not under the law: the proof too that they were under everlasting ruin also. Death reigned, he says, over those who had not sinned in the likeness of Adam's transgression (that is, over those who, in a different position from that of Adam and of the Jews, had sinned without the law). Paul groups together the position of the Jews and Adam, according to the true sense of Hosea 6:7, which charges the people with having acted like Adam. "But they, like (not "men," but) Adam, have transgressed the covenant." Both of these had a positive command, which each violated. But it was not so with sinners between the two points. They had died because they sinned, but it was not after the resemblance of Adam's transgression.

Adam is the type or the figure of the coming one — of Christ. Like the disobedience of Adam, the work of Christ has an effect on a great number of individuals. If death struck all men, as well those who sinned like Adam in the way of transgressing commands, as those who sinned otherwise, the remedy which the Lord Jesus Christ brings for sin has no less universal effects. The work of His death has a value which answers to man's state, whatever may be the form of the sin. The Jew died under the curse of the law — Christ has borne this curse. The Gentile, without law, died under sin — Christ by His death delivers him.

Romans 5:15-17. There is, in these verses, a parallel instituted between sin in Adam and righteousness in Christ, a parallel by which are shown the extent and the excellency of Christ's work. As to the details we may remark the order as follows:

Romans 5:15. — The roots of sin and grace. The subject is not shut up within the bounds of a Jewish question (Moses, the law, the prophets, etc.): it embraces a vaster extent. To judge of sin and grace, it is to Adam and Christ that we must go back.

Romans 5:16. If the judgement was from one to condemnation, the free gift is from many offences to accomplished righteousness. The principle of grace extends to the things as well as persons.

Romans 5:17. The issues are then given. By one offence death reigned: much more shall those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life by the one, Jesus Christ. How rich the contrast! Not merely life reigns, but we shall reign ourselves in life.

The parenthesis which began with verse 13 closes here. In Romans 5:18 the general reasoning is taken up in a peculiarly abstract way. "So then as [the bearing was] by one offence toward all men to condemnation, so by one accomplished righteousness [it is] toward all men to justification of life." It is the direction of either act expressed abstractly. We are always here in the parallel between Adam and Christ. Their acts have a bearing toward all men; but the tendency of Adam's act is to condemn, that of Christ's work is to justify.

It must be borne in mind that the point in this verse is not the application or actual effect; for in that case all men would be justified in justification of life, which is not the fact. All men are condemned; but it is for more than the simple imputation of Adam's sin, as the preceding chapters have shown. Likewise, as to justification, if there are individuals placed in the state which it indicates, this is in virtue of a moral fact which corresponds to it — even faith. From what sources flow these two conditions of man? From Adam and Christ, only while the acts of the one and the other are of similar bearing, we find that, when we come to fact, condemnation weighs on all, while justification is only the portion of some. Hence we see that after having said "all men" in verse 18, Paul changes his phrase and speaks of the "many" in verse 19. "For as by the disobedience of the one man the many have been constituted sinners, so also by the obedience of the one the many were constituted righteous." This is because "all" are not definitively justified in Christ, though all are made sinners. Using the word "many," or rather "the many," in the second term of the parallel, he employs it in the first also for the correspondence of the subjects.

Romans 5:20-21. But why, then, law? It "came in that (not sin but) the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace still more abounded, that as sin reigned in (the power of) death, so also grace might reign through righteousness, to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." If justice reigned, as sin has reigned by death, it would have been all over with us: we should have been under the penalties. But grace reigns. The contrast is established between God and man, not between sin and righteousness, and God exercises His sovereign right in grace; and this to life everlasting, instead of governing this world according to the Jewish system. Save certain glimmerings in eternal life, the Jews in general looked at life on this side of death. Here God, far from sanctioning unrighteousness, justifies in His grace through Jesus, and gives eternal life above and beyond death.

Romans 6:1-23 :

We have in this chapter the second of the three things we have already indicated — the life. The apostle's doctrine is, that we are brought into God's presence by death and resurrection in virtue of the work which Christ therein accomplished. We believe in Him who raised up Christ from among the dead. Can we live in the sin to which we are dead? It is to contradict oneself and one's baptism. But if I am baptised into Christ, it is as having part in His death (for there it is that I have this righteousness in which He appears before God, and I in him). Now it is to sin that He is dead; and I am brought into the participation of this divine and perfect righteousness by having part in death unto sin. It is impossible, therefore, that it should be to live in sin, though, no doubt, the flesh would like that. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." All that is in God was interested in the resurrection of Christ. At the cross, God (not the Father, as such, but God) was glorified; His holiness, love, righteousness, plainly witnessed by the death of the just one, were there fully magnified. But in the resurrection of Christ all that God was in His glory, and the Father in His relationship as Father, was displayed and put in exercise.

The question here is not motive, nor duty merely but the nature of the blessing in which we participate, and of which Christian baptism is the expression. The Christian's life is quite new and the walk flows from it. Death and resurrection with Christ is his present portion. Our old man

(Romans 6:6) has been crucified with him, that the body of sin might be rendered null, that we might no longer serve sin. Death gives quittance from sin (Romans 6:7).

Romans 6:10. The obedience of Christ was put to the proof up to the end, till there rested no more than death; and He preferred to die rather than fail in obedience, which would have been yielding to sin. Far from yielding, He died; He completed His obedience in death; and by it He has done with sin in every way. He has only to do with God. We, too, should appropriate this by faith (Romans 6:11), and reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Hence the clear and solemn exhortations of Romans 6:12-13, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." But mark well that the source of practical power (and that is the question) is in grace: "sin shall not have dominion over you, FOR you are not [under law but] under grace." If God and sin are in question, doubtless God is found the strongest!

Romans 6:1-23 : 15. It is owned that grace is an occasion for the flesh, not for the Christian to walk according to the flesh. Observe how, in this chapter, Paul reduces the flesh to silence: Shall we sin (Romans 6:1) to show greater grace? No, for that would be no longer the grace which annulled our sins to save us. Shall we sin (Romans 6:15) since grace delivers from the law, and we are no longer under its slavery? No, for in that we should become slaves in another way.

Romans 6:16. While it is by righteousness outside us that we are justified, this righteousness is identified in us, notwithstanding, with practical righteousness. Its character is obedience, and obedience is learned of Christ. If I forbid my son to do something he would like to do, and I am heeded, I say, There is an obedient child; but Christ's obedience is quite another thing. Never had God to stop Him in the movement of His soul, for that movement was always the very will of God. Our obedience is on the same principle. We are elect to the obedience of Jesus Christ, 1:e., to that same obedience (1 Peter 1:1-25). We have also to obey Jesus; but here it is the obedience of Jesus Christ. Obedience owns the authority of another, binding to the person, and not merely to the precept. So 1 Corinthians 9:21, "lawfully subject to Christ."

Romans 6:19. The contrary is here spoken of — lawlessness — the act not only of disobeying a recognised authority, but of not owning the authority itself. The lawlessness produced nothing, but stops in itself. Obedience bears fruit unto holiness. By it one is in connection with God, and its effect is holiness. In Romans 6:20 there is an "end" but no fruits. The end is death.

Romans 6:22. The present fruit of obedience is holiness, and the end eternal life. We possess eternal life and we make towards it for the end. Such is the enigma of Christianity: we have not and we have.

Romans 7:1-25 :

We have seen the deliverance of the believer as to guilt (Romans 5:1-21), and as to life (Romans 6:1-23). In the seventh chapter we have deliverance with regard to the law. Thus these three chapters give, taken together, deliverance as to the guilt of sin, as to the power of sin, and as to the law which binds upon us both these things. From the details of chaps. 5, 6 we have also seen that it is always on the principle of death and resurrection that our deliverance rests. It is the same

in the seventh chapter.

The Christian, or, to say better, the believer, has part in Christ as a dead Christ, and lives, in that Christ is raised from the dead. Now the law has only power over a man as long as he lives. In bringing out the effect of this truth, the apostle uses the example of the law of marriage. The woman would be an adulteress if she were married to another while her husband was alive, but when her husband is dead she is free. In this illustration, the husband died; but in application to us, the law does not lose its force, its rights, by dying, but by our dying. The law does not die (for in that case sin would be free), but we, by the body of Christ, are dead to the law.

Romans 7:6. "But now we are dead from the law, having died in that in which we were held, so that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in oldness of letter." In Galatians 2:19 it is the same thing differently expressed. There our death to the law is attributed to the law itself. "I through the law am dead to the law." A man suffocated in a room owes his death to the room itself, but by the very fact he is also dead to this room. We are dead to the law; it has no more rights over us. Notwithstanding, if we were freed from it without a sufficient authority, we should become anomoi, without law, without restraint. But in Christ we have a good authority for being free. In Him, on the cross, our responsibility before God was settled. In Him risen, we partake of a new life which bears its fruits, and for which the system of law no longer exists.

We must not confound the principle of law, under which the responsibility of man before God, as to righteousness, is guarded, with the system of ordinances blotted out by the death of Christ. There is the authority of God, and the authority of the lawgiver. As to man, he is necessarily under responsibility before God, whatever may be the particular circumstances which are attached to that responsibility. The law of Moses, for example, is an application of man's responsibility; it is by it that God has illustrated, on a large scale, this principle of law. And what we almost always find in the Old Testament is the law. In the subject which occupies us Paul generalises; he reasons on the principle of law, without confining himself to the law of Moses, although he sometimes quotes it. The Romans, to whom he says, "ye have been made dead to the law by the body of Christ," had never been put under Moses' law, with the exception of a few Jews among them.

God could never do otherwise than give a law which man could not possibly accomplish, seeing that when He gave it, man was already under sin; and God could not give a law which should tolerate sin. Moreover, whatever rule He gives to man, it is always according to the divine perfection, and consequently a rule that man cannot accomplish.

After the seventh verse, we have the details of the experience which is made of the law when it acts on a man in whom are found the two natures — the flesh and the inner man. Is the law sin, that we are withdrawn from its authority? But it gave the knowledge of sin and imputed it. The apostle says that he would not have understood that the mere impulse of his nature was sin if the law had not said, "thou shalt not covet." But the commandment gave sin the occasion to attack the soul. Sin, that evil principle of our nature, making use of the commandment to provoke the soul to the sin that is forbidden, (but which it took occasion to suggest by the interdiction itself, acting also on the will which resisted the interdiction,) produced all manner of concupiscence.

Romans 7:9. "I was alive without law once." Paul does not mean to indicate by this a state in which he himself had been. It is a great principle which he demonstrates by personifying it, as he says

elsewhere, "these things I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos." That does not designate any individual — it is every man.

We may remark three characters of sin — lawlessness, transgression, and hatred. These characters, for instance, might be seen in the following circumstances of the conduct of a child. First, he runs about the streets, instead of going to school. His father forbids him to leave the house, and the child, without taking heed to the interdiction, runs in the streets all the same. Lastly, his father entreats him, on the ground of his love as a father, and the son replies by giving him a blow. In these three cases, he has successively followed his wrong desires, and infringed his father's order, and despised his love. This last case is the consummation of sin.

Romans 7:9-10. If one calls oneself under law, without acknowledging oneself condemned, it weakens the authority of the law. One sometimes hears this profession from the mouths of Christians, "I am saved by grace, I am not under the law except for my conduct; doubtless, I fail in it, but God is merciful." That is not the question. The law condemns. You have sinned, and you are cursed. "The commandment which was for life was found by me itself [to be] unto death." "Do this and live" became death, by showing the exigencies of God to a sinful nature, whose will rejected them and to a conscience which could not but accept the just condemnation. Therefore the law is good and holy, since it forbade the sin, but in condemning the sinners. "Did then that which is good become death to me? Far be the thought. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death to me by that which is good; in order that sin might, by the commandment, become exceedingly sinful (Romans 7:13). "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am fleshly, sold under sin." (Romans 7:14). This last is individual experience. Speaking of Christians, as such, Paul would not say, "we are fleshly," because he ought always to see the saints in Christ. In the case where, addressing the Corinthian believers, he said, "you are carnal," it was when he had to look at them in a particular circumstance — when they walked as men of this world. To be in the flesh is to be before God in the condition of the first Adam. We are in the Spirit when we are in the second Adam, because it is in this position that we receive the Spirit.

The first thing, then, noticed is the attack of sin, personified as one that seizes the opportunity of the law to drive him in the contrary direction, and thus on God's part slay him in the conscience of what the law forbade. Next the apostle presents the experience of a soul under the law — not the conflict between the two natures, which still goes on when the Holy Ghost dwells in us, as shown in Galatians 6:1-18 but the effect of the law if permitted to have its way even where the heart is renewed. It will be remarked, accordingly, that neither Christ nor the Spirit is named till the question of deliverance appears. In Romans 7:14; Romans 7:17; Romans 7:20, the I is emphatic. It is the individual case which is supposed and reasoned out. The evil here is want of power where the desires are good: so that the better they are, the more miserable the person is. The question of guilt is over, but the soul discovers that it has no strength. In Romans 7:23, the law means, not a rule imposed, but one acting always in the same way.

Romans 7:24. "O wretched man that I [am]! who shall deliver me out of this body of death?" The soul sees that it has neither righteousness nor power: it is in despair as to this, and looks around, not saying, How shall I? but Who shall deliver me?" It finds at once in God a deliverance already prepared in Jesus. It is not even that God will deliver: the deliverance is wrought, and he gives thanks. Such is what happens always when, in the travail of conscience, there is the action of the

Holy Spirit: then one is in quest of God, even when one is yet shrouded in a great deal of darkness.

It is, on one side, remarkable to see how, in order to get free from its embarrassment, this troubled soul cries out, "Who shall deliver me?" It ceases saying, "Who will make me better?" It seeks nothing more in itself; it wants and asks a deliverance to come from without — a deliverance indeed. On the other side, it is also remarkable to see how suddenly it can say with joy, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

What is described here is the natural and necessary result of the law, when the conscience is awakened. The sense of unanswered responsibility, and the lack of peace, turns the soul in upon itself. Hence self is so prominent from verse 14, after speaking of general Christian knowledge ("we know"). It is introduced as a sort of parenthesis, to show the wretched condition to which grace applies, and from which it only can deliver, through Jesus Christ. Romans 7:25 is the Christian state, characterised by deliverance. But the fullness of it is developed in the next chapter.

Romans 8:1-39 :

This chapter is divided into three parts, and presents the following subjects:

1st, the Spirit considered as life (Romans 8:1-15);

2nd, the Spirit seen personally dwelling in the Christian — God in us (Romans 8:16-27); and

3rd, God for us (Romans 8:28-39).

Romans 8:1. "There is therefore" * The beginning of the chapter is a consequence of all that has been proved in Romans 5:1-21; Romans 6:1-23; Romans 7:1-25. Deliverance in Christ (Romans 5:1-21) is not touched by the flesh (Romans 6:1-23) nor by the law (Romans 7:1-25). As to these different points, all is ordered in the way of deliverance. Observe, too, that the three first verses of our chapter answer to the three preceding chapters — first to chap. 5, second to chap. 6, and third to chap. 7. The great point here is the justification of life — our new position in Christ outside the judgement of God, which has, as it were, spent itself for us in the blood and cross. Condemnation fell on Christ crucified; but now He is risen, God being glorified in the way in which He suffered and atoned for our sins, and not a debt of ours unpaid.

{*It is well known that the latter clause of the verse in the common text should disappear. It really belongs to ver. 4, where it is rightly read.}

Romans 8:2. As Christ now stands, all wrath past, in the full favour of God, such is the position of the Christian before God; "for the law of the Spirit of life has set me free from the law of sin and death." It is not a question of experience, but the fruit of what God has wrought in Christ and given to us in the new life wherewith we are quickened.

Romans 8:3-4. "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God having sent his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin (i.e., as a sacrifice for sin), has condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to flesh but according to Spirit." The Greek phrase, "for sin," is an expression derived from the Septuagint (Leviticus 6:1-30, Numbers 8:1-26, etc. Comp. also Hebrews 10:6).

The grand thing here is not merely the forgiveness of sinful acts, but the deliverance which God has wrought for the believer in respect of the sin which is in his nature. God has, in Christ, executed sentence upon this root of sin; so that this sin has no title whatever against us; nay, it exists no more for the conscience between the soul and God, however we have to watch, and judge, and fight against it. Thus the Christian life is united inseparably with deliverance from condemnation by grace, and this in virtue of the resurrection of Christ. The law could only condemn the sinner: God, acting in grace, has condemned the sin, and delivered the sinner. The practical result for him is that, being freed, he walks in love, and that is the fulfilling of the law. Holiness is produced by the Spirit in the ways; for it is the Spirit; not the law, which characterises the Christian and gives him power. Romans 8:4, then, is a transition from the position in which grace has set us before God to the practical life in which this grace places and conducts the Christian. While they are distinct, absolute righteousness and practical righteousness cannot be severed. The first comes to us from Christ dead on the cross; the second from Christ living in us.

Romans 8:5 indicates the moral categories — not the duty merely, but the tendency and sure action of the nature whether in those according to the flesh, or in those according to the Spirit.

Romans 8:6 gives the respective results — death, and life, and peace: as Romans 8:7 presents the deep, moral reason — the mind of the flesh is enmity against God, and hence necessarily rebellious when tested by His law. The conclusion, Romans 8:9, is clear: those that are in flesh (i.e., natural men) cannot please God. The law could only regulate their responsibility and condemn their failure, instead of delivering them.

Romans 8:9 puts us, Christians as such, entirely outside the first Adam. We belong no more to that existence. The principle of our relations with God is not the flesh but the Spirit. If God's Spirit dwell in us, we are not in flesh but in Spirit, though the flesh is still in us. Thus is a new life given, a new man formed. The man has the Spirit of Christ: if not, he is none of His. Whatever be the sovereign grace of God, there is in Christianity a practical realisation through the Spirit of Christ. We "are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

Romans 8:10. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin." The body can only produce sin. Now, on account of Christ, the Christian accounts it as dead. If it act in its living will, there is nothing but sin. The body is only an instrument of righteousness so far as it is dead. But the Spirit is life because of righteousness. By the fact that Christ is in us, the Spirit is our life. He produces only righteousness.

Romans 8:11. The resurrection of the saints falls under a spiritual principle which distinguishes it entirely from the resurrection of the rest of men. Three things may be remarked in these verses relating to the Spirit.

(1) He is called "the Spirit of God" abiding in us, so that we are not in the flesh. It is the Holy Spirit in opposition to the old man.

(2) The Spirit of Christ as the formal character of the life morally. It is the Spirit, as the formative agent of the new man, or the perfect life of Christ in man. And

(3) He is the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead; not only the opposition to the flesh of man, — not only effects in man; but a state perfect and definitive in resurrection. In this way we are

finally delivered from this body of death, and get the full answer to the question of Romans 7:24, "Who shall deliver me?" The very body is to be set free by the power of God acting as He did in Christ's resurrection by the Spirit.

Romans 8:12-13. Whatever be His gifts and favours toward man, God never changes in the first elements of righteousness and holiness. It is extremely important to maintain these great principles in all their force.

Romans 8:14-15. But those led by God's Spirit are sons of God. We have received a spirit of sonship, whereby we cry, Abba Father.

Romans 8:16-26. We are arrived at that part of the subject which considers the Spirit as personally indwelling in the saints. Two things are said of His operations in them. First, inasmuch as He has made us His dwelling, He is the power which introduces us into the knowledge and enjoyment of our privileges. Next, since we, through our bodies, suffer in the midst of a suffering creation, He takes part in our infirmities. He is the power of that which is new, namely of grace and its riches, and He is the consolation of that which is old, namely, the consolation of our souls in the midst of a state of things resulting from the fall.

Romans 8:16. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." This passage, which, in experience leaves no difficulty, presents one when it is a question of saying what it means. If I separate from my spirit the witness of the Spirit of God, I leave no witness at all. If I receive the witness of the Spirit, then I have two; I have the certainty in my own spirit that I am a child of God, and I have besides the witness of that Spirit which works in us as the Spirit of adoption. It is the Spirit of God in us who gives to our spirit the strength to say that we are children of God.

Romans 8:17. The relation of child of God, formed in our hearts by the Spirit of adoption, having been named, the privileges which belong to children are afterwards brought out. The first of the privileges mentioned is that of our participation in the inheritance of God. We are "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." But the saints, before they receive the inheritance, have to tread a road which is sown with sorrows. Sufferings mark their path towards the glory which is to come. Suffering for Christ is not exactly the subject here; it is suffering with Christ. A spiritual man cannot do other than suffer with Christ, because he will feel things as Christ felt them.

Romans 8:19-21. We are brought into liberty; this is the subject of the chapter. But creation has nothing to do with the liberty of the grace which we enjoy. In order that it may be delivered, glory must come. Then the creation, brought into captivity through the sin of man, will be delivered from the bondage of corruption. Meanwhile it groans and travails. The Christian is the channel through which these groans ascend to God. The Lord Himself, when upon earth, knew what were these groans. He groaned at the tomb of Lazarus and was heard.

Romans 8:22. There is something unutterable in the condition of the Christian. On the one hand he is connected with the dust; on the other he bears within him the divine nature. He can thus, in a practical manner, express before God all the sufferings of this creation.

Romans 8:26. This is a wonderful experience of the child of God, in which meet, at the same time, our heart, the new life, and the Holy Ghost. In the midst of the confusion of visible things, our

hearts, under the impression received from them, and in the consciousness of the good which is in God, send forth groans. But God gathers up these groans, for they are an intercession which is pleasing to Him. They come from the Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts quickened by grace. And the vessel into which the Holy Ghost puts so excellent a thing is, nevertheless, a human heart.

Romans 8:27. "He maketh intercession for the saints according to God" — not in a selfish manner, which would lead one only to think of oneself, but associating us with the groans of creation.

Romans 8:28. So far we have seen in this chapter the work of God in us. We pass now to another point; the work of God for us.

Romans 8:29. He has predestinated them "to be conformed to the image of his Son." This counsel is not at all dependence upon a foresight by which God would know that we should succeed in becoming conformed to Christ. It is a purpose which was reserved in God — a purpose which He has had of rendering us conformed to the image of His Son. It is very sweet to see our happiness thus flowing from the divine will.

Romans 8:30. "Whom he called, them he also justified; whom he justified, them he also glorified." All these blessings belong to the work of God for us — to His acts accomplished outside us, according to His determinate counsel. In this list, sanctification is not mentioned. It is not said, as in 1 Corinthians 6:2, "washed, sanctified, justified." We see by this verse of the epistle to the Corinthians, that sanctification takes its place before justification. As soon as truth has reached us, the first effect that it produces is to set us apart; an operation which is accomplished by the action of the word upon us, by regeneration, etc. Thus set apart by divine action, we are sanctified; after that, God justifies us. Three facts are to be remarked in sanctification — we are sanctified by God the Father, sanctified through the blood of Christ, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost. The Father, in the thoughts of His sovereign grace, has determined this condition for us; the blood has redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit forms us in holiness. Practical sanctification must be added; the stone taken from the quarry is afterwards fashioned for taking its place in the building.

Romans 8:31-32. In these words, the Holy Spirit brings out the full extent of the liberality and the free giving of God. He draws consequences from this liberality, and he concludes by the certainty of grace, and of the security of the saints. "God is for us." He has shown it by giving His Son, and delivering Him up to death for us all. When man reasons upon sacred things, he arrives at different conclusions. Making himself the starting point, he judges of God by himself, and finds in result uncertainty. Here there is nothing vague; faith is surrounded with certainties.

Romans 8:33-38. The Holy Ghost is still drawing consequences from the perfect grace of God. Taking in the circumstances of the saints, their weakness, etc., and measuring the extent of the difficulties that they may meet with in this world, he concludes once more with their perfect security. No accusation against them is possible: they are the elect of God; nor any condemnation, for it is God Himself who has justified them. And as to the difficulties which may arise on their way, there are none which are not known to Christ, and subordinate to the power of that Saviour who loved these chosen ones and gave Himself for them.

Romans 8:33. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Paul here puts forth a challenge, as we see the Lord giving one to Satan in favour of Joshua (Zechariah 3:1-10). "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" The answer is in the question, "who will dare to accuse these

persons before God? It is God who justifies" — God who has elected them.

Romans 8:33-34. Read, punctuating as follows, — "It is God who justifies; who is he that condemns?" Justification and condemnation are put in contrast.

Romans 8:35-37. These three verses are delicious. In the midst of so many sorrows, calculated to separate us from the love of Christ, it is precisely there that we meet with this faithful Saviour. In tribulation He has passed through it, He is with us in it, etc.

Romans 8:38-39. Paul, in terminating this unfolding of the Christian condition, names the strongest things which could dare to rise up against the saints, and only sees in them powerless obstacles in presence of the love that God has shown us in Jesus Christ. This eighth chapter, as it has been expressed, sets out by saying "no condemnation," and ends by adding "no separation."

(3) Romans 9:1-33.

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We now approach another subject. In Romans 9:1-33; Romans 10:1-21; Romans 11:1-36 Paul is reconciling the special promises given to Abraham with the levelling which the gospel makes of Jew and Gentile, by placing them on equal conditions, whether before judgement or before grace.

Romans 9:1-33. They are not all Israel who are of Israel. There is an election which admits Gentiles among the children of promises. The apostle reasons in this way: You, Jews, allow that it is from Abraham you hold the promises. Well, if simple descent from Abraham conferred a right to the promises, you must take in along with you Ishmael and Esau, with their races; for they also were descended from Abraham. Notwithstanding, they do not belong to the congregation of the Lord. And wherefore? Because God chose Isaac and Jacob, and did not take up Ishmael and Esau. There is then an election which distinguishes between the children of the promise and the children of the flesh. You must needs again allow the sovereignty of God, for without it all is over with you since Sinai, where you broke the covenant of the Lord. If you have subsisted since that time, if till this day there yet remains a resource for you, it is in virtue of the sovereign grace God exercises as and where He pleases. Thus, then, there is no unrighteousness with God. You have no room to complain, if He acts toward the Gentiles in the same sovereign mercy which He has shown to you.

Romans 9:1-3. Paul begins by protesting solemnly his affection for Israel, and deep concern for their blessing. Their state was to him a source of great grief and continual pain. Far from despising his nation or returning their dislike and rancour against him he loved them as much as Moses ever did. If Moses had pleaded in his anguish, "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written," Paul was not at all behind in his love. "I could wish (or I did wish) that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Of course, it is not a calm settled desire, but the impassioned feeling of his heart, expressing in all its strength his intense interest in Israel. There is no difficulty in Paul's words if we compare them with the similar outburst of Moses' heart.

Romans 9:4-5. Hence, too, he hastens to recognise the privileges of Israel, before striking what he knew would be a great blow. "Who are Israelites, whose is the sonship, and the glory, and the covenants, and the law-giving and the service, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as to flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen." His controversy, therefore, was not with their privileges, but rather with Israel, because they were not rated highly enough. He owns those privileges as theirs, and appreciates them far more than the Jews did.

Romans 9:6-13. Next he denies that the word of God has failed, and pronounces the declaration in their face that not at all Israel are Israel; God in His sovereignty decides, by election, who are to inherit the promise. Nor was there any need of going beyond the family of the fathers to demonstrate this truth; for undeniably not all the seed of Abraham himself were called, but "in Isaac shall a seed be called to thee." In vain, then, did the Jews found their exclusive rights upon their descent from him to whom the promises were made. Ishmael was Abraham's seed no less than Isaac, and yet undeniably God chose Isaac, not Ishmael, for the line of special favour. Thus, it is not the children of the flesh that are the children of God, but the children of the promise are reckoned as seed. "For this word is [a matter] of promise. At this appointed time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." This was confirmed in the next generation; for though the children sprang from the same father and mother, — yea, before they were born, or had done anything, good or evil, (that God's purpose according to election might abide) it was said to Rebecca, The greater [elder] shall serve the less [younger]. And so ran the prophetic testimony of Malachi at the close, I loved Jacob and hated Esau. What could be more conclusive than this reasoning? For of all the Gentiles, none were more odious in the eyes of Jews than these very races, the Arabs and the Edomites. Yet clearly, if mere descent were to decide, they sprang from Abraham and Isaac as certainly as Israel. They must fall back, therefore, on the principle of God's sovereign choice.

Romans 9:14-18. Man, stumbled by the doctrine of election, objects and says that it involves unrighteousness with God. Far be the thought, says the apostle; for if God deals in the way of righteousness, man, being sinful, falls under judgement, and all are lost. But it is not so. God acts as He will; He shows mercy or judgement, as it pleases Him; and so it should be and is best, for His will is the highest wisdom and goodness. Nor has a single soul right to complain, for those on whom this sovereign will is exercised are all covered with sin. Two examples are therein given in illustration; one of mercy towards the people when guilty and deserving death, the other of judgement on their enemy.

Now the circumstances in which God announced His sovereignty add amazing force to all this. For when was it that He said to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion?" It was when, on grounds of bare righteousness, Israel ought to have been cut off. God then withdrew, as it were, within His sovereignty, in order to spare Israel, whom righteousness must have condemned around their golden idol. How blessed then

for Israel that it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs; but of God that shows mercy! Romans 9:16 is an abstract enunciation of this principle, that the question is not of man's desires or efforts, but of God's will. Besides, when we come to the facts of the case, we find that man neither wishes nor seeks for mercy, It is too late, then, for man to talk of rights. The truth is that he himself is all wrong, and that the foundation of righteousness is that God should have His rights. As we have

seen, and we may bless Him for it; He uses His rights in maintaining His prerogative of mercy in behalf of the people who had utterly destroyed themselves! (Cp. Exodus 33:19 with the preceding history.)

Thus, too, we find it in the history of every day. When men are self-righteous, they are ready to dispute at every step with God's sovereignty: when really broken down under a sense of sin, they are right glad to hear that God's mercy is sovereign enough to show them mercy: when saved and at peace themselves, they can rejoice at that mercy flowing out towards any.

On the side of judgement, the apostle cites the instance of Pharaoh. For the scripture says to Pharaoh, For this very thing have I raised thee up, that I might show in thee my power, and that my name might be declared in all the earth. Nor, in fact, could any dealing be more just; for Pharaoh had derided and denied the right of God over His own people. He was a proud and rebellious man against God, who righteously made an example of him. Hardening came on him judicially, and in the end utter ruin. Therefore has He mercy on whom He will, and whom He will He hardens. On a large scale, it was so with Israel, (Isaiah 6:1-13) and it will be so with Christendom. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-17) Man is wicked and rejects God, who thereon — according to His sovereign wisdom — can and does give men up to hardness. Though election belongs to the eternal will of God, it is occupied with man under sin, since it settles for him the question of mercy or judgement. It is not the less sovereign for that. If God were to show His glory in the place where we are, for instance, and were suddenly to take to Him one or two persons, that act would be as sovereign as if He had decreed it thousands of years before. Observe, too, that while God hardens whom He will, He does not render wicked; but He may take a wicked man to make an example of His justice in his case. Had God created man evil, there would not have been room for a fall, and in that case man might have fairly complained.

Romans 9:19-29. But man does complain, and a second objection is: Since the sovereign God decides everything, why does He any longer find fault? For who has resisted His purpose? And what I am, I am: I can only be what He pleases. Nay, but thou, man, says the apostle, who art thou that answerest again to God? Does the creature of the dust dare to judge the Creator? God does what He will, and renders account of His acts to none. Thus man complains of God's righteousness when it touches himself, as he dislikes the grace which justifies others freely and absolutely. And to this indeed the question will be found to come: Is God to judge man? or is man to judge God? In the entire answer there are three propositions. First, as we have seen, the apostle maintains, in all its strength, the right of the sovereign God — the authority that He has to do just as He will with His creatures. Has not the potter power over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honour and another for dishonour? Next, he comes to the facts, and sets before us, that God, even when minded to show his wrath and make His power known, endured with much long-suffering vessels of wrath fitted for destruction — vessels which He did not fit, but had long endured. Thirdly, there is the revelation that He had afore prepared for glory vessels of mercy. The vessels of wrath were fitted by themselves — by their sins — for wrath; but the vessels of mercy were prepared of God, for in truth no man is prepared of himself for glory: grace alone effects His work in favour of the elect. The passage is written, if we may so say, carefully, by the Spirit, that we should not impute the fitting of the wicked to God. His title to act sovereignly is asserted as a general and abstract truth in Romans 9:21. But when we come to the facts as they are, Paul declares that it is not by God's act that they are fitted to destruction. On the

other hand, it is expressly said that God endured vessels of wrath, (Romans 9:22) and that he prepared vessels of mercy. Such are the cases supposed. Who or what, then, prepared those vessels of wrath? Sin, without doubt. Nevertheless, the word on this point preserves silence. What profound revelations result from the existence of sin — from God's way for us and for His own glory in respect of it! God alone suffices to Himself, and His power is necessary to the maintenance of everything, as it was needed to create all. The creature can only fall, if it be not sustained. The moment it seeks an independent existence it is fallen, and that even before committing a positive act of sin.

It is God's sovereignty, then, which is here established, and this necessarily dissipates the exclusive claim of the Jews to the promises. The call of God was established in Isaac, else they must share all with their most detested neighbours and enemies! The pure compassion of God was proved to be the only hope of Israel, for they had set up the golden calf! Thus, all pretence for taking the promises as a right in virtue of descent from Abraham or of obeying the law was clean gone. The sovereignty of God was the sole resource that remained. But if God was sovereign, a Jew had no more right than a Gentile: it was a question henceforth of God's will and God's word. Accordingly He calls not only from amongst Jews but from amongst Gentiles, as is shown in Hosea 1:1-11; Hosea 2:1-23.* Nay, more: Esaias, (Romans 9:27-29,) far from strengthening the Jews pretension, declares too plainly that; numerous as the sons of Israel might be, the remnant should be saved — not the mass; even as the same prophet had said before, that had not the Lord left them a seed, they had been as Sodom and Gomorrhah. In a word, judgement on Israel was the burden of the testimony in their own prophets, as well as the disclosures of mercy to the Gentiles.

{*To confirm what is said in Romans 9:24, Paul cites two passages of Hosea, of which the one (Hosea 2:23) applies to the Jews, and the other (Hosea 1:10), applies to the Gentile. Peter, who only addresses Jews, confines himself to citing the former passage. (1 Peter 2:10.) Thus, the prophets predicted that Israel, as a people, should not enjoy the promises during the time which is now going on.}

Thus Paul puts the Gentiles under the benefit of the principle of sovereign election — the very same principle which opened the door for Israel's blessing, as their past history showed. Thus had God spared the Jew; thus He was now calling the Gentile. It is well to remark that this election is not a national election, as men often say; for, on the contrary, God uses His sovereignty to draw individuals out from the nation, — "us whom he has also called, not only from among Jews, but also from among Gentiles." Indeed, the greater part of the reasoning of the chapter is precisely against the national pretension of the Jews.

Romans 9:30-33. These last citations from Isaiah pave the way for the grand subject in Romans 11:1-36 — for the temporary setting aside of Israel. They have shown that if all the people were not cut off, what remained of them was to be but a little remnant. In the closing verses we have the principle under which Israel are seen cut off, and Gentiles let in. "What then shall we say? that Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness, have attained righteousness, righteousness which is by [or from] faith. But Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, has not attained to a law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because [it was] not from faith but from works of law. For they stumbled at the stumbling-stone," etc. Thus their cutting off is not a fact which merely flows from the scripture, but which results from the conduct of Israel, and that not only from their failure in

accomplishing the law, which they undertook to do under the fearful sanctions of Sinai, but far more because they rejected their own Messiah, forfeiting thus their title to the promises. They stumbled at the stumbling-stone.

(4) Romans 10:1-21.

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Romans 9:1-33 has brought before us the sovereign counsels of God towards Israel; chapter 10 occupies us with His ways in respect of the people during the present period.

Romans 10:1. We may remark, first of all, that the knowledge of the irrevocable counsels of God about Israel had not at all extinguished the affection of Paul for his nation, nor taken away from his heart every hope of salvation for his Israelitish brethren. The thought which delighted his heart and which drew out his affections in supplication to God was their salvation. He says "for them," (not for Israel, as in the vulgar text). Occupied as he is with Israel, its insertion would have been needless: its omission is beautiful, for it implies how they and their salvation — not their judgement, much as Israel might deserve it — were before his mind.

Romans 10:2-3. Nor does he fail to bear them witness that they have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about seeking to establish their own righteousness have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Their zeal, which had for its object the righteousness of man according to the law, was the obstacle which hindered their knowing the righteousness of God and submitting to it. When God presented His righteousness, offering it to Israel in their own Messiah, they rejected Him. They failed in their own righteousness and what was worse, they would not submit to God's.

Romans 10:4. The righteousness of God is in Christ — Christ the end of law for righteousness to every believer. This verse gives the subject round which turn all the developments of the chapter. Christ is the object of faith and the end of law. For though Christ was in view in the law, these words mean rather that He was its accomplishment, so that law ends in Him. He closes the ancient order of things. The whole principle of the first Adam, namely, the principle of the responsibility of man before the righteousness of God, dies in Christ. But in Him also everything recommences, on a new footing. Christ is Himself God's righteousness — righteousness which becomes the portion of the believer, and which sets him before God in a position of acceptance. It is in Jesus Christ that we pass from the first state to the second, from the responsibility that has failed to real righteousness.

Romans 10:5-13. The righteousness of faith is established in the scriptures of the Old Testament. Several citations follow.

Romans 10:6-8. He quotes a portion of Deuteronomy, which has this peculiarity, that it is addressed to Israel by Moses to serve as a resource when all should be lost under the law, when Israel might be in exile, far from the altars of the Lord, suffering the consequence of their transgressions. We know that for a Jew righteousness consisted in the observance of the law, in all its precepts and all its ordinances — ordinances which were bound up with the establishment of

Israel in the land of Canaan, and which could not be observed save in the country where God had set up His altar. But Israel for their rebellions, and under the chastisement of the Lord, were to be carried away. Then there was no more altar, and, of course, no more possibility of attaining righteousness by means of law. "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee." (Deuteronomy 30:1.) Thus when all hopes of legal righteousness are overturned and gone, a new principle comes in. The passage used by the apostle begins at verse 11, "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." (Deuteronomy 30:11-14.)

If, in the discourse of Moses, you remark these words and those which precede them, you will see that before expressing what belongs to the righteousness of faith, Moses has done with the law as a thing revealed. What the law could produce, alas! has been produced: Israel have shown themselves transgressors, and the wrath of the Lord weighs down upon them for their transgressions. It is all over. They are under chastisement. There is nothing more to expect on the side of the law. "The Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land." (Deuteronomy 29:28.) But is there an end without hope of return? Ah, says Moses, "the secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." (Deuteronomy 29:29). The things revealed were their rules of action and are summed up in this: "Obey, and you shall abide in the land; if not, you shall be driven out." They did not obey all the words of the law and were rooted out. But what are those secret things? Grace which remained with God for the time in which Israel should find themselves under chastisement. This subject is the theme of the prophets.

Let Israel be ever so far off, the testimony of God was addressed to them: they might turn to Him in spirit. But this was not legal righteousness: it was by faith they might have relations with God. They had not practised the things commanded in the law; they were under punishment. But the righteousness of faith speaks thus to any one who asks where he must go to recover what is lost, to return to God: "Say not in thine heart," etc. Paul interprets this movement of the Israelite's heart, or rather he answers it according to God. To ascend to heaven, to descend into the abyss, would be to bring Christ down, or to bring Him again from the dead. Taken thus, spiritually, Christ is the aim of the law. There was need of going nowhere. The word had come from God to them. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth; and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness: and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:8-10.)

Two other quotations follow: verse 11, Isaiah 28:16, and verse 13, Joel 2:32. If none that believe on Him shall be ashamed, the Gentile believer need not be any more than the Jew. Therefore, adds the apostle, "there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be

saved." If all were on one level of sin, grace equally levels all difference between Jew and Gentile. (Cp. Romans 3:1-31)

Thus it is clear that the words "in thy mouth and in thine heart" (Romans 10:8-9, 10), cited from Deuteronomy 30:1-20 are in contrast with the merely literal accomplishment of the law. This is supposed to be impossible, for Israel is viewed as scattered and in captivity, far away from their land and the place which the Lord their God chose to set His name in. There only could the law in strictness apply; but the gracious word of his God might be in the heart and mouth of an Israelite. It was not necessary, then, to go to Jerusalem across the sea, any more than to go up to heaven. The word was near them, "in thy mouth and in thy heart;" that is, adds the apostle, the word not of law, but of faith, which we preach; that, if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, [or Jesus as Lord,] and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart is belief to righteousness and with the mouth is confession to salvation. Hence even the law indicated that the faith of the heart is the sole resource of the Jew when all was ruined — the sole means of drawing near to God at any time, for man is a sinner. And to this agree the words of the prophets; Isaiah, on the one hand, declaring that none who believed on Him should be ashamed, and Joel, on the other, affirming that every one whatsoever that should call on His name should be saved. Negatively and positively, then, it was manifest from the law and the prophets, not to speak of the gospel, that in this respect there is no difference between Jew and Greek: if there is none as to their sin, neither is there in the Lord's grace, for the same Lord of all is rich toward all that call upon Him.

Romans 10:14-21. Here the apostle, pursuing the thread of the same passage of Joel (Joel 2:32), justifies his own ministry, and what God was doing thereby among the Gentiles. The word of faith was preached to them. God, by means of preaching, is making them acquainted with the name of the Lord, who must be called on in order that they should be saved. "How then shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that announce glad tidings of peace, of them that announce glad tidings of good things!"

Evangelisation characterises the action of God in Christianity. It is a part of His scheme of grace, the activity of His love in seeking as well as saving the lost, be they who and where they may. Evangelisation, I say, and not the Church; for the confusion of the two ideas is, at bottom, popery. Ministry is the action of God in the world, and is characteristic of Christianity (as priesthood on earth was of Judaism); it is a testimony of goodness and grace, addressed from God to man. It is the Lord who sends, the Lord who teaches by His servants. The Church does not teach, but is taught. Teaching is a care which the Lord confides to special members of His body, for the good of all.

This announcement of glad tidings was clearly not the law: for this was a report of what the Lord had done — a report to be believed by man, not works to be done by him. Their own prophet, Isaiah, spoke of it as a future blessing; why, then, should the Jews be so incredulous? But even this incredulity was only an accomplishment of the same prophet's words, and that too the incredulity of Israel. "They have not all obeyed the glad tidings, for Esaias says, Lord, who has believed our report? So then faith is by a report, and the report by the word of God. But I say, have

they not heard? Yea, verily, their voice has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the bounds of the world." Israel is thereby shown to be inexcusable. Not only had they heard, but all the habitable world — Gentiles as well as Jews — had had the testimony of God's Son published to them. Thus Psalms 19:1-14 from which he quotes, is a witness of the universality of God's message. It was not like the law given to a particular people, but like the light of the sun, "whose going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit to the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." But this seems rather to be hinted than plainly brought out. The next verses (Romans 10:19-21) are express. "But I say, has not Israel known? First, Moses says, I will provoke you to jealousy through that which is no nation, and through a senseless nation I will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and says, I was found by those who sought me not; I was made manifest to those who asked not after me. But to Israel he says, All the day long I have stretched out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people." That is, Israel should have known that God would receive the Gentiles. Moses was the first to say so, and Isaiah declares it with great boldness. Isaiah had predicted outright that the Gentiles were to find God, and what was still more, that Israel would oppose and be rebellious against God. It was indeed no other than the Lord Jesus had intimated in the parable of the king and his servants, (Matthew 18:1-35.) no other than the Holy Ghost develops in word and deed throughout the history in the Acts. And there it was in their own prophet 700 years before.

(5) Romans 11:1-36.

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The subject of the chapter is this — God has not re jected His people. The apostle gives three proofs that Israel is not finally rejected of God.

1. There is, as in the time of Elijah, a remnant. The rejection which affects Israel does not strike in an absolute way the totality of the people. (Romans 11:1-10.)
2. This re jection is not definitive. God, in putting His people aside for a time, calls the Gentiles to provoke His people to jealousy. Israel is not therefore cast off, if there remains for them the opportunity of returning to God, even in a case of being animated by a feel ing of jealousy towards the Gentiles. The call of the Gentiles should arouse Israel, instead of being a proof that God had done with them. (Romans 11:11-24)
3. The time will come when all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. (Romans 11:25-32.) The chapter, with the exception of the last four verses of doxology, is summed up in these three points. There are details to consider, above all in that which concerns the olive tree of the promises mentioned in this subject, and on which we may gather up the following remarks:—

The olive-tree represents the line of promise and testimony, ("by nature" Israel, the posterity of promise which issued from Abraham.) That is shown by the fact that the Jews, as well those who abide as those who were cut off for their unbelief, are its "natural branches," and that it is added that when the Jews shall cease to be disobedient, they shall be anew grafted into "their own olive-tree." Israel, according to nature, is Israel viewed as a nation descended from Abraham, the

posterity issued from him according to the flesh. That point offers no difficulty. Thus, to take Israel at the root, it must be taken in Abraham, for before him it was not a question of Israel. It was in the person of the patriarch that this nation commenced. The root of the promises, then, is Abraham; and the fatness, namely the sap which springs from the root and which circulates in the tree, answers consequently to the promises which God deposited as it were in Abraham. Thus viewed, he is the personification of the three principles — election, calling, and promise.

The olive-tree is upon the earth. God who has once planted it, neither cuts nor roots it up; He could not annul His promises. According as He finds it good, He removes some branches. He grafts in others in their place; but as to the olive-tree, He leaves it — yea more, He maintains it.

It came to pass that at a certain moment God considered the state of this tree, and decided to remove from it the dry branches, i.e., the unbelieving Jews, and to graft in their stead the believing Gentiles. This operation has changed for a time the aspect of the olive-tree, without causing nevertheless that the tree should cease to be the same stock. In this respect it is with the olive-tree as with a bank, whose firm changes in the course of years whilst the capital abides the same. The persons who have their fortune there deliver drafts upon this bank; and though, in course of time, their drafts may have borne different addresses, the fact is, notwithstanding, that the clerks have always been at the same bank to cash them.

The place which the Jews and the Gentiles occupy on the olive-tree has not been given to the one and the other in virtue of the same principle. The first, as being the Israelitish race, Abraham's posterity, are found there by birth; they are there according to nature; this tree is their own olive-tree. But the Gentiles, grafted on this tree by the blessing of the gospel, enter in by virtue of a new principle, that of faith. An example of it is seen in Cornelius. With regard to this, it may also be remarked that Christianity, as grafted upon the olive-tree of the promises, succeeds Judaism. The national Churches, such as established Protestantism, Popery, and the Greek Church, are right as to this. But it must be added that Christianity, after having been set up by God, has been over-run, later on, by the number of professors, and is become Christendom such as is seen at this day. The doom of this grafting in of the Gentiles, and therefore, the doom of the professing masses, is found thus decided; for the Gentiles, in receiving a place on the olive-tree, were put under this condition; "toward thee, goodness, [i.e. of God,] if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."

If it be asked whether the olive-tree is not the Church, the answer is, No. The Church is the creation of one new man, (Ephesians 2:1-22,) the formation of one new body, which, far from succeeding to Abraham and to Israel here below, has only its existence for heaven. The olive-tree leaves the Jews and the Gentiles distinct, (Romans 11:1-36.) whilst the Church takes out of the one and the other, and unites them in, one single body. (Ephesians 2:1-22.) It may well be that the individuals composing the Church, united to Christ in heaven, are also branches of the olive-tree on the earth — that they have these two relations, but the olive-tree never could be the Church. How should the Jews, at the time of the Saviour, Caiaphas, Pharisees, etc., be of the Church? Finally, in the consideration of what is to come, remark once more that if a portion of Israel has been cut off the olive-tree, this chastisement will have an end. The moment will come when the Jews, returned from their unbelief, shall be grafted in again. Then Israel, as a people, shall be reinstated in the blessing of the promises: "the Deliverer shall come to Sion, and shall turn away

ungodliness from Jacob." This return of Israel to God is the subject of the close of the chapter. The whole is a blessed picture of the faithfulness of God and His ways towards Israel. Originally the tree was Jewish, it is now Gentile, but finally it will be Jewish again.

Romans 11:1-10. Far be the thought, then, that God had cast away His people, Israel. For, as the apostle urges, himself also was one of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. It was a pledge of more, and a proof that God had not cast away His people as a whole, not about the elect remnant, but that remnant showed that God did not finally discard Israel. This leads the apostle to refer to the case of Elijah. "Know you not what the scripture says in [the history of] Elias? How he pleads to God against Israel, saying," etc. But what says the divine answer to him?" I have left to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal. " Thus, then, at the present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace; "And if by grace, no longer of works, since [if it were,] grace is no more grace." That is, the apostle illustrates the remnant in his day by a reference to Elijah's day when he, the most energetic of faithful men in Israel, did not know of one but himself that owned Jehovah. But it was want of faith. God knew 7000, whose existence proved God's love and faithful care. If Elijah pleaded against Israel, it only drew out God for them, and the disclosure of a complete though hidden remnant, whom the prophet had failed to discern. There was a remnant still in the apostle's day. God showed thereby that He had not done with Israel. But if sovereign grace thus dwelt with an election from Israel, the mass were but lying under the tremendous maledictions which he next proceeds to quote from their own prophets. (Romans 11:7-10.) The remnant were blessed, the rest were blinded, just as Moses, David, and Isaiah, had predicted. They might talk of their works, but they had eyes not to see and ears not to hear until this day. Their own scriptures were clear enough that it should be so — clear as to a little godly remnant — clear as to an ensnared and hardened mass in Israel.

Romans 11:11-24. Had Israel then stumbled that they might fall? Far be the thought; but by their slip, salvation [is come] to the Gentiles to provoke them to jealousy. God had merciful thoughts in store for Israel. He judged their sin, took advantage of it to call the Gentiles, but this not as if He had abandoned the Jews for ever as His people, but rather to stir them up to holy emulation. Israel had slipped, not finally fallen. And if their slip [be] the world's wealth, and their loss the Gentiles' wealth, how much more their fullness? He is speaking to the Gentiles, but it is about Israel, whose temporary slip gave occasion to the revelation of God's grace to Gentiles, and whose future restoration in full would be life from the dead to the world. If their disgrace brought blessing to the Gentile, what would not be the fruit of their honour when grace gives it to them?

It will be observed that Paul is here tracing the question of responsibility on earth, and reconciling it with the sure and triumphant faithfulness of God at the end. The subject is neither the salvation of the soul, nor the peculiar calling of the Church, the body of Christ. It is the line of promise here below, and God's wise and holy ways as to it on a large scale. It need hardly be said that he is not proving that God was saving Israelites individually, for that needed no proof; but as he had used the fact of a Jewish elect remnant to show that God had not wholly cast off Israel, but ever hung over them, as an earnest of future mercy to them as a nation, so he interprets the call of the Gentiles as done meanwhile to provoke Israel to jealousy, not to give them up altogether.

It is astonishing how persons who believe in the eternal life of the believer can apply the olive-tree, of which we next hear (Romans 11:16-24), to salvation or the Church. If it did bear such a

meaning, it would follow that branches, not of the wild olive, but natural branches — in that case meaning members of Christ could be broken off. Take these branches as the Jews, the natural heirs of the promise to Abraham, and all is plain. They have been broken off in part. They trusted to their works and their own goodness; they have slipped from their place as God's witnesses. The Gentiles meanwhile enjoy the light and testimony of God. They have replaced the incredulous Jews in this respect.

They are grafted into the olive-tree. The unbelieving Jews were in the olive-tree: who will say that they were ever in the Church? Till the death of Christ, Israel, as a whole, composed the olive tree. By nature the Jews were branches in this, the old stock of promise from Abraham downwards. They were born the natural heirs. All this disappears in the Church, where there is neither Jew nor Gentile: everything there is above nature, and the Jew is no more than a Gentile in that new man, where of twain God makes one. And as Israel nationally never did form the Church or body of Christ, so it never will; whereas all Israel shall be saved and be grafted once more into their own olive-tree. These considerations suffice to show that the Church and the olive-tree are two very different things.

But if the Gentile, wild olive as he was, was grafted into the tree of earthly testimony, let him not boast over the branches: the Gentile does not bear the root, but the root him. And let him remember that through unbelief they were broken off, and that the Gentile, having no natural right, stands by faith. If God spared not the natural branches, it might be He will not spare the Gentile! Nay, it is certain that, if the Gentile abide not in goodness, excision will be his lot, as it was of the Jewish branches who had been unfaithful before him. And God, who cut out the Gentile from the naturally wild olive and grafted him, contrary to nature, into the good olive, how much more will He graft the branches that are according to nature into their own olive? Israel, then, was not cast off.

Romans 11:25-32. But there is another reason more express: blindness in part is happened to Israel, but this is until the fullness of the Gentiles shall have come in; and so all Israel, instead of being rejected, shall be saved. It is the future national restoration and salvation of Israel. They shall be restored to their own olive, to their place in the line of God's testimony and promises on earth: for heavenly hopes do not enter into view here. Instead of being cast off, Israel, as such, are destined to enjoy all that was promised them. The Deliverer shall come out of Sion; and God will take away their sins. Plainly it is the Jews, the literal Jews, who are here meant; for they are distinguished from, and contrasted with, the Gentiles all through the chapter from verse 11, and very clearly in this verse 26. "The fullness of the Gentiles" means the complete number of such Gentiles as believe — all the Gentiles who share in the blessing during Israel's practical obduracy.* Israel are enemies on account of the Gentiles now as regards the gospel, but as regards election, beloved on account of the fathers. This is in no wise applicable to what people call the spiritual Israel, for they are friends as regards the gospel, and beloved of God the Father, not on account of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand Israel after the flesh, and all is simple: they have made good their enmity as regards the Gospel, and God will not fail to prove in due time that they are beloved on the fathers' account. For the gifts and calling of God are not subject to repentance: they are indefeasible. The election mentioned in Romans 11:28 is that of the beloved people Israel. It must not be confounded with the election according to grace, whereby, in the interval of Israel's rejection, the called Jews and Gentiles are taken for heaven. The first is a national election, the second an individual election, which sets us in far superior blessing, since its

object and result are to introduce us into heaven. In fact, the believing Jews, who abode on the olive-tree, share in these two elections.

{*It is plainly a quite distinct thought and phrase from the "times of the Gentiles," in Luke 21:1-38. The latter refers to the allotted period of Gentile supremacy, during which Jerusalem should receive at the Lord's hand for her sins. Both expressions suppose Israel unfaithful; but one alludes rather to the times of Gentile dominion, when the Jewish polity was finally broken; the other to the completion of God's present work of mercy, in visiting the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name.}

How strange that Christians who enjoy and maintain the faithfulness of God as to their own souls, should deny it as to Israel, spite of His call and promises to them. But He will never repent. He is not a man that He should lie, neither the son of man that He should repent. He created, and when His work became corrupt, He destroyed. (Genesis 6:1-22; Genesis 7:1-24.) But if He calls, He never casts off: His counsel is irrevocable. He is sovereign in Romans 9:1-33. He is faithful in Romans 11:1-36. "For as the Gentiles at one time believed not in God, but have now had mercy shown them through their (Israel's) unbelief, so Israel have now not believed in the Gentiles' mercy, in order that they also may have mercy shown them. For God has shut up all together in unbelief in order that He might show mercy to all." Israel shall be reinstated in the blessing of the promises by the same road that the Gentiles have followed to enter into the blessing of the gospel — namely the mercy of God. Through rejecting Christ they lost their title to the promises, and they sealed that loss by opposing and denying the mercy of God which passed on to the Gentiles who received the Christ in heaven, whom the Jews rejected on earth. Thus Israel is stripped of title and stands the object of pure mercy just as much as a Gentile. And thus God will save Israel at the end, not on the ground of their claim but of His mercy.

Romans 11:33-36. "O depth of riches, both of God's wisdom and knowledge! how unsearchable his judgements and untraceable his ways! For who has known the Lord's mind? or who has become his counsellor? or who has first given to him and it shall be rendered to him? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to him be glory for ever. Amen."

(6) Romans 12:1-21; Romans 13:1-14.

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Romans 12:1. The Apostle now comes to the moral consequences of his doctrine. The compassions of God, manifested in the acts of His grace toward us, and developed in the doctrine of this epistle, are the motive given to the Christian to urge him to obedience and personal devotedness to God. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the compassions of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God — your intelligent service." The devotedness of the Christian is an offering which he renders to God of his life and all his movements. Therefore is it that the Christian life is here called "worship" or divine "service." The compassions of God are contrasted with the law, a living sacrifice with the sacrifices of dead beasts, and an intelligent service or worship with a ceremonial service which the hands or the body could accomplish. In no way should the Christian be a Jew.

Romans 12:2. Nevertheless, he is not to be a Gentile either. If, on the one hand, he is to be outside the system of religious ceremonies, he is, on the other hand, to be also outside the world. "And be not conformed to this world, (or age), but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Renewed in understanding, he has no more his relationship with the present age, but with the will of God. Under the law, one had, between ceremonies and the world, nothing but the flesh. It is remarkable that in exhorting to intelligent service, the apostle beseeches Christians to present their bodies as a sacrifice to God, and in warning against conformity to this world, he desires not a mere outward separation, but one that answers to the renewing of his mind, and this in order to discerning the will of God. It does not happen habitually that one knows His will all at once. We are exercised by God in order to know it; and in this exercise, formed by Him, we learn that His will is good, acceptable, and perfect. These two first verses furnish the general character of the Christian life, the principles of conduct that apply to every Christian, and to all his walk here below. They are summed up in devotedness and obedience.

Romans 12:3-8. "For I say, through the grace that has been given to me, to every one that is among you, not to have high thoughts, above what he should think; but to think so as to be sober-minded, as God has dealt to each a measure of faith. For just as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office; so we the many are one body in Christ, and severally members of each other. But having gifts different according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, [let us prophesy] according to the proportion of faith; or service, [let us occupy ourselves] in service; or he that teacheth, in teaching; or he that exhorteth, in exhortation: he that giveth, in simplicity; he that leadeth, with earnestness; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness." Here the apostle looks at the Christian life in a narrower circle. To trace in all points the service of the gospel, he now looks at the body of Christ — this body in which each has to display conduct and activity which harmonises with the place he occupies in it. It is the only passage in the epistle where mention is made of the body, the Church, and that in reference to the duties of the members as individuals. The general subject is — man in his individual responsibility before God. But since there is one body, the service of the members should be in the common interest. We cannot have an isolated action, as if we had a tie with none on earth. And in the general interest, the first thing recommended to our attention is sobriety, which teaches one to abide in the measure of that which he has received, not to put one-self forward, etc. Each is exhorted to modest thoughts of himself and his gift, and therefore to confine himself to the kind and the measure of the gift bestowed by God. A humble, faithful use of whatever gift has been given is the object of the apostle's injunction. The gifts found in the members of the body are different, and that again makes the saints mutually dependent, for all the gifts are not in one individual nor for one. Thus, a certain need before our eyes demands perhaps a service for which we are not qualified. What then? We are compelled; if walking in humility and faith, to wait till the Lord sends the ministry which answers to it.

Romans 12:9-21. After having spoken of the particular service of the members, which are joints in the body of Christ, the apostle almost imperceptibly slides into the conduct of the saints in things which belong to the general state of the body. He gives directions and precepts which concern the good collective state, the well-being of the body. He recommends also the sentiments which suit this state. "Let love be unfeigned: abhor evil; cleave to good. In brotherly love, be affectionate

towards each other; in honour, setting the lead to each other; in business, not slothful; in spirit, fervent; serving the Lord; in hope, rejoicing; in tribulation, enduring; in prayer, persevering; relieving the necessities of the saints; pursuing hospitality. Bless those that persecute you; bless and curse not. Rejoice with those that rejoice, and weep with those that weep. Have the same mind towards each other, not minding high things, but consorting with the lowly; be not wise in your own conceit. Repay to none evil for evil. Take forethought of things honourable in the sight of all men. If possible, as far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men; avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place to wrath; for it is written, Vengeance [is] mine; I will requite, saith the Lord. If, therefore, thine enemy should hunger, feed him; if thirsty, give him drink; for, doing this, thou will heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." In Romans 12:19 the wrath of man is meant, and the saint is told to yield, letting it alone and not avenging himself. Vengeance belongs to God. The words in the next verse are a citation of Proverbs 25:21-22. The sense of the Hebrew word rendered "heap," and in other versions "to take, or withdraw," etc., is literally to "take coals from the hearth to gather them." The meaning of these two verses amounts to this: leave thine enemy to the vengeance of God, let God do it. The exhortation to patience under wrongs naturally introduces the relations of the Christian to the authorities of the world.

Romans 13:1-14. The preceding chapter has given instructions which have to do with the conduct of the saints as making part of one and the same body. It has shown what the Christian owes to the internal prosperity of the assembly of the faithful. The chapter we are entering on is occupied with their relations with the outside.

The first thing recommended is submission, on the part of the Christian, to "the powers that be." The principle of the Christian's submission to the power is, that, in submitting to it, he is subject to God who has ordained it. "Let every soul be subject to the authorities that are above [it]; for there is no authority except from God, and those that be are ordained by God. So he that sets himself against the authority, withstands the ordinance of God, and they that withstand will get judgement for themselves. For the rulers are not a terror for the good work, but for the evil. And dost thou desire not to be afraid of the authority? Do what is good, and thou shalt have praise from it; for God's servant it is to thee for good. But if thou shouldst do what is evil, fear; for it bears not the sword in vain: for God's servant it is, an avenger for wrath to him that practises evil. Wherefore it is needful to be subject, not only on account of wrath, but also on account of conscience. For on this account pay tribute also; for they are God's officers ever attending on this very thing. Render to all their dues; tribute to him [that claims] tribute, custom to him [that claims] custom, fear to him [that claims] fear, honour to him [that claims] honour."

By the designation, "the powers that be," we must understand not merely force but authority. Now from the moment that power is there, it is enough to command our subjection, for the power that exists is of God. We have nothing else to do; we have not to occupy ourselves with judging it in what it is or in what it does. Our duty is to be subject. There can be no power save from God, for otherwise there would be several sources of power.

But how then render account of Satan's success in the things of this world? The adversary, though power does not proceed from him, suggests to the established powers different motives, so that they may act in the way that he desires. But this again is not our affair: we have not to occupy

ourselves with it. The authorities are set up by God. Such is the principle which decides our obedience, and which teaches us to submit not through fear of the consequences, but for conscience' sake. When it is a question of fidelity to Christ, we must obey Him; but in no case should we resist the authority: obedience to it is absolute, unless it involves positive unfaithfulness to Christ.

Indeed, the Christian should owe no person any debt, but discharge to every man, according to the position he is in, whatever is due to him in virtue of that position. Owe nothing to the creditor, to the magistrate, to anybody. Pay to the creditor his account, to the magistrate his honour, to each that which is his due. "Owe no one anything, except the love of each other, for he that loves another has fulfilled [the] law." Love is a debt of which we are never quit. But, besides the love which works no evil to one's neighbour, and therefore is the sum and substance of the law, there is another principle which encourages the Christian to be faithful. "It is already high time for us to be aroused out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand, . . . as in daylight, let us walk becomingly; not with revels and drunkenness, not with chambering and wantonness, not with strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and take no forethought of the flesh with a view to lusts."

(7) Romans 14:1-23; Romans 15:1-7.

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This chapter 14, teaches in what spirit we ought to behave towards the scrupulous or "the weak," 1:e., towards such as are still under the influence of Jewish elements. The same subject continues to Romans 15:7 — the obligation, the grounds, the sphere, and the end of christian forbearance.

Various principles ought to govern the sentiments and conduct with regard to the weak. It was hard for the Christian, who had been a Jew, to renounce his old and divinely-established differences of clean and unclean, of days holy and days common. The converted Gentile had, or ought to have had, no difficulty whatever; for what respect could he have longer for the particular parts of a system which, as a whole, he had rejected as false and idolatrous? But these very diversities of their circumstances exposed the Christians, who comprised both, to danger from disputes as to these questions of conscience about outward things. For it must be carefully borne in mind, that what the Holy Ghost lays down does not refer to matters of moral good or evil, not to doctrine or revelation, but to questions which grew out of the relics of Jewish feeling. In other words, "the weak" brother was one who loved Christ, and who hated sin, not less really than "the strong." The weak were not lax, but the contrary: they were extremely and painfully scrupulous, hence their anxiety as to eating meat or keeping a day. It was a remnant of legalism from which they had not been set free, from feebleness in apprehending the place into which we are brought through and in Christ risen from the dead.

Now it is well to remember that human nature always tends to one or other of the perils which threatened the saints at Rome. Liberty, if not exercised immediately in Christ's service, is apt to slip into a lack of conscience: sense of responsibility, if not maintained with full and unclouded rest in God's grace, soon degenerates into a burdened and groaning scrupulosity. The Christian is in principle delivered from both these snares: he is dead with Christ, and so ordinances of "touch not,

taste not, handle not" no longer apply. They are meant for those who are living in the world; whereas, he is dead with Christ and risen with Him, no longer to be occupied with such earthly restrictions, but free to set the mind upon things above, where Christ sitteth at God's right hand. Such is the position of the Christian for himself; but then for his brethren, there is the love that bears with and respects the conscience that is tried by the very things in which he realises his liberty. Love bends to feebleness of faith, never to latitudinarianism; love does not put a cause of tripping or stumbling before one's brother.

The apostle, then, exhorts that the weak in the faith (i.e., as to the ancient ceremonial precepts) should be received, but not to the discussion of questions. The Christian should know his superiority to such a point as eating herbs, but if he had doubts about it from Levitical associations, etc., he was not to be disdained, nor should he judge another who knew no scruples of the sort. It is remarkable that the stress is laid, in verse 4, on not judging. It is the weak who are liable to judge the strong, the strong in danger of making little of the weak. Who art thou that art judging another's servant? he belongs to the Lord, not to us; and what he does, he does to the Lord, giving thanks to God. Living or dying, we are the Lord's — the expression of entire consecration to God in the Christian life. Founded then upon this truth of Christ's universal lordship over His own, ("for for this end Christ both died and lived, that he might rule over both dead and living,") the apostle urges once more with increased force, not upon the ground of our service, but of His Lordship. "But thou, why dost thou judge thy brother?" Or, again, why dost thou make nothing of thy brother? for we shall be presented before the judgement-seat of Christ . . . each of us shall render account concerning himself to God. Christ has the authority to judge, we have not: why should we judge our brethren?

Besides, charity demands that we should respect our brother. The more right a man is, the more he can afford to be gracious. "Let not then your good be evil spoken of; for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men." We have been called to liberty, but true liberty proceeds by love. It is very touching to serve the Lord even in these details. We shall appear, too, before His judgement-seat, not to be judged, but to render account to God — a striking proof of the deity of the Lord Jesus. We are already accepted, so that the righteousness of God will by no means put us again on our trial; and if it is a question of us on this point in any way, it will be to show that we are "the righteousness of God in Christ." But in this circumstance what a discovery shall we not make of the tenderness of Christ, and what will not be our admiration, when we shall know all the watchful care wherewith the faithful Saviour has surrounded our weakness, during the passage through the desert! Seen in this light, this moment presents something delicious to the mind.

Practically, peace and edification are to be the great aim in all these debatable points. If thou hast faith, instead of doubts, so much the better, but have it to thyself before God. Blessed is he who does not judge himself in what he allows, (or approves,) but he who doubts is condemned if he eat, because it is not from faith; but whatsoever is not from faith is sin: that is, whatever is not done in liberty of faith.

Romans 15:1-7. "But we who are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves." If we are really better off than our brethren, how are we to show it? As Christ, we are to

act in love and in this spirit of candour which finds pleasure in the society of the humble. How well Paul could speak of it, who, with a ministry so elevated as his knew how to bend down to the level of all, even of the least. Further, the Christian represents God so that if any one outrages God, the Christian receives the outrage. What a marvellous position this passage puts us in! "As many things as were written before, were written for our instruction, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have our hope." But it is in God that these graces are found which are communicated to us by the scriptures. God is in Himself the God of patience and of comfort. Patience is for the strong; the weak have hardly any; patience is in the number of the qualities which characterise the apostleship. Christ received us, not because we were wise, enlightened, etc., but by an effect of His grace to the glory of God. So should we receive brethren in a like spirit.

(8) Romans 15:8-33; Romans 15:16.

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From verse 8 of chapter 15 to the end of the chapter, Paul resumes the great principles of the epistle and his personal circumstances; then in the concluding chapter, affectionate salutations to the Christians at Rome, whom he knew. It is a sort of peroration.

Romans 15:8-9 present to us the two sides of the mission of Christ, the ways of God towards the Jew and the Gentile, accomplished in His advent. "Jesus Christ became a minister of circumcision for the truth of God, in order to confirm the promises of the fathers, and that the Gentiles should glorify God for mercy." That explains the conduct of the Lord in the gospels. While the mercy shown to the Gentiles might seem inferior to the promises of the Jews, it is at bottom more excellent still; for this mercy is pure grace, the exercise of the free and sovereign grace of God. The Gentiles had no promises made to them; so that, as far as they were concerned, it was not a question of truth but of grace, if God were pleased, as He was, to abound in mercy towards them by Jesus. To prove that this grace to the Gentiles was in the mind of God, the apostle quotes from the Psalms, the law, and the prophets. (Romans 15:9-12.) How decisive to a godly Jew, who might hesitate before the special promises to the fathers! Without disparagement to — nay, fulfilling, or ready to fulfil, all which God had guaranteed of old, Jesus was the vessel of deeper counsels of mercy; and for these the very law itself made room, though it did not reveal them. But therein was their justification when they were revealed.

In Romans 15:13 the apostle turns to the saints at Rome, the then centre or metropolis of the Gentile world, warmly expressing his desires and prayers on their behalf, as well as (Romans 15:14) his confidence in them through grace. In Romans 15:15-16, he speaks with the authority he possessed in virtue of his apostleship, his peculiarly Gentile mission. In an extraordinary sense he was a minister (leitourgos) of Jesus Christ to the nations or Gentiles. He had a public function in respect of them to discharge, carrying on as a holy rite the glad tidings of God, in order that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. This was not the result of confidence from a ministry exercised in their midst — a special tie which Scripture recognises; but here the case was different, for Paul had never seen the Roman saints generally. Nevertheless, he speaks figuratively of presenting the nations (i.e., such Gentiles as received

Christ) to God, as the priests offered the Levites in Numbers 8:1-26. It was no longer external birth-holiness, as in Israel, but real separation to God in the power of the Holy Ghost. From Jerusalem, and in circuit as far as Illyricum, Paul had fully set forth the glad tidings of the Christ, and this where He had not been named. (Romans 15:18-21.) God had taken care to show that there were saints at Rome before any apostle had arrived there; (Romans 15:23-24;) and it may be remarked also that his project, as his visit to them, was not realised in the way he had intended or expected. He came as a prisoner to Rome, and whether he visited Spain we know not.

Romans 16:1-27.

Paul terminates the epistle by sending to the Roman saints cordial and numerous salutations. (Romans 16:1-16.) It is interesting to see, by this example, the affection which reigns in the relationship of the saints. It is beautiful above all to see Paul, so elevated by the mysteries in which God had initiated him, condescending so far as to put himself on a level with the very least. How touching, too, it is to hear him recall the things which clothed each with honour! "Priscilla and Aquila, my work-fellows in Christ Jesus, who, in behalf of my life, staked their own neck." "Epenetus, my beloved, who is the first-fruits of Asia for Christ." etc. etc. Alas! there were those who created divisions and stumbling-blocks. Such were to be avoided. (Romans 16:17-18.) Then in ver. 19 we have a precious rule and useful to follow in the midst of the evil which surrounds us. "I wish you to be wise as to (or for) that which is good, and simple as to evil." If the man of the world would escape evil, he has need to know it; whilst the Christian walks directly in good, following the pathway God has marked out for him. If he walks with wisdom, following what is good, he has no need to know the evil. But if he knows not the good way he is embarrassed: he is forced to try several routes. A complete deliverance is at hand. "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

The last verses are important, for this amongst other reasons, because they insist on the inspiration and authenticity of the New Testament. The meaning of the phrase in Romans 16:26 is, "by prophetic writings" or "scriptures," and not "by the scriptures of the prophets." The epistles addressed to the Gentiles, like that to the Romans, had this character.

The epistle we have been studying lays down the foundations of our relations with God in a manner equally clear and powerful. There is this difference between it and the Epistle to the Ephesians, that the latter begins with the counsels of God, and consequently gives all the extent of God's grace in its own perfection, whether as regards the individual or the Church; whilst in our epistle the apostle begins with the sin of man, and therefore addresses himself more to the conscience, develops individual justification, and shows how the believer is set free from sin, and what are the character and the bearing of the freedom he enjoys.

Here is the order of the teachings of the epistle to the Romans. After the introduction, which shows the glad tidings of grace, the apostle lays bare the sins of the Gentiles and of the Jews, the sin of every man, of the moralists, as well as of men of pleasure; of those who enjoyed a revelation, no less than of the slaves of idolatry. All are shut up under sin. At the end of this demonstration of the sinful state of all men, he presents the sole and sovereign remedy, the blood of Christ, making this difference as to its application, that the patience of God, in view of the efficacy of the death of Jesus, had borne with the sins of the believers who lived before the work of atonement, whilst now the perfect righteousness of God is revealed. The death of Jesus proved the righteousness of God

in the long-suffering He had shown in respect of the sins of the faithful in past times, but this divine righteousness formed now the ground on which the believer found himself set before God. What the apostle had already said closed the mouth of the Jew, in respect of his pretensions as the depository of the law. God would have realities and righteousness, not pretensions founded on the advantages by which they had not profited. But besides the law, there was both Abraham and David, on whom the Jews rested. Now these men bore the same testimony: man is justified by faith and finds his happiness in pardon. But this appeal to Abraham introduces a principle of great importance, namely, the introduction of man into a totally new scene by the resurrection, a scene where sin exists no longer, where man is justified, not only as pardoned, but as agreeable to God in this new state. Abraham had been blessed by his faith in this truth as a principle: he counted on the power and the faithfulness of God to accomplish what was a resurrection.

We believe that God has accomplished this act of power in Jesus delivered for our offences, and risen for our justification. Thus our justification is founded on resurrection, as well as on death; and this connects justification and life. We have the position of the second Adam, of Christ in righteousness, as we had the position of the first Adam. Now, if the law has had the effect of giving the character of multiplied transgressions to all the sins of the Jews, and if these have thus added something more to the difficulty of the work of reconciliation, it is not less evident that the principle on which man is justified, applies to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews. Human justice is shut out, because it is by the obedience of One alone that we are made righteous; but a holy life where sin is not found is brought in by our participation in the life of Christ risen.

This doctrine of resurrection is applied to justification in Romans 5:1-21, to the new life in Romans 6:1-23, to deliverance from the law in Romans 7:1-25, which gives us at the same time the experience of the renewed soul under the law. Lastly, Romans 8:1-39 presents to us the state of the christian, the liberty founded on the work of Christ, the liberty which one enjoys in sharing His life; and this deliverance is pursued up to its final application to the body. Then it shows us the Spirit Himself as the power of our joy and the consoler of our hearts, during our sojourn in this body, which binds us to the fallen creation. The apostle closes this part of his instructions, and the fundamental doctrine of the epistle, by showing that God ensures to us the enjoyment of the heavenly blessing by His own power, which guarantees the accomplishment of His counsels, so that nothing shall separate us from His love.

There remained one question to clear. The apostle had just shown that the Jew, viewed as set under the law, had nothing to say in his own justification. The law even condemned him. But what is to be said of the promises? God had given promises without condition. This point is treated in Romans 9:1-33; Romans 10:1-21; Romans 11:1-36. In Romans 9:1-33 it is shown that, Ishmael and Esau having been put aside though they were children of Abraham, and the Jews under Sinai having been spared purely by sovereign compassion of God, the Jews were forced to own God's sovereignty. Now God exercised this sovereignty in favour of the Gentiles, which the prophets, besides, had clearly announced. In Romans 10:1-21 Paul shows that the Jews, just as the same prophets had predicted, had stumbled against the stumbling-stone, and had not submitted to the righteousness of God. Ought one to conclude that they were finally rejected as a people? Not at all: so Romans 11:1-36 shows, by presenting these considerations.

1. There was then a remnant.

2. The object of the admission of the Gentiles was to provoke the Jews to jealousy.

3. Finally, the Redeemer should come to Zion.

In Romans 12:1-21 the apostle resumes the thread of his general instructions, by bringing out the conduct, which in all respects suited those who were the objects of so great mercy; and in particular he draws clearly out the principles on which the new relations of the Jews and the Gentiles could be founded and maintained. The teaching on this last point gives room for some directions touching on the unity of the body, and forming the sole passage where the church is introduced. The apostle closes with communications relative to his projected voyage to Jerusalem and Rome; he foresaw in part the dangers which awaited him. He adds numerous salutations to the Christians at Rome, whom he knew individually, though he had never founded the church at Rome, nor visited this city itself.

Vol 01 - People and Land of Israel.

Vol 01 - People and Land of Israel.

The Jews After the Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

(History of the Jewish nation after the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus. By the Rev. Alfred Edersheim, Ph.D. Old Aberdeen. Edinburgh: Thomas Constable & Co; London: Hamilton Adams & Co. 1856.) Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, August 1856.

(1st. Edition, August 1856 [01 1856 050])

[01 1856 048]

It must be evident to the believer that the Jew is of the last importance in God's history of the world. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." The dispersion of the post-diluvians was not a casual chance-medley circumstance, but so ordered of God as to admit Israel as their earthly centre. This has been verified in their past history, though suspended at present; but prophecy discloses that every jot and tittle of the divine scheme is to be fulfilled in the grand scenes of the last days.

The philosophic infidel does not of course see — probably may deride — the purpose of God as to His earthly people. Nevertheless, the Jew has haunted many an unbelieving mind, has broken in like a spectre upon his dreamy materialism. The too celebrated Hegel often and long thought upon Hebrew history, often changed his thoughts: "all his life long," says his biographer, "it tormented him as a dark enigma." If Christ crucified proved to the Jews a stumbling-block, the Jews are to the Gentiles an abiding sign which the wisdom of this world vainly essays to fathom and expound.

Of the history of this people, terrible from their beginning hitherto, Dr. Edersheim has given us some instructive chapters, the firstfruits of his studies in a department full of interest. After an introductory sketch of the Hebrew commonwealth, we are presented with a graphic yet touching picture, the "closing scenes of the Jewish war of independence." Let the reader judge:

"The stars twinkled just as they had done in happier days over the burning walls of Masada. Beneath rolled the Dead Sea — the monument of foreign wrath and war; in the distance, as far as the eye could reach, the desolate landscape bore the marks of the oppressor. Before them was the camp of the Roman, who watched with anxiety for his prey and the morrow. All was silent in Masada. Defence now seemed impossible, and certain death stared the devoted garrison in the face. Despair settled on the stoutest heart, deepened by the presence and the well-known fate of the women and children. Nought was heard but the crackling of burning timbers, and the ill-suppressed moans of the wives and children of the garrison. Then for the last time Eleazar summoned his warriors. In language such as fierce despair alone could have inspired on his, or brooked on their part, he reminded them of their solemn oath — to gain freedom or to die. One of these alternatives alone remained for them — to die. The men of war around him had not quailed

before any enemy, yet they shrank from the proposal of their leader. A low murmur betokened their disapprobation. Then flashed Eleazar's eye. Pointing over the burning rampart to the enemy, and in the distance towards Jerusalem, he related with fearful truthfulness, the fate which awaited them on the morrow:— to be slain by the enemy, or to be reserved for the arena; to have their wives devoted in their sight to shame, and their children to torture and slavery. Were they to choose this alternative, or a glorious death, and with it liberty — a death in obedience to their oath, in devotedness to their God and to their country? The appeal had its effect. It was not sudden madness, nor a momentary frenzy, which seized these men when they brought forth, to immolate them on the altar of their liberty, their wives, their children, their chattels, and ranged themselves each by the side of all that had been dear to him in the world. The last glimmer of hope had died out, and with the determination of despair, the last defenders of Judaea prepared to perish in the flames which enveloped its last fortress. First, each heaped together his household gear, associated with the pleasures of other days, and set fire to it. Again they pressed to their hearts their wives and children. Bitter were the tears wrung from these iron men; yet the sacrifice was made unshrinkingly, and each plunged his sword into the hearts of his wife and children. Now they laid themselves down beside them, and locked them in tender embrace — now the embrace of death. Cheerfully they presented their breasts to ten of their number, chosen by lot to put the rest of their brethren to death. Of these ten, one had again been fixed upon to slay the remaining nine. Having finished his bloody work, he looked around to see whether any of the band yet required his service. But all was silent. The last survivor then approached as closely as possible to his own family and fell upon his sword. Nine hundred bodies covered the ground.

"Morning dawned upon Masada, and the Romans eagerly approached its walls — but within was the silence of death. A faint was apprehended, and the soldiers advanced cautiously, raising a shout, as if the defenders on the wall implored the help of their brethren. Then two women, who, with five children, had concealed themselves in vaults during the murderous scene of the preceding evening, came forth from their retreat to tell the Romans the sad story. So fearfully strange did it sound, that their statement was scarcely credited. Slowly the Romans advanced; then rushing through the flames, they penetrated into the court of the palace. There lay the lifeless bodies of the garrison and their families. It was not a day of triumph even to the enemy, but one of awe and admiration. They buried the dead and withdrew, leaving a garrison. 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem that killest the prophets,' etc. 'Therefore, behold, your house is left unto you desolate.'

"Thus terminated the war of Jewish nationality. Various causes conspired to make this contest one of the most obstinate ever witnessed. The Roman legions were led by the ablest generals of the empire, and instigated by the recollection of the shameful defeat which they had sustained at the commencement of the war, and by the obstinate resistance now made by a small and unwarlike race whom they had long affected to despise. Nor was the issue of the struggle unimportant to the Roman state. Defeat under any circumstances would have been the first step in the decadence of an empire whose provinces bore so disproportionate a relation to the dominant country. Besides, Roman rule had never been firmly established eastward of Judaea, and on that account the latter country presented an important military position. Finally, the triumph of the Jews would have been fatal to the prestige of Rome in the East, and probably become the signal for a general rising in the neighbouring provinces. On the other hand, the Jews fought for national existence, for political and religious liberty, for their lives, for their hearths and homes. Flushed at first by victory, relying on

the zeal and enthusiasm of the whole nation, and defending themselves in their own country and among its fastnesses against the foreign invaders, the Jews fought with the despair of men who knew what awaited them in case of defeat. Besides, they relied on promised succours from their brethren in the East, or at least on a diversion in their favour.

Nor was this contest merely one for national independence; it was essentially also a religious war. Jerusalem was not only a political but also a religious capital. In fighting for their country, the Jews fought also for their religion, which, indeed, was almost inseparable from the soil of Palestine, and hence, as they sought, for the name and cause of their God. Were it requisite, proofs could readily be adduced of this. Even after they had been defeated, it was stated by the theological expositors of popular sentiment, that since the day of the destruction of the temple, God had mourned for the fate of His people, and that joy had become a stranger in the celestial mansions. Hence they constantly reckoned all along on the Divine assistance. The Maccabees had in former times, with a mere handful of men, defied the Syrian hosts, and why should not similar success be vouchsafed to them under more advantageous circumstances? And even if it turned out otherwise, surely it could only happen in judgement, and for a season, that their God had left His covenant people, His special favourites, for whose sakes even heaven and earth had been created, and who alone fulfilled the end of their being by glorifying their Maker. Whatever, then, might be their divinely appointed fate, to conquer or to die, the Zealots were ready to meet it in such a cause. These views were indeed intimately connected with the whole of the carnal tendency in their religion to which we have already, and shall by and by more fully advert. To belong outwardly to the chosen race, constituted a person a member of the kingdom of God. The place and the rites of the temple were identical with acceptable worship; outward observances and a mere logical development, became substitutes for spiritual apprehension of the truth, for love and devotedness. Thus as the form was being more and more cultivated, to the neglect of the spirit, it appeared also more and more precious, and its final destruction, by an overthrow of the Jewish commonwealth, seemed almost impossible. Nor were the expectations entertained about that time of the sudden appearance of a Messiah, who, long hid, would suddenly come forth to deliver his people from the enemies which threatened them, without their effect on the minds of the people. Though the life and death of the blessed Saviour had too lately taken place for the leaders of the people lightly to risk the safety of the Synagogue, by bringing Messianic views prominently forward, as they did at an after period in the war under Bar-Cochba, in order to inflame the zeal of their followers, such considerations must no doubt have had some influence. At times these hopes seemed about to be realised. More than once did the balance tremble in favour of the Jews — the Roman generals were in imminent danger — the Roman engines destroyed — the Jews successful — the legions panic-struck or dispirited. Yet the sceptre passed finally and irrevocably from Judah, by the same hand which had at first placed it there. Calculating merely the probabilities of the case, we would say that the war was begun at a most favourable time; and that notwithstanding the various mistakes and disadvantages of the Jews, had there not been treason in the Jewish camp, or had there not been factions and bloody revenge amongst themselves, or had their eastern allies made a diversion in their favour, they would have obtained the object of their desires, or at least have had a greater measure of success in their defence. But true it is that 'the history of the world is the judgement of the world'

"About the same time that the Jewish war terminated, Rome attained the climax of her grandeur. Hostile movements had taken place in other provinces, but these had now been suppressed, and Vespasian opened once again the temple of peace. But this prosperity was of short duration. We do not mean to connect the destruction of Jerusalem and the decline of Rome's Empire as cause and effect; but it is certain that the former immediately preceded the latter event. The insurrections in the northern parts of the empire were only quelled for a time, the fire still smouldered under the ashes — it speedily burst forth anew, and destroyed that mighty engine with which the Lord had, in fulfilment of prophecy, punished his people. So it has ever been: the rod of his vengeance, after having served its purpose, has always been speedily broken in pieces." (pp. 42-47.)

Neither our author nor our readers will have reason to regret so long an extract: it is a fair and favourable sample of the volume, and well illustrates both manner, and subject-matter. Chapter 3 furnishes a good deal of curious information as regards the dispersed of Israel. The three following chapters are occupied with the political and religious state of the Jews, and with the history of the synagogue before and subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem. Next is given a stirring narrative of the last Jewish war under Bar Cochab, with a sketch of the state of the synagogue afterwards. Chapters 9, 10, and 11 have evidently involved no little labour and research, and convey much which cannot be found elsewhere in our language; they are devoted respectively to an account of the social condition, arts and sciences, theology and religious belief of Palestine. The historical thread is again resumed with a notice of the patriarchate under the last pagan Emperors, till its extinction and the final scattering of the Jews. All is wound up with an appendix on these heads: 1 Jewish Calendar, 2 the Wisdom of Ben Sira, 3 Alexandrian Jewish Poetry, 4 Geographical Nations of the Rabbins, and 5 Rabbinical Exegesis.

The following extract from chapter 11 (Theological science and religious belief in Palestine) will show our readers some of the interesting details in which the latter part of Dr. E.'s volume abounds.

"From internal evidence, and from the accordance of the Septuagint translation of the Pentateuch with that of the Samaritans, it has been inferred that both were originally derived from an old Aramean Targum, to which allusions are made in Jewish writings. It has also been argued that the present LXX was of very gradual origin, while from the frequent variations, the existence of different editions, if not translations, has been inferred. Leaving out of view the mistakes, additions, or emendations by copyists, and its frequent interpolations, there is an internal relationship between the spirit which the LXX breathes, and that of the version of Onkelos and of the Targum of Jonathan. Many passages show clearly that the translation was made under Hagadic influences.* The learned reader will notice, that the Greek of Joshua 13:22, becomes only intelligible by the Hagada, that Balaam had by magic flown into the air, but that Phinehas had thrown him to the ground and killed him in the fall. The translation of 1 Samuel 20:30, is explained by the Hagada, that Jonathan's mother was one of those maidens of Shiloh (Judges 21:1-25) and had of her own accord gone forth to offer herself to Saul. The reading in 1 Samuel 28:19, depends upon the legend that apparitions of ghosts were generally in an inverted posture of body, while that of Samuel had come up in the ordinary or straight position. Numerous similar instances might be quoted. Again we find clear traces in the Halacha * as in the translation of Leviticus 11:47. Similarly, the rendering of Leviticus 19:6-7, which has commonly been imputed to Alexandrian peculiarities, becomes plain by the Halacha which applies the passage to the intention of those

who offered the sacrifice to eat it on the third day, and enjoins that, under these circumstances, the sacrifice may no more be offered. Similarly, the version of Leviticus 23:11, is explained by a reference to the Halacha. However, the version of Leviticus is the best in the Pentateuch. It would be easy to multiply instances from other parts of the Bible. Considerable Hagadic additions also occur. Thus, we have in Proverbs 6:8, praise of the diligence of the ant; in Joshua 24:30, a Hagadic story about the knives with which Joshua circumcised the Jews, in imitation of a similar Palestinian Hagada about Moses; numerous additions to the book of Esther: an addition to Haggai 2:9, etc. Sometimes verses were left out, or even whole passages transposed. It is well known that the pronunciation of Palestine proper, or Judea, favourably differed from that of Galilee; and this is also transferred to the LXX., which follows more closely the dialect of Palestine. Passing over grammatical and other blunders, contractions, amplifications, and attempts at circumlocution, we notice that sometimes verses are translated in one and left untranslated in another place, as the word 'plains' (in one version) in Joshua 11:16, and again in Joshua 12:8; or the 'children of Solomon's servants,' in Ezra 2:55, while in verse 58 we read the 'children of Abdeselma,' etc. Sometimes prepositions are treated as if they formed part of the appellative, while evident traces of having been translated from the Aramean are found in Psalms 60:10, etc." (p.p. 425, 426.)

{* The Halachas were the traditional ordinances, of which the Mishna was the scientific arrangement, and the Talmud or Gemara the commentary. The Hagada professed to interpret and apply the sacred text in general.— REV.}

There are views, particularly in the opening chapter, from which we must dissent, but they are in no way such as affect the general bearing and value of the work: perhaps we are bound to add that they are the current coin of the religious world. As a history of the Jewish nation, and as far as it has gone, we cannot withhold our strong commendation. It is a clear, compact, spirited and withal conscientious production, well deserving a place on the shelf of the christian student, and a large circulation among those who take pleasure in the stones of Zion and favour the dust thereof.

(2) Jerusalem.

2nd. Edition, Volume 1, November 1856.

(1st. Edition, November 1856 [01:098])

[01:095]

A Letter from Jerusalem of a recent date, in the Augsburg Gazette, says:—

"In digging out the foundations of a house which is being built in this city for the Austrian Catholic clergy, the workmen discovered at a depth of about fifteen feet from the surface several subterranean rooms, the walls of which are of hewn stone, and the floor of mosaic. The most important part of the discovery is, however, a grotto cut out in the rock, and supported by five columns. There are certain indications which lead to the belief that this grotto had served as a church for the early Christians; but the grotto, it is supposed, was formed before the advent of Christianity. Several capitals of Corinthian columns and fragments of antique marbles have also been found. The Austrian, French, and Prussian consuls, accompanied by the architect Endlicher, who is superintending the building, have visited these subterranean galleries, and have had photographic drawings made. The Mussulman authorities throw no obstacles in the way of those

archaeological researches."

The Abbé J. H. Michon has just published a pamphlet entitled, "La Papauté à Jerusalem." He thinks that the influence of modern ideas having produced no effect on the Administration of affairs at Rome, the progressive element of the nation has become a formidable enemy to the stationary element of the Pontifical Government; that the old machine may, it is true, go on, well or ill, so long as it is aided by foreign diplomacy or foreign occupation; but that the moment these are withdrawn, the Papacy will be helplessly exposed to revolution, and that the danger is imminent. The solution of this question is not to be found, he thinks, in political, administrative, or civil reform, nor in the secularisation of clerical power. It is to be found only in the abdication of temporal power. He is of opinion that, in such a case, the capital of the spiritual Papacy could not be Rome. This power would lose in dignity, and would still suffer from political complications. He believes that there is but one city in the world which presents conditions indispensable to its independence and grandeur, and where a new era would arise for the mission of a true apostle; and that city is Jerusalem!

Vol 01 - Recent Travels in the Holy Land and Neighbouring Countries.

Vol 01 - Recent Travels in the Holy Land and Neighbouring Countries.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, April 1857.

(1st. Edition, April [01 1857 177])

{The 2nd. Edition as below, is much abbreviated}

[01 1857 176]

1. Later Biblical Researches in Palestine and the adjacent Regions: a Journal of Travels in the year 1862. By Edward Robinson, Eli Smith, and others. Drawn up from the original Diaries, with. Historical Illustrations, by Edward Robinson, D.D., LL.D., etc. With Maps and Plans. (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street. 1856.)

2. The Desert of Sinai: Notes of a Spring Journey from Cairo to Beersheba. By Horatius Bonar, D.D., Kelso. (London: James Nisbet & Co., Berners Street 1857.)

[01 1857 177]

In the preface, Dr. Robinson states that with this volume closes the record of his personal observations in the Holy Land. "To these my BIBLICAL RESEARCHES in the Holy Land, the fruit of thirty years of preparation, and of personal travels in 1838 and 1852, I can hope to add nothing more." The present work is intended as a supplement to his former one, and prepared of course on the same principles. "The great object of all these travels and labours has been, as formerly announced, to collect materials for the preparation of a systematic work on the physical and historical geography of the Holy Land. To this work, so much needed, should my life and health be spared, I hope speedily to address myself" (p. 6.)

The book before us consists of thirteen sections, with a few notes and indexes, the last of which, Passages of Scripture Illustrated, is meagre and incomplete. Judged by that list, one might well wonder why the volume was entitled "Biblical Researches," for Matthew and Revelation are the only books of the New Testament referred to, and these in the most cursory way. As to the Revelation, the solitary allusion is divided with Nehemiah 13:5; and Job 24:14, as well as with one of the two references to Matthew. Even as regards the Old Testament, the prospect looked extremely unpromising. We are glad to say, however, that this is the fault of him who drew up the third index; for the body of the work and the foot notes really discuss a considerable number of points interesting to the reader of scripture, as will appear presently.

The maps which are at the end, drawn up by Kiepert, of Berlin, principally from materials furnished by Dr. R., the late Dr. E. Smith, and other American travellers, appear to be extremely full and accurate.

From the cold, minute, business-like "Researches" of the American traveller, we turn to Dr. Bonar's Notes of his journey to the borders of Canaan. We were disappointed to find that it is spun out. It is to be followed by "Notes of a Journey through the Land of Promise." The matter would not have been too much for one volume, particularly as we might have been spared, without loss, many allusions to things and places at home, and oft-recurring descriptions of the sky and the stars abroad, not to mention dubious scraps of erudition and caustic allusions to the peccadilloes of Keble's oriental descriptions. Notwithstanding, it is a relief to meet with a modern book of travels, written by a man who honestly believes in the Word of God. We may meet with almost wearisome illustration of the points of parallel between Old Testament allusions and the manners of the East to this day, most of them trite and some far-fetched indeed. Still there is no comparison between the general, moral, and godly tone of this latest contribution, and that which prevailed in the more ambitious works of Lepsius, Robinson, and others.

Vol 01 - Travels in Sinai and Palestine.

Vol 01 - Travels in Sinai and Palestine.

People and Land of Israel.

Sinai and Palestine, in Connection with their History.

By Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, M.A., Canon of Canterbury, with Maps and Plans. Third Edition. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street. 1856.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, May 1857.

(1st. Edition, May [01 1857 191])

{The 2nd. Edition as below, is abbreviated}

[01 1857 189]

Our object in the present paper is to cite some passages in the most able and interesting of recent works on the Holy Land, and at the same time to afford evidence whether or not it ought to have the confidence of the Christian and the Christian household.

Mr. Stanley's preface is devoted to his view of the connection of sacred history with the geography of the promised land. He attempts to trace its influence on national character, on forms of expression, the explanation it offers of particular events, and the evidence afforded of historical truth, with its illustrative, poetical, or proverbial uses. Most of our readers will feel that it is an attempt to invest what at best is but Gibeonite labour, "hewing wood and drawing water," with a grandeur to which it is in no way entitled. Still as such servitude had its place towards Israel and the sanctuary, the believer may reap good if he know how to turn to account these efforts, earthly as they are.

The introduction treats of Egypt in relation to Israel. Part I., on the peninsula of Sinai, is a fair sample of Mr. S.'s graphic and comprehensive pen. This peninsula is, in certain respects, one of the most remarkable districts on the face of the earth.

"It combines the three grand features of earthly scenery — the sea, the desert, and the mountains. It occupies also a position central to three countries, distinguished not merely for their history, but for their geography, amongst all other nations of the world, Egypt, Arabia, Palestine. And lastly, it has been the scene of a history as unique as its situation; by which the fate of the three nations which surround it, and through them the fate of the whole world, has been determined. It was a just remark of Chevalier Bunsen, that 'Egypt has, properly speaking, no history. History was born on that night when Moses led forth his people from Goshen.' Most fully is this felt as the traveller emerges from the valley of the Nile, the study of the Egyptian monuments, and finds himself on the broad tract of the desert. In these monuments, magnificent and instructive as they are, he sees great kings and mighty deeds — the father, the son, and the children — the sacrifices, the

conquests, the coronations. But there is no before and after, no unrolling of a great drama, no beginning, middle, and end of a moral progress, or even of a mournful decline. In the desert, on the contrary, the moment the green fields of Egypt recede from our view, still more when we reach the Red sea, the farther we advance into the desert and the mountains, we feel that everything henceforward is continuous, that there is a sustained and protracted interest, increasing more and more, till it reaches its highest point in Palestine, in Jerusalem, on Calvary, and on Olivet. And in the desert of Sinai by the fact that there it stands alone. Over all the other great scenes of human history — Palestine itself, Egypt, and Italy — successive tides of great recollections have rolled, each, to a certain extent, obliterating the traces of the former. But in the peninsula of Sinai there is nothing to interfere with the effect of that single event. The Exodus is the one stream of history that has passed through this wonderful region — a stream which has for its background the whole magnificence of Egypt, and for its distant horizon the forms, as yet unborn, of Judaism, of Mahometanism, of Christianity." (pp. 3, 4).

This extract exemplifies our author, and not least his unhappy practice of blending things divine and human, heavenly and earthly, which may fascinate the natural mind, but is abhorrent to the spiritual man.

Take another specimen.

"It is between those two gulfs, the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of 'Akaba, that the peninsula of Sinai lies. From them it derives its contact with the sea and therefore with the world, which is one striking distinction between it and the rest of the vast desert of which it forms a part. From hardly any point of the Sinaitic range is the view of the sea wholly excluded; from the highest points both of its branches are visible; its waters blue with a depth of colour more like that of some of the Swiss lakes than of our northern or midland seas, its tides imparting a life to the dead landscape, familiar to modern travellers from the shores of the Atlantic or German ocean, but strange and inexplicable to the inhabitants of the ancient world, whose only knowledge of the sea was the vast tideless lake which washed the coasts of Egypt, Palestine, Greece, and Italy. It must have always brought to the mind of those who stood on its shores that they were on the waters of a new and almost unknown world. Those tides come rolling in from the great Indian Ocean; and with Indian Ocean these two gulfs are the chief channels of communication from the northern world. The white shells which strew their shores, the forests of submarine vegetation, which gave the whole sea its Hebrew appellation of the 'Sea of weeds,' the trees of coral, whose huge trunks may be seen even on the dry shore, with the red rocks and red sand, which especially in the gulf of 'Akaba bound its sides, all bring before us the mightier mass of the Red or Erythrean Ocean, the coral strands of the Indian Archipelago, of which these two gulfs, with their peculiar products, are the northern off-shoots. The peninsula itself has been the scene of but one cycle of human events. But it has, through its two watery boundaries, been encircled with two tides of history which must not be forgotten in the associations which give it a foremost place in the geography and history of the world; two tides never flowing together, one falling as the other rose, but imparting to each of the two barren valleys through which they flow a life and activity hardly less than that which has so long animated the valley of the Nile. The two great lines of Indian traffic have alternately passed up the eastern and the western gulf, and though unconnected with the greater events of the peninsula of Sinai, the commerce of Alexandria, and the communications of England with India, which now pass down the Gulf of Suez, are not without interest, as giving a lively impression of the ancient

importance of the twin gulf of 'Akaba, That gulf, now wholly deserted, was in the times of the Jewish monarchy the, great thoroughfare of the fleets of Solomon and Jehoshaphat, and the only point in the second period of their history which brought the Israelites into connection with the scenes of the earliest wanderings of their nation. Such are the western and eastern boundaries of this mountain tract; striking to the eye of the geographer, as the two parallels to that narrow Egyptian land from which the Israelites came forth: important to the historian, as the two links of Europe and Asia with the great ocean of the south, as the two points of contact between the Jewish people and the civilisation of the ancient world. From the summit of Mount St. Catherine, or of Um-Shômer, a wandering Israelite might have seen the beginning and the end of his nation's greatness. On the one side lay the sea through which they had escaped from the bondage of slavery and idolatry — still a mere tribe of the shepherds of the desert. On the other side lay the sea, up which were afterwards conveyed the treasures of the Indies, to adorn the palace and the temple of the capital of a mighty empire."

Here the reader may observe the good and bad points of Mr. S. In all that is external, and that touches on human affairs, there is much which is valuable and masterly; but when he approaches the ways of God, as revealed in Scripture, there is a melancholy falling off. No Israelite has yet seen "the end of his nation's greatness," nor can see it, we may add. Indeed, that nation's sun has never yet reached its meridian, and, once risen, shall never set. "Thy sun shall no more go down." The reign of Solomon was but the partial and transient prefiguration of this destiny when a greater than Solomon, the true Son of David, whom himself typified, "shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

Very unsatisfactory too is his mode of dealing with the passage of the Red Sea. The magnificence of the crisis, and its long train of associations are frankly admitted. But there is a careful insinuation of all that might reduce the fact to the level of the extraordinary but natural.

With very different feelings would we refer to chapter 2: pp. 112-117, which exemplifies Mr. S.'s happiest manner in linking together the external features with the history and calling of the people.

The rest of the chapter traces the peculiarities of Palestine as a land of ruins, its present condition as compared with the past, its climate and volcanic phenomena, its physical configuration, scenery, and geological features, as illustrations of scripture phrases.

Chapter 3. is devoted to Judea and Jerusalem, as is chapter 4. to the heights and passes of Benjamin; chapter 5. to Ephraim and Manasseh; chapter 6. to the maritime plain; chapter 7. to the Jordan and the Dead Sea; chapter 8. to Peraea and the transjordanic tribes; chapter 9. to the plain of Esdraelon; chapter 10. to Galilee; chapter 11, to the Lake of Merom and the source of the Jordan; chapter 12. to Lebanon and Damascus; chapter 13. to the gospel history and teaching, viewed in connection with the localities of Palestine; and chapter 14. to the Holy places, with an appendix of Hebrew and topographical words, arranged under different heads. It is curious that the finest sketches of the Canon of Canterbury are the battle scenes of ancient and mediaeval times, with which his accounts of cities and rivers, hill and dale, are plentifully bestrewed. His most frequent and perilous fault is habitual exaggeration of secondary causes, the suppression or veiling of the divine actings in the scripture history of the chosen people. We have only to add that the illustrative maps, which convey the colouring and nature of the ground, rocks, etc., of the Desert and Palestine, are interesting and valuable. With our author's corrections of the Authorised

Version (save of appellatives) we do not agree. Fuller knowledge, we are persuaded, would dispose of not a few which are apparently the offspring of foreign criticism, and this is a most suspicious source, except for verbal minutiae.

Vol 01 - From the Jewish Chronicle.

Vol 01 - From the Jewish Chronicle.

People and Land of Israel

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, April 1857.

(1st. Edition, April [01 1857 177])

[01 1857 176]

It appears from the Jewish Chronicle that the project for a railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem has been abandoned for the present. It is not that any insuperable difficulties stood in its way, for the line has been surveyed by a civil engineer of celebrity, who pronounces decidedly in favour of its feasibility. But the financial results anticipated are not such as to encourage the enterprise, unless grants of land were made by the Ports, such as are usually given by government in imperfectly cultivated countries. Aali Pacha did not see fit to hold out this inducement; but those interested in it are looking for greater vigour and decision from Redschid Pacha.

On the other hand, the Sultan, who had already presented to the Emperor Napoleon the Church of the Nativity at Jerusalem, has also given him the old palace of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, which is annexed to St. Peter's prison.

Thus, with whatever slight delays and temporary checks, the prophetic student will descry the growing tendency and desire of the West to facilitate the political restoration of the Jews to their own land. Alas, an untimely birth! which will issue in the deepest sorrows, and in divine judgements upon all concerned. "For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut of the sprigs with pruning hooks, and take away and cut down the branches." Nor will it be merely the disappointment of Israelitish hopes; for their Gentile patrons will prove their scourge, and will turn again and rend them. "They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth; and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them." But that very time shall see the Lord undertake the work, and gather in His people with a high hand. "For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." "And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people; all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people in the earth be gathered together against it." Their worst tribulation immediately precedes their final deliverance, and the putting down of the Gentiles, who will afterwards owe their best blessing, as far as means are concerned, to Israel. "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them towards the former sea, and half of them towards the hinder sea, (i.e. east and west:) in summer and in winter shall it be (i.e. always, as depending on God, not upon the mere natural seasons.) And the LORD shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one."

Vol 01 - People and Land of Israel.

Vol 01 - People and Land of Israel.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, June 1857.

(1st. Edition, June [01 1857 212])

[01 1857 209]

The Jewish Chronicle of this month (May) affords melancholy evidence of the dissolving process going on among the Jews, as elsewhere. Far be the thought from us that the Christian, Church is aught but a wreck! It is not, therefore to excuse our own sin and shame that we extract sentiments sanctioned by the highest Jewish authorities in this country, — sentiments which the humblest person could eschew, who abides a Jew. "We will not dispute the desirability of maintaining the legislature Christian. To maintain it Christian means to maintain it Jewish. Christian morality is Jewish morality, and Jewish morality is Christian morality. The morality of Jesus is the reflex of that of Moses." Nor is it limited to moral questions. The writer is showing why Jews do not seek, as he says, to make proselytes. "The Jews believe that the salvation of Gentile depends upon the practice of the morality taught in the law and the prophets, and that the observance of the ceremonial part, although binding upon Jews, has no reference whatever to those from without the pale of Judaism." Alas! is not this shutting God out of the matter? Is faith in Jesus a mere "ceremonial" thing? Is it not fatal to refuse Him if He is the true Messiah and Son of God? Is it not idolatry of the worst dye to worship Him if He be not? What did Moses say should be the portion of a false prophet and his adherents? (Deuteronomy 13:1-18) What did Moses say should become of those who hearken not to the words of the true Prophet, "like unto him." (Deuteronomy 18:1-22) The claims, the testimony of Jesus cannot be said, by a "conscientious Jew," to be innocuous if untrue. It is a poor morality which begins with ignoring the sin of blasphemy and imposture in the holy things of God. And if the confession of Jesus is not falsehood but the truth, where are the Jews, and what their morality? "Father, forgive them." "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

Vol 01 - Jerusalem ■ The Place of Wailing.

Vol 01 - Jerusalem — The Place of Wailing.

People and Land of Israel.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, September 1857.

(1st. Edition, September [01 1857 260])

[01 1857 256]

But as the sun was going westward, and the sabbath day rapidly approaching, we hastened toward the place of wailing. I found my own way, up one street, down another, through narrow alley after alley, and at last emerged suddenly in a small paved court or place, seventy or a hundred feet long by twenty broad, the east side of which was the high wall of massive stones on the west side of the mosque enclosure, which is without doubt the same wall that stood here, enclosing the temple in the days of its great glory. In this place the Jews are accustomed to assemble, and with low murmurs of prayer, to bewail the desolation of the holy places. Moslem rule forbids their nearer approach to their once holy hill.

The impression made on my mind by the scene here witnessed will never be effaced. Men, women, and children of all ages, from young infants to patriarchs of fourscore and ten, crowded the pavement and pressed their throbbing foreheads against the beloved stones. There was no formality of grief here. We waited till the crowd had thinned away and only a dozen remained. These were men of stately mien and imposing countenances: their long beards flowed down on their breasts, and tears, not a few, ran down their cheeks and fell on the pavement. There was one man of noble features that we especially noticed; whose countenance for more than half-an-hour seemed unmoved by any sensation of earth, save only that of grief too deep for expression. I approached close to him, but he did not look up at me. He sat on the pavement, his back to a wall of a house or garden, and his face to the wall that once enclosed the shrine of his ancestors. I looked over his shoulder, and saw that he was reading the mournful words of Isaiah; nor did I then wonder that he wept for the mockery that now occupied the place of the solemn services of the daily sacrifice, and the senseless Moslem traditions, which in vain essayed to cloud the glorious history of the mountain of the Lord.

Evening came down, and with the sunset the sabbath commenced. Still some old men lingered, and still we lingered too, for the scene was not to be witnessed elsewhere on all the earth. The children of Abraham approaching as nearly as they dared to the holy of holies, and murmuring in low voices of hushed grief and sobs of anguish their prayers to the great God of Jacob, some kissed the rocky wall with fervent lips — some knelt and pressed their foreheads to it — and some prayed in silent speechless grief, while tears fell like rain-drops before them.

I was deeply moved, as one might well be in the presence of this sad assembly — the last representatives, near the site of their ancient temple, of those who once thronged its glorious

courts and offered sacrifices to the God who had so long withdrawn His countenance from the race. A more abject race of men can hardly be conceived than are the down-trodden children of Israel in the city of their fathers, except when they assemble here where the majesty of their grief demands respect from every human heart. — Tent Life in the Holy Land.

Vol 01 - Rabbinical Criticism on the History of John the Baptist.

Vol 01 - Rabbinical Criticism on the History of John the Baptist.

People and Land of Israel.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, November 1857.

(1st. Edition, December [01 1857 309])

[01 1857 288]

In a recent number of the Jewish Chronicle there appeared an essay by Rabbi Isidor Kalisch, United States, the drift of which is to prove, if possible, that John the Baptist was a fictitious personage. Dr. Benisch also wishes to show thereby that intelligent Jews may and do read the Gospels with a strengthened conviction of their spuriousness. With what success the Rabbi and the editor of the Jewish Chronicle have stepped into the arena of evangelical controversy, our readers may soon judge.

The opening objection is, that "by the accounts given by the evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and John, John the Baptist appeared like a Deus ex machinâ; nobody knows whence he came, or how old he was when he obtained some influence over the people by preaching to and baptising them." Now, if these were the only notices given in the New Testament, such a remark would be captious enough. Let R.I.K. apply the same measure to the "important personage" of Genesis 14:1-24. Is not the introduction of the royal priest of Salem more abrupt and less authenticated, as far as human witnesses are concerned, while neither father nor mother is named? Over his beginning and his end there hangs an impenetrable cloud. Nobody knows whence he came, or how old he was when he obtained such paramount influence over the father of the faithful, that he gave him tithes of all. Incomparably more than John the Baptist does Melchizedek resemble a Deus ex machinâ, yet unlike his unbelieving seed, Abram stumbles not, but bows down for his blessing; and without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the greater. Moses alone recounts the wonderful facts; David long after refers to this mysterious priest as the type of Messiah. There is far more semblance of "meagreness" in their combined references to Melchizedek, than in any one of the New Testament accounts of John the Baptist. Every one of the evangelists implies that the forerunner of the Lord Jesus was notorious to all Judea, and that the effects of his preaching were marked and wide-spread, from Jerusalem throughout all the region round about Jordan. His person and his mode of life, his preaching and his baptising, his imprisonment and his death, are so narrated as to leave no other conclusion open, unless these modern Jews are prepared to throw overboard their own ancient traditions, and to maintain that Matthew, Mark, and John, with their several histories, are unreal, no less than John the Baptist.

But, besides meagreness, it is alleged that contradictions "appear, partly in each account, and partly by comparing the accounts with each other." The first is suppose to result from a comparison of Matthew 3:15-16, with Matthew 11:3. "How could such a question have been put if

John had indeed baptised Jesus, and witnessed all that is mentioned in Matthew 11:5?" But there is nothing herein save the sad and common lesson of man's failure. Much better might one cry out at the breaking down of the apostles themselves, and especially of Peter somewhat later; and yet the evangelists record this, yea, to their own shame. With equal reason might the Rabbi exclaim about David, Joshua, Aaron, Moses, Jacob, Abraham, and all, in short, from Adam downwards, — all save the Lord Jesus Himself. John, the herald of Messiah, was in prison, insulted and suffering, instead of triumphant. What could be more stumbling to faith, if human feeling wrought for a moment? Doubtless, this was not to believe the Lord, to sanctify Him in the eyes of the children of Israel. John the Baptist faltered under a heavy trial, as the apostle and the high priest of the Jewish profession had done before. Moreover, the Rabbi is mistaken in affirming that John the Baptist witnessed all that is mentioned in Matthew 11:5. This does not look like reading the gospels attentively, much less examining them critically, but rather eyeing them with the rash malice of an enemy. On the contrary, Matthew 11:2 tends to show that John had (not seen but) heard in the prison the works of the Messiah. John's disciples were desired to report to their master what they heard and saw. The miracles of Jesus were such and so great as to reassure a wavering heart, not to speak of the glad tidings preached to the poor — the last and best of all. "And blessed is he," adds the Lord, "whosoever shall not be offended in me." Jesus of Nazareth is the stumbling stone! Thus, even if John the Baptist had witnessed those miracles, which is contrary to the evidence, it would only show that he was but, too, like his Israelitish fathers, who believed Jehovah's word, sang His praise, and soon forgot all His works.

Still more groundless is the next "contradiction." It is the fruit of interpreting Matthew 3:1 perversely, so as to make it clash with Luke 3:2-3. The obvious answer is that Matthew does not place the baptism of Jesus under Archelaus; on the contrary, he leaves abundant space for successors, if need were, between Matthew 2:22-23, and Matthew 3:1. "In those days" does not refer to the days of Archelaus, but to the interval during which the Holy Family dwelt in Nazareth. Luke gives the precise date of our Lord's baptism, which Matthew in no way professes to do. Jesus was yet a young child when Joseph left Egypt, and Archelaus reigned over Judea, whereas the baptising in chap. 3 supposes the lapse of a quarter of a century. Then He who must be spared no shame in life or death, in a dwelling-place, or without one, emerged from the obscure and reproached shelter of so many blameless years, and was baptised of John in the Jordan. The Rabbi's gloss is the evidence of ill-will, not of intelligent perusal.

The most frivolous assault, perhaps, is that on Luke 1:1-80 which is said to be legendary, not historical. The first reason is so obscurely stated, that it is hard to know what is meant, but it seems founded on the improbability of Zechariah's using the same words as Abraham (Genesis 15:8; Luke 1:13), and this unbelievably! The second is the absurd pretence that the prophecy of Luke 1:20 was not fulfilled! The words of the angel did not promise the removal of the sentence when John the Baptist should be born, but made it impossible before. And God chose a most happy and suited moment when those who rejoiced at the child's birth came together for his circumcision, and learnt from the mother's word and the father's writing that his name was John. "Thou," said the angel to Zacharias, "shalt call his name John And, behold, thou shalt be dumb and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed." Just so, when his father named the child which was a sign of "these things," his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake and praised God. The angel did not appoint the time eight days

before.

The closing observations we are little concerned with, as they are an attack, not on the New Testament, but on the fifth chapter of Josephus' Antiq. Lib. 18:, which the Rabbi denounces as "smuggled in by Christian hands." An idea so much the more unfounded, as Josephus' history, while it wonderfully tallies with the Evangelists as to both Herod and Herodias on the one hand, and John's godliness, preaching, baptising, and vast influence on the other, differs, nevertheless, from the New Testament account of the cause of John's death. Is it not absurd to argue that Christians would foist into a Jew's writings that which materially varies from their own inspired works?

Vol 01 - The Silent Building of Solomon's Temple.

Vol 01 - The Silent Building of Solomon's Temple.

Things New and Old.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, December 1857;

(1st. Edition, (slightly longer) June [01 1856 017])

[01 1857 305]

When Bishop Heber read his beautiful poem, "Palestine," in manuscript to Sir Walter Scott, his friend remarked that in speaking of the Temple of Solomon he had forgotten to refer to the silence which prevailed during its erection. The poet immediately retired for a few minutes and introduced the following beautiful lines:

"No workman's steel, no ponderous axes rung;

Like some tall palm, the noiseless fabric sprung."

This very remarkable circumstance has been frequently noticed. It is regarded as an indication of the deep sense which Solomon had of the sacredness of the work; and it has given rise to many pious and useful meditations. Matthew Henry in his commentary says, "It was to be the temple of the God of peace, therefore no iron tool must be heard in it: quietness and silence both become and befriend religious exercises; God's work should be done with as much care and as little noise as may be; the temple was thrown down with axes and hammers; they that did it roared in the midst of the congregation, Psalms 74:4; Psalms 74:6; but it was built up in silence. Clamour and violence often hinder, but never further the work of God." These thoughts are well worthy of consideration, especially of those who can never assert their own opinions without violently assailing those of others; nor do anything for God, without inviting the multitude to come and see their zeal for the Lord of Hosts.

The fact itself, however, has lately received a remarkable confirmation of its truth. Mr. Douglas, a Scotch gentleman, writing to the Athenæum on the 3rd of May last, states that during a recent visit to Jerusalem he learned from a very intelligent Hebrew, that there were extensive quarries beneath the city, and that there was abundant evidence that from those quarries had been obtained the stones employed in the building and re-building of the temple. He had visited them some time before, with two Englishmen, and discovered that the quarries had contained materials sufficient for building the walls and the city of Jerusalem. We extract the following statement: "When fairly inside, we found ourselves in an immense vault, and standing upon the top of a pile which was very evidently formed by the accumulation of the minute particles from the final dressings of the blocks of stone. On descending this pile, we entered through a large arch, into another vault, equally vast, and separated from the first by enormous pillars. This vault, or quarry, led by a gradual descent, into another and another, each separated from the other by massive

stonework partitions, which had been left to give additional strength to the vaulted roofs. In some of the quarries the blocks of stone which had been quarried out lay partly dressed; in some the blocks were still attached to the rock; in some the workmen had just commenced chiselling; and in some the architect's line was distinct on the smooth face of the wall of the quarry. The mode in which the blocks were got out was similar to that used by the ancient Egyptians, as seen in the sandstone quarries at Hagar Tilsilis and in the granite quarries at Syene. The architect first drew the outline of the blocks on the face of the quarry; the workmen then chiselled them out in their whole thickness, separating them entirely from each other, and leaving them attached by their barks only to the solid wall. We spent between two and three hours in these quarries. Our examinations were, however, chiefly on the side towards the Valley of Jehoshaphat. Our guide stated that more to the westward was a quarry of the peculiar reddish marble so commonly used as pavement in the streets of Jerusalem. From the place where we entered the descent was gradual; between some of the quarries, however, there were broad flights of steps, cut out of the solid rock. I had no means of judging of the distance between the roofs of the vaults and the streets of the city, except that from the descent the thickness must be enormous. The size and extent of these excavations fully bore out the opinion that they had yielded stones enough to build not only the Temple, but the whole of Jerusalem.

"The situation of these quarries — the mode by which the stones were got out — and the evidence that the stones were fully prepared and dressed before being removed, may possibly throw light upon the verses of Scripture in which it is said — 2 Chronicles 2:18 — 'And he (Solomon) set threescore and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand to be hewers in the mountains, and three thousand and six hundred overseers to set the people a work.' And again — 1 Kings 6:7 — 'And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.'"

It could scarcely have been anticipated that at a period so remote from that in which the temple was erected, any evidence should arise, thus to confirm the statement concerning the silence observed in the building; yet this testimony has come forth as it were from the dead to verify the word of truth.

Vol 01 - Modern Hegelianism compared with Brahminism.

Vol 01 - Modern Hegelianism compared with Brahminism.

Things New and Old.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Vol. 1, Addendum (2) re-issued in 1868.

[01:354]

"Upwards of thirty years ago a professor in one of the German universities taught a new philosophical system, which was greatly admired, and considered to exhibit most astonishing progress in the development of the human mind; — and what is it? Nothing more or less than the most common Brahminism, as it has existed here in India for upwards of 2000 years. I shall briefly mention the three chief points of this system.

"Hegel and his disciples, of which Strauss is one, say: God Almighty, the Creator, must reveal Himself, go out of life, — being the subject, become His object. They say, this world is the personification of God, His second Person, and there is no other revelation. The creation of the world out of nothing we believe, they say; but it must be rightly understood. Nothing is not nothing; nothing means that which was nothing, namely, God, before His manifestation or effusion in the world. What do the Hindus reason in regard to the same subject? They speculate on the nature of God: whether He is nothing, or everything; whether He is gunman or nirgun; with qualities or attributes, or without; whether He can reveal Himself, or not. The Brahmins and Hindus know no other God but the world. A transcendental, pure, and holy God they can form no notion of.

"Again, Hegel and Strauss assert that everything which is is reasonable — is as it ought to be. This is exactly what the Hindus argue, and this leads them to the second conclusion, namely, that there is no sin nor guilt, no accountableness, no personal responsibility. What men call sin is regarded only as a step to further development and greater improvement. All that is done is done by God: how, then, can there be sin or guilt? What an awful delusion is this! Look to the life the Hindus lead: no truthfulness, no gratitude, no chastity, no purity, a total abandonment to all vice and crime, no family life, — and where there is no family tie, there can be no happiness, no blessing anywhere. How clever and cunning are the natives in all that concerns their own interests, in all worldly affairs and temporal matters; but how perverted and blind in all spiritual things, in all that concerns their immortal soul. The consequences of the Hegelian philosophy, where it has penetrated the mass of the people, have been just as fearful and baneful.

"The third point in which this modern philosophy coincides with Hinduism is the distinct denial of a personal existence after death. What an arrogance, what a selfishness and pride of men, they exclaim, of worms of the dust, to claim a personal existence after death! As one drop of water loses its separate existence when falling into the ocean, so man, when dying, loses his personality in God, And what is the consequence of such a system of Pantheism? The complete degradation, the extreme ignorance and excessive misery of the lower classes of Germany, only lately brought

to light by the efforts of the Home Mission, are more or less the consequences of a godless education, and of practical Pantheism Yea, the disciples of Hegel go even so far as to say, that Christianity has brought extreme woe over mankind, by oppressing the flesh, and that they desire to reinstate it in its rights! 'Woe unto them,' the Bible says, 'that call evil good, and good evil, that put darkness for light, and light for darkness.' Fearful in the extreme are the consequences of such a system, openly taught and widely spread. The fruits are described by the apostle Paul, in the latter part of the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. Are we wrong, are we too severe, when we call such a system diabolical, satanical? Education, without christian principles and opposed to the Bible, cannot but do incalculable injury and great harm. The natives in this country, without education, are little elevated above animal existence. Train them up in all arts and sciences, products of [mind and taste] without giving them the Bible, the word of God, without implanting christian principles, and you will train them to be enemies of God and man. The Hegelian philosophy shows us that the human mind under the most favourable circumstances, under the highest mental training and culture, when not influenced by the word [and Spirit] of God, cannot advance a step towards obtaining truth, but must fall into the most dangerous errors, which again lead to a most immoral life and to vicious practices."

(Cited, with omissions, from Dr. Prochnow, in News of the Churches.)

Vol 01 - The Mind of Christ. 1Co_2:1-16.

Vol 01 - The Mind of Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:1-16.

Things New and Old.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, April 1857.

(1st. Edition, April [01 1857 181])

[01 1857 177]

The mind of Christ is what belongs to the saint as a new man. The Spirit of God first quickened, and now he has the mind of Christ, to mind the things above, as quickened out of the system of this world. He has the intelligence of Christ, through the Holy Ghost and the word. It is the communicated mind of God as it has formed itself in His purposes of Christ.

When taught of God, we shall find proportion in truth; it will find its place. Where this is not the case, persons will overstate or wrongly apply truth, and find it will not tell. Then, in place of judging themselves, they will judge the truth, and make no progress.

Error in judgement is connected with wrongness of affection. When the man in the parable said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused," it was as much as to say, I prefer oxen to the supper. If a person says, I cannot see, then his eye is not single; he cannot justify himself before God. "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." Whenever we walk in conscience before God, we shall find our path simple: having the mind of Christ, things are as clear as day.

We have in Acts 13:1-52 an instance of the ability of applying scripture, with the mind of Christ, to the circumstances in which they were. "Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and said, it was necessary," etc. In this scripture we do not find positive particular command to Paul or Barnabas; but as having the mind of Christ, they could find command there and say, "for so hath the Lord commanded us" The apostle found his place with Jesus. (See Isaiah 49:6.)

Vol 01 - A Few Words on Ecclesiastes and Canticles.

Vol 01 - A Few Words on Ecclesiastes and Canticles.

Things New and Old.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, May 1857.

(1st. Edition, May [01 1857 197])

[01 1857 194]

In the Book of Ecclesiastes we get the man Solomon, the wisest of monarchs, seeking out that good under the sun with which man may satisfy himself. He goes to prove his heart with mirth and folly and wisdom, with learning, philosophy, natural history, music, wine, wealth, and the special delights of kings. His wisdom, too, remains with him. God allows him, as it were, to try what is to be found on earth. And what does it all come to? Just this: "all is vanity and vexation of spirit; vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

In the Song of Solomon we get another thing — the soul satisfied with one object only, desirous to grasp it more largely and to enter into it more fully. That object is CHRIST, the object of the soul's affections. If we have but one object, we shall be satisfied with His goodness and loving-kindness, and we shall seek only to know its fullness. If it be said, "Well, I want to experience that the world cannot satisfy," I answer that Solomon has far more experience than you ever can have: he fully tried it, and all is vanity and vexation of spirit. But as in Canticles, when the soul is satisfied with one object, and that object is Christ, all is peace and satisfaction: "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste."

Vol 01 - A Few Words on Modern Criticism.

Vol 01 - A Few Words on Modern Criticism.

Things New and Old.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, September 1857.

(1st. Edition, September [01 1857 261])

[01 1857 257]

In almost all the critical works of our times, we find a deep-seated deadness of the mind to the real essential character of the divine word; a blindness which is incapable of seeing the spiritual and heavenly character of scripture. It is only by remembering this sad fact, that one can comprehend how it was possible for criticism to subject the text to such cruel tortures: only thus one can account for the cool indifference with which such indignities to God's word are regarded, even where they are not received. And this spiritual disorder arises simply from the fact, that the fundamental relations of the heart to God and divine things are not right; that there is wanting fear and reverence before His majesty, not to speak of confidence in His love; that light and darkness are not really distinguished, and carefully kept separate (Isaiah 66:2). From olden times it has been thought a heinous crime to remove landmarks; but it is the boast of our day to blot out the holiest of all boundary-lines, that between truth and error. Man — Satan — invents something intermediate, and is applauded for boldness and originality of thought. Our fathers knew well what they said when they maintained that the testimony of the Holy Spirit was the worst canon of Bible criticism. He who emancipates himself from this subjection of the conscience to the word of God, is an unbiblical critic. Let us not sever, on any point, knowledge and the conscience; let us give way to no sophisms, however specious, but adhere in theological questions of all kinds to moral bearings and connections. This is, above all, an imperative obligation in the case of those sacred writers to whom we are indebted for all the revealed light we possess, and of whom we find throughout, that their sense of God's authority and truth was strong and delicate in a most eminent degree (1 Timothy 2:7; John 19:35; 2 Peter 1:16). It is by no means narrow-minded to proceed from such a starting point; it is inward liberty from the thralldom of human wilfulness; it is natural, sound, unsophisticated sense, which alone leads us to a right, holy, and thorough understanding of the truth. Men have lost faith in the supernatural, not because they have gained, but chiefly because they have lost knowledge of nature, no less than of what is above nature.

Modern theology deeply needs to be reminded of that word, "God made man upright, but he sought out many inventions." I know from my own experience, in which I was not spared the passing through the furnace of criticism, that it is the simple foundation truths, to which our conscience bears witness, that form the decisive and all-pervading element, and that they are able to refute the dazzling deductions of a science which refuses to place itself in the light of God's all-righteous countenance. In a time like ours, when the gospel, not only in its links with the mysteries of Christ, but even in its most simple and essential elements, is foolishness to the

Greeks, yea, to the noblest among them, it is of paramount importance to be faithful in these first principles, which, however insignificant they may appear, are the foundation of all the rest. IGNOTUS.

Vol 01 - Poetry.

Vol 01 - Poetry

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, November 1857

(1st. Edition, June [01 1856 018])

[01 1857 290]

Faith and Its Fruits.

Where'er the patriarch pitched his tent,

He built an altar to His God;

And sanctified, where'er he went,

With faith and prayer, the ground he trod.

Through all the east for riches famed,

(Heaven's gifts) he set his heart on none;

Nor when the dearest was reclaimed,

Withheld his son, his only son.

Wherefore in blessing he was blest;

Friendless, the friend of God became;

Long wandering, everywhere found rest;

Long childless, nations bear his name. Nor nations born of blood alone;

The father of the faithful he,

Where'er his promised seed is known,

Faith's heirs are his posterity. My God, if called like him to roam,

Glad may I all for thee forsake;

My God, what thou hast made my home,

Let me thy sanctuary make.

Thy law, thy love, be my delight,

Whate'er I do, or think, or am,

Walking by faith, and not by sight,

Like a true child of Abraham.

James Montgomery.

Vol 01 - The 'Latter-Day Saints'

Vol 01 - The 'Latter-Day Saints'

Bible Treasury, 2nd. Edition, Volume 1, November 1856.

(1st. Edition, November 1856 [01 1856 099])

[01 1856 098]

We insert the following letter, which has been sent to us for this purpose, in the hope that the Satan-deluded author of the pamphlet referred to, and his approving readers may see it, peruse it, and take warning ere it be too late:

2, Little's Lane, Wolverhampton.

7 Oct., 1856.

To Mr. Charles F. Jones.

Sir, — Having recently received from you a very singular pamphlet, called "Marriage and Morals in Utah," I am constrained to say a few words upon it to you. This I do both as a Christian man, and as a servant of the Lord; not as being appointed to any office, or as giving forth the sentiments of any class of persons.

Observe! I do not write in the tone of offence, or as one offended, but with much pain and sorrow of heart that anything so defiling and injurious to the truth should have emanated from any class of persons calling themselves "saints" (holy persons), and should ever have been wickedly fathered upon the character of the ever blessed God, the object of all true adoration and worship.

In this pamphlet I am pained to observe that there is nothing said about what can give relief to a troubled conscience; about the calling of "saints" to heaven, and their walking worthy of that "calling"; and about the person and work of the Son of God: but only about the perpetuation of our species, and the desire to get possession of as wide a space of the earth as possible; as if our whole destiny and need were met in such carnal wretched pursuits as these. Is it not monstrous that anything so low and grovelling can occupy "saints" (and that too in laying down principles for the government of a new state), and can be made the subject of their teaching? How suited to inflame the passions of the carnal heart, from the dominion of which Jesus came to deliver us.

And because a species of polygamy was permitted in early times, yet, after its condemnation by our Lord Jesus Christ (after the folly and sin of man have made his own desire manifest), it is assumed in this pamphlet, that polygamy is still to continue; and to this, abominable adultery is added. It is further intimated that this is what is meant by the "everlasting covenant," although it is quite plain that that covenant had to do with the earth, and that even to this day it has not received its full accomplishment. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ," Galatians 3:16. "But

when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son to redeem," etc., Galatians 4:4-6. Is it, then, more wives, or redemption, that poor, fallen, and degraded man wants. And yet, alas for the blindness of such writers! it is, taught in this pamphlet, that marriage and the earth are what we are to be occupied about, and not redemption. And when God says to the "saints" at Corinth, 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new"; 1:e., of course, only to real Christians, here are other self-called "saints," according to your pamphlet, teaching that it is the old creature we are to be occupied about. With you it is the old Adam, the earth, and more wives; with God it is the new creature, the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven, 1 Corinthians 15:47. Does such a perversion of the truth come from heaven or hell?

Sir, it is shocking to father such sentiments as these upon a holy God, "who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and who cannot look upon sin"! And were I not instructed from Holy Scripture to believe that such things should come in these "last days," I should indeed wonder that hell itself could ever invent things so truly wicked and defiling as those recommended in your pamphlet. Let me solemnly remind you of what is said of false prophets and teachers: "To the law, and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light (morning, see margin) in them," Isaiah 8:20. Such doctrine is not of the morning, but is of the night and "darkness," John 3:20-21. "If any man, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel than that which I have preached let him be accursed," Galatians 1:8.

Let "marriage and morals in Utah" be what they may, it will soon be seen that "many will come and say, Lord! Lord! open to us but then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me," etc., Matthew 7:15-23. And further on in time, "the heavens will pass away, and the elements melt with fervent heat," etc., 2 Peter 3:10. We want something that will secure us then and now! What has marriage and morals to do with meeting the need of the human conscience, furnishing an adequate object for new-born affections, and lifting a poor soul into the presence of God, and giving him the assurance that God loves him in Jesus?

I could say much more, but forbear, praying that a holy and merciful God may rebuke the daring impiety of the Mormons, and in his great mercy rescue them from their delusion. "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them who are lost," etc., 2 Corinthians 4:3-4. With proper estimation suited to the case,

I am, Sir, yours truly, Richard Timley.

Vol 01 - On Mr. Elliott's Apocalyptic Interpretation.

Vol 01 - On Mr. Elliott's Apocalyptic Interpretation.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, August 1857.

(1st. Edition, August [01 245])

[01 1857 241]

My Dear Brother in Christ,

I have read enough of the "Horæ Apocalypticæ," to convince myself of its unsoundness in general.

The foundation principles of interpretation are found succinctly laid down in chap. 5 (vol. 1); the remainder being simply an examination into the events of history, with a view to apply and illustrate them. It is not therefore necessary to follow him through all these statements, the leading theory being the most material point to be attended to. For even admitting that the historical facts accord with the principles advocated, this would not be sufficient. Such tallying may be allowed as secondary evidence of that which has been previously demonstrated upon independent grounds. But Mr. E. does not thus advance them, (i.e., not upon proofs derived from scripture only, irrespectively of uninspired records). His mode of procedure is a "petitio principii." He assumes his principles, and then proceeds to try and show the extreme probability by an appeal to history. This method should be carefully used at all times, when the meaning of the Holy Ghost is the enquiry; and perhaps not at all, except in some point of detail, and where no fundamental question is involved. To apply it to the subject-matter of the Holy Ghost in the very basis and frame-work of prophetic truth, is in my judgement an act of self-sufficiency incompatible with a due subjection to the Holy Ghost, and tends to produce and encourage a similar spirit in the reader. The prophetic, like the doctrinal, and other parts of the word of God, are not to be mastered as books of science and general knowledge. The latter require intellectual ability only, and make no demand upon the moral aptitudes of the student. Not so the former. They were given by the Holy Ghost, and for reasons far other than even a carnally minded christian would think of. They appeal to the renewed mind, and imperatively call for a true soul in fellowship with the purposes of God. For lack of this we find that the very saints of God do not seem able to judge between things that differ widely. Take for example the views of many Christians as to the walk of the Church. Having little fellowship with the thoughts of God respecting the body He is now forming by the Spirit for the Lord Jesus Christ, they do not see the inconsistency of believers standing in what contravenes some, at least, of the primary principles of the Church. So with their views of what is delivered by the Spirit concerning things to come. The author says he assumes the subject-matter of the Apocalypse to be the continuous fortunes of the Church, and the world (i.e., of the Christian Church and the Roman world). What right has the author so to assume? Is not the legitimate sphere of hypothesis that in which no primary evidence is found? Further assumptions should always be closely tested by the subject-matter to which they belong. Even when this has been done with a certain measure of satisfactory result, they may often all be wrong. So that a scheme

which rests only on assumptions, however probable, is but a probability after all. Now to rest the interpretation of the Apocalypse, — a portion vitally connected with the preceding prophetic utterances of the Holy Ghost, not only in details but essentially; belonging to the same great structure of prophetic truth which the Spirit began to rear by the Old Testament prophets — to rest this, I say, upon mere assumptions is not less unwise than unwarrantable. If it is not necessary for Old Testament prophecy, why for the Apocalypse? Are we prepared to say that the older prophecies present no evidence of their meaning sufficient to give an insight through the Spirit, as definite as is needful? And if this is so with the Old Testament, is it otherwise with the Apocalypse, organically connected as it is with what went before? Is there not adequate instructions in the scriptures of truth to teach the humble and dependent soul, and thus to render needless, if not dangerous, all assumptions as to the scope and subject-matter of prophecy? That Mr E. resorts to such an expedient is a plain proof that he feels that he has no other ground to stand upon. The sphere, subject-matter, and the essential character of the Spirit's testimonies in the Apocalypse, are taken for granted. Is this necessary? Suffer me to bring one of his assumptions to the test. First, he says, "the subject-matter of the Apocalyptic seals is the temporary glory of Pagan Rome, and its ravages and destruction by the Goths, Saracens, and Turks, after it had become christianised, and that the decline and fall of Pagan Rome was owing to the advancing power of Christianity." If this were so, what are we called upon to believe? That all the seals are past! and that the first six trumpets have received their accomplishment already! Accordingly the events under the seals have relation to the transient splendour, the wane and the extinction of the Pagan Roman world before the power of Christianity. Mark the words, before the power of Christianity. I am told that the day of the Lamb's wrath had arrived, when the forces under Licinius were defeated by Constantine * — that then and before some noted personages who had persecuted the Christians, and Licinius who had opposed Constantine, — whom the author seems to think divinely commissioned by the Lord to assume the emblem of His passion as the badge of his commission, to go forth, in the name of the Prince of Peace, and scatter war and destruction among men — had remorse on their death-bed because of their conduct, and that the object that inspired their dread was the wrath of the Lamb! Supposing that individuals may have died in remorse of conscience, and under a vague apprehension of judgement after death, what was there in such things at all on a moral level with the language of the sixth vial? A few great men are made to mean the kings of the earth, the great men and the chief captains, and the mighty men! Licinius and his defeated soldiers represent all these, and every bondman and ever freeman besides! What parallel between the death-bed terrors of a few Roman Emperors or the consternation of the forces under Licinius at their defeat by Constantine, and the great day of the Lamb's wrath, which is to be visible to all and to inspire universal terror through all the earth, for who shall be able to stand? Again, the fifth seal reveals martyr's blood shed like water upon the earth; and yet, according to the "Horæ," this was included among the events which marked the progress of triumphing Christianity, before which the Paganism of the "world's mistress" became changed into the Christianity of the Church of God.

[* Revelation 6:16-17, does not disclose the actual presence of that day, but a fearful convulsion which produced this apprehension in men's minds. They said "the great day of His wrath is come." The Spirit did not say this. Mr E. is right thus far in my opinion. It is the expression of human terror, not God's utterance, save as predicting men's hearts failing them for fear. — Ed.]

Now I ask myself what is there in any of the Apocalyptic seals that has the characteristics of truth's progress on the earth? Is the mighty conqueror under the first seal; is universal murder under the second seal? is black famine under the third; is the march of death over the fourth part of the earth, with hell his follower slaying with the sword, with hunger, with pestilence, and with wild beasts (therion), under the fourth; is the cry of the martyrs souls beneath the altar for vengeance under the fifth, and the persecution and slaughter of many more upon the earth after a little season; or the great earthquake leading men to anticipate the wrath of the Lamb under the sixth seal: are these things marked by any real resemblance to the progress of God's truth, or the victories of the gospel? The heart that can say "yes" can have little spiritual power to hold the balances of the sanctuary. A greater perversion of this part of the Spirit's revelations is scarcely possible. It indicates, to my mind at least, how little there is of that priestly discrimination to put a difference between holy and unholy things, which the functions of the sanctuary of God imperatively demand.

The Lord Jesus said, "he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." That a Christian can take the words of the Holy Ghost, "the temple and holy city" to be expressive of Pagan or even of Christianised Rome, marks an obliquity of judgement that renders him, in my opinion, an unsafe expounder of the lively oracles of God. The character of his interpretation bears no affinity to the grandeur of the Spirit's utterances; while the subject-matter of the two is marked by just the difference between the holy and profane. Could Christianised Rome be other than an unclean thing before God? Is not Constantine's assumption of the labarum a libel upon the heavenly source and character of Christianity? You will thus perceive that my doubts whether the Protestant præterist principle of Apocalyptic interpretation were sound have been converted into convictions of its unsoundness by the perusal of the "Horæ."

I have said so much, feeling that I ought not to commend but rather to contend against a work which, I am satisfied, is really hostile to the interests of God's truth, and to Christ's glory in the earth.

Yours in the truth, R. S.

Vol 01 - Answers to Queries on Psa_24:1-10.

Vol 01 - Answers to Queries on Psalms 24:1-10.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, August 1857. [1st Edition answer is different]

[01 1857 241]

This is truly a millennial psalm, in the form of a dialogue of which there are many instances in the Hebrew writings (Psalms 91:1-16 ;, Isaiah 53:4). It contains just an acknowledgement of Jehovah's title to the earth — He founded it and established it; it is His and all that it contains. Then follows the question "Who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah?" etc. The answer is, he of clean hands and a pure heart, free from idolatry and profaneness. Such shall be blessed; and such is the generation to come. But when the godly remnant shall thus appear, another appears at their head, the suffering Messiah, the Shepherd of Israel, the King of glory entering by the everlasting doors. Who is he, this King of glory? Jehovah strong and mighty, Jehovah mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates. Jehovah of hosts, He is the King of glory, erst a reproach of men and despised of the people, yea forsaken of His God on the cross. What a discovery for Israel!

Vol 01 - Our Study.

Vol 01 - Our Study.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, May 1857.

(1st. Edition, May [01 1857 198])

[01 1857 193]

Notes on the Book of Genesis. London: Gregg, 24 Warwick Lane, Paternoster Row.

Here is a little work which may be safely and strongly recommended, as a suitable book, both for enquiring Christians who desire to search into the living oracles, and for those whose souls are at all awakened to their true condition. It traverses a large and varied surface, inasmuch as the book of scripture of which it treats is, when typically viewed, one of the richest tracts where all is rich. It also abounds in forcible appeals to every heart, in plain, perspicuous language.

The Apocalypse of Saint John. A New Translation, Metrically arranged with Scripture Illustration. London: Jackson & Walford, 18 St. Paul's Churchyard. 1856.

An interesting attempt to arrange the one prophetic book of the New Testament according to the parallelistic method of Old Testament poetry. There are a few turns given, in the translation, which are not unhappy; but, on the whole, it fails in representing the apostle John's majestic simplicity. Who, indeed, has succeeded? Mr. Godwin, however, not only imparts too free and modern an air, but he inclines a great deal too much to the not infrequently rash changes of Lachmann and other critics. In one instance (Revelation 2:13) he has gone beyond all, and ventures to give a verb, instead of the proper name Antipas, and to render the clause, "and in the days thou wast arraigned." He says that in this he follows some of the oldest MSS. and Versions. Now it is true that the Coptic diverges in one direction, the Syriac, etc., in another, and that the Alexandrian copy, followed by some later ones, spells the word so as possibly to mean a verb; but we are not aware of any authority for Mr. G.'s version, and we have no doubt that a man's name is intended. Mr. G. leans toward the Neronian date, in spite of the testimony of Irenaeus; and this upon the slender ground that the internal evidence (i.e., his view) points to the time before the fall of Judaism and Jerusalem. Accordingly Mr. G. makes the seals refer to Jews, the trumpets to idolaters, and the vials "to those who, giving their homage to force and fraud, are really worshippers of Satan" — a scheme in evident accordance with German mysticism and directly tending to blunt the edge of this sharp, prophetic sword of the Lord.

Vol 01 - The Scriptural Museum

Vol 01 - The Scriptural Museum

Inaugural Lecture by Sir H. Rawlinson.

Notes of the Month.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, March 1857.

(1st. Edition, February [01 1857 149])

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The lectures of this new Museum were opened on the evening of January 8th, by the well known Oriental explorer. On the platform were a model of Nebuchadnezzar's temple, and a slab inscribed with cuneiform characters. The Subject was — "Recent Oriental discoveries in relation to the Bible." Sir H. Rawlinson began by urging the great value of the visible and tangible illustrations of scripture history, which recent researches had brought to light.

For 2000 years the Bible had rested chiefly on internal evidence, and that evidence was, indeed, sufficient for all earnest and truth-seeking people. But there were others who would not be at the pains to examine internal evidence, and to them these extraneous corroborations of Biblical statements might speak powerfully. The cuneiform inscriptions, the key to deciphering which had only been discovered within the last twenty years, had brought to light a great variety of Assyrian and Babylonian historic records, running contemporaneously with scripture narrative, and affording innumerable points of contact; and wherever such contact occurred, there was always found to be a coincidence between the two, showing incontestably the genuineness and authenticity of scripture. Coming to details, he adduced proofs of correspondence between the statements of the inspired volume and the deductions from monumental inscriptions in several leading particulars, under the heads of ethnology, mythology, geography, and history. The earliest period, to which the inscriptions on the cylinders and tablets he had found positively referred, was about 2000 years before Christ, though there were some indications of the time before the Flood. Thus, Babylonia, to which the early portion of scripture history refers, was called the country of the four rivers, and those rivers he believed to signify the Tigris and Euphrates, with their two principal branches. The whole country of Assyria had been excavated in the course of his researches, and cylinders, tablets, and prisms had been extracted from the ruins of the ancient temples, filled with inscriptions, which had now been deciphered; and in many instances, they served not only to verify scripture, but to throw light upon and explain passages which had hitherto been obscure. It appeared from these inscriptions, that, in the earliest time, a colony had been led by Nimrod from Egypt into Mesopotamia. [?] Nimrod was a Cushite, and belonged to the family of Ham. He was afterwards worshipped as a divinity, by the name of Nergal, (2 Kings 17:30,) whose attributes were equivalent to those of Mars. The inscriptions enabled Sir H. to explain the meaning of many names of early scripture history, all of which were significant. Thus, Shem, Ham, and Japheth signified the

parts of the country they inhabited. The meaning of Ham was the right hand, indicating that he lived in Arabia; Shem signified the left, or Assyria; and Japbeth was the intermediate country. The names of Europe and Asia are purely Babylonian, meaning the setting and the rising of the sun, which names were afterwards adopted by the Greeks. The name Shinar was really a Hammite name of the country; and after the people of Nimrod had been driven into the mountains they took the name of Shinar with them. Sir H. said that the descendants of Ham were in the habit of counting by sixties. They divided day and night into sixty hours instead of twenty-four hours It is a remarkable fact, he observed, that the Indians also reckoned by sixties, which indicated a connection between the Chaldees and Indians of which there are no records. The inscriptions throw light on the meaning of the names of the gods of Babylon, and show, by the functions assigned to their gods, their representatives in the mythology of the Greeks and Romans. The names of the gods sometimes signified sentences, of which the first syllable was the name, the second was the verb, and the third the object.

The inscriptions, he said, present a complete tableau of ancient Assyria, by which the name and situation of every town of note mentioned in the Bible can be identified. Sir Henry addressed himself specially to the historical coincidences extending over a period of 2000 years. He had found the record of a king corresponding with the Chedorlaomer of Gen 14, 1900 years B.C., and who was described by the epithet "the ravager of Syria." For about 1000 years after this there was no point of contact between profane and sacred history, but this Sir Henry accounted for from the circumstance that, during that period, there was no inducement for intercourse between the Assyrians and the Jews. The circumstances disclosed relating to the mode of government of Northern Arabia verified the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, for it appeared that that country was ruled by queens, and not by kings. One of the most interesting periods in relation to which coincidences had been discovered related to that of Sennacherib and Hezekiah. The explorations had brought to light the annals of Sennacherib, written by himself, or by his direction, occupying 800 lines; and the account they gave of his first campaign, when he was pacified by a tribute, corresponded in the most striking manner with 2 Kings 18:1-37. To illustrate this Sir Henry read passages from the chapter, and then from the annals, showing minute correspondences in the names of places, especially Lachish, the amount of tribute received from the Jewish king, "three hundred talents of silver and thirty pieces of gold" (ver. 14), and so forth. It appeared from this inscription, however, that upwards of 200,000 Jews were taken into captivity by Sennacherib after that first campaign, and Sir Henry Rawlinson expressed the opinion that there were four distinct captivities of the Jews. There occurs in Sennacherib's account of his wars with Hezekiah, the remarkable passage, "Then I prayed to God," which is the only instance in the whole of the inscriptions in which the Deity is mentioned without some heathen adjunct. One of the latest excavations brought to light inscriptions referring to the time of Nebuchadnezzar. It was made in the ruins of the Tower of Nimrod, which was supposed by some to be the Tower of Babel. These cylinders, besides other interesting records, threw light on a point regarding Belshazzar which had hitherto appeared obscure, for no such name occurs in any ancient history but that of the Bible. It appeared, however, that Belshazzar was joint king with his father Minus, and that he shut himself in Babylon, whilst the other king, his father, took refuge elsewhere. Profane historians have not mentioned Belshazzar, because he was considered subordinate to his father. Sir Henry, having mentioned other numerous facts, concluded by a renewed expression of his sense of the importance of these discoveries, viewed more especially as a practical refutation of the mythical

theories of German Neologians. We had by this means evidence at once visible and convincing to verify the statements of holy writ, and it was not the language of pride or boasting to say that he felt great satisfaction in being, with others, an humble instrument under God in strengthening the authority of His word, so far as external evidence could go.

At the recent Meeting of the Asiatic Society, Sir H. Rawlinson exhibited twenty-four sheets of cuneiform inscriptions, as part of a great work he was editing for the British Museum. The legend belonged to Tiglath-Pileser, and dated from the twelfth century (B.C.), referring to a restored temple in the city, carrying back the Chaldean Chronology to the eighteenth century (B.C.), together with an enumeration of the four immediate ancestors of the king, and a record of his conquest of Egypt and of the submission of the Chismonians, who inhabited Phoenicia before the Semitic colonisation of the country. The second inscription, it was stated, would contain the annals of the great Sardanapalus, recovered from the temple of Hercules on the great mound of Nimrud, which is now known to represent the Calneh of the Bible. The third inscription exhibited was a copy of the famous cylinder or hexagonal prism of Sennacherib, found at Nineveh, and now deposited in the British Museum. He gave it as his opinion that there was as much accuracy in his system of interpretation as in that by which Latin and Greek texts were read.

Vol 01 - Notes of the Month.

Vol 01 - Notes of the Month.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, April 1857.

(1st. Edition, April [01 1857 182])

[01 1857 177]

A circular letter has been issued by the Committee of the Lancashire Independent College, on the charges brought against Mr. Davidson's contribution to the last edition of Horne's Introduction. It is a feeble and faithless production, fully justifying the fears which godly men outside the Congregational body could not but feel, when they noticed the insensibility to the glory of Christ which the Rivulet Controversy brought to light. For it soon became a question, not of Mr. Lynch, but of the London dissenting chiefs. Naturally they did and said what they could to convince others of their soundness in the faith. Letters, pamphlets, books, appeared by one or other of the fifteen, intended to convey strong impressions of their own orthodoxy. But no such effort has done away with the plain and utterly condemning fact, that they endorse, as Christian, and as in the main sound, a writer and writings which undermine nearly all the foundation truths of revelation. Altogether akin, and proving that the provinces are tainted, as well as the metropolis, is the Committee's judgement of Dr. D. It admits a number of petty faults, as hasty, incautious, inaccurate, and contradictory statements; it pleads the variety, peculiarity, and difficulty of his task; it urges that while many passages, taken by themselves, seem to indicate unsatisfactory views, others, and especially the author's oral explanations, fully satisfied his examiners that he holds all the vital truths impugned, and that he maintains the inspiration of the Bible! They characterise it as a "noble work," throughout manifesting reverence for the authority of scripture. The result is an unanimous vote of continued confidence in Dr. D's theological views generally, with a request for published explanations, as soon and as kindly as a due regard to the case and his own position will allow; and this, in the face of the fact that both his colleagues have disclaimed his part of their joint-work with horror, and that his very publishers have felt it needful to deal with it as unworthy of confidence! Such an opinion from the Committee is to us a graver symptom than Dr. D's book.

Vol 01 - Fragments Gathered up.

Vol 01 - Fragments Gathered up.

J. N. Darby, Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, December 1857.

(1st. Edition, December [01 1857 310])

[01 1857 306]

Perfection.— When it is said, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," (Matthew 5:48), Jesus Himself explains this passage by what precedes. This perfection consists in acting according to love and not according to the law of retaliation which says, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." It is the acting towards men according to the principle of God acting towards us according to the grace of our heavenly Father. There is no question here as to the root of sin in our nature.

This word perfection is used in connection with the three great revelations of God. He made Himself known to Abraham as the Almighty, to the Jews as the Eternal, and to Christians as Father. God said to Abraham, "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect:" thus signifying that he ought to walk before God, trusting continually in His power as Almighty. Abraham did not do this — he failed in this respect, for he spoke falsehood (Genesis 20:2), just because he was not trusting in the almighty power of God. The question is not as to sin in Abraham's fallen nature, but of acting in full confidence in God's omnipotence. In fact, Abraham had still sin, and he fell.

It was said to the Israelites, "Thou shalt be perfect with Jehovah thy God (Deuteronomy 18:13). The matter in hand here was their not imitating the abominations of the Canaanites in their idolatries; but there was no question of the state of purification from all sin, of the heart of one Israelite or another. The contrary is so true that in the same book (Deut 39: 4) Moses says to them, "Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day."

Thirdly, it is said (Matthew 5:48), "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." We at once observe a difference in the expressions. It is not said, Be perfect "before me," or "with thy God," as was said to Abraham and to the Israelites, because the name of Father reveals to us the fullness of grace. According to this sweet name they were already children, accepted in Christ as Christ is accepted of the Father. They were already made accepted in the Beloved; righteous before God as Christ is righteous; loved as Jesus is loved. Now it is not said, Present to God a character of perfection, such that you should be accepted of Him through this means, and that you should be well-pleasing to Him; but you are the children of your heavenly Father — therefore display His character to the world. "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." He acts according to His grace, and not according to the law: you saved sinners, you are and ought to be witnesses of it. The

publicans love those who love them, but your heavenly Father loves His enemies. Act according to this rule, and be perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. It is not said, Be perfect before Him, or with Him, as if you were without sin, but like Him, act in love towards your enemies.

There is no question here as to whether sin is or is not in the flesh, but of the principle which ought to direct the conduct of God's children, in contrast with the principle of the law or of natural justice. But if to be perfect as my heavenly Father is to be applied to the absence of the sin of my nature, if it means that I resemble Him perfectly in this respect, seeing that perfection, according to those who hold that doctrine, still leaves things which expose us to eternal damnation, the same thing would be true of the divine perfection — an idea which, of course, would be the grossest impiety and absurdity.

Vol 01 - Introductory Address.

Vol 01 - Introductory Address.

W. Kelly, Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, June 1856.

[01 1856 003]

The name of this periodical is not one which I should have chosen, as it wears a pretentious air — least to an unfriendly eye. But the project was unknown to me till after the first number, or the second, was in the hands of its readers. To the third I contributed the first of a series. From the eighth number the editorial care was mine; not long after the entire responsibility devolved on me. Though never liking the title as a question of taste and feeling, I saw in it no sufficiently serious objection to risk the confusion which must have ensued from a change of name. If the work be a poor "Treasury," as I cannot but feel, "the Bible," at any rate, is in God's grace a rich and unfailing source of supply:

Accordingly, whilst the prophetic word has not been neglected throughout the past eleven years, I may say, of its course, the reader can bear witness that there has been the continual desire to draw from every province of Scripture, avoiding no truth which God has revealed for our instruction. The person and the work of Christ, the expectations of Israel from of old, the prospects of the world, the hope of the Christian and of the Church, the dispensations and the kingdom of God, have all been treated, most of these subjects frequently and by various pens; and this with a direct view to the practical profit of souls. Exposition of Scripture (Old Testament and New, portions and whole books), has had; and I trust, ever will have a large place. So too questions of the day for good or ill have been discussed, with occasional reviews or notices of such books etc. as handle them. Neither exhortation to Christians nor appeal to the unconverted will be looked for in vain in these pages. Critical difficulties, faults of textual reading in Greek and Hebrew, emendations of translation, and corrections of prevalent interpretation, may not interest so extensive a class, but they have ever had a prominent place here; because the aim has been to consider such Christians especially as desire to make progress in the things of God. Now, mistake in text or version or exegesis arrests the mind in proportion to the value given to God's word. Hence, to such as prize that word above all things, the exceeding preciousness of every fresh insight into its true bearing, and the importance of removing every hindrance.

As for the writers, no matter of interest to the believer, or of bearing on Christ's glory, will they exclude or evade; though it is assuredly desired to avoid the discussion of every unprofitable question, and to rid all things discussed as much as possible of a controversial air. Papers of real value from any Christian will of course be admissible, save where known evil practice, or indifference to Christ, ruins the credit of the profession of His name.

In the first edition, some papers appeared which it seems due to truth to replace, and notices of ephemeral matter are consigned to oblivion. But care will be taken to adhere to the former paging and subjects as closely as can be, so as to avoid confusion in making up volumes.

May the gracious Lord deign to use the work increasingly to the edification of souls and to His own glory. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine" — [Ed. W. Kelly.]

Vol 01 - Fragments

Vol 01 - Fragments

Israel's Vocation.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, June 1856.

[01 1856 018] As we, Christians, are in relationship with Christ's Father, and our Father, with His God and our God, as the Church is united to Christ the Head glorified on high by the Holy Ghost, who baptises us into one body here below, so Israel were called to be Jehovah's witnesses. They broke down under law; they will be restored in mercy, and made to stand in the latter day under Messiah and the new covenant, but it will be for the display of the glory of Jehovah, the unchanging God of Israel. Jerusalem shall then be the city of the Great King. The place and duties of them, of us, or any others, always depend on the relationship.

David And Solomon. 1 Chronicles 21:1-30, 2 Chronicles 5:1-14; 2 Chronicles 6:1-42.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, July 1856.

[01 1856 034] David is convicted, brought to hope, established in the sense of deliverance. Affections suited to these conditions mark his spirit. But when established, he is as personally devoted as when hoping (1 Chronicles 21:4, and 1 Chronicles 22:1-19, 1 Chronicles 29:1-30), and this is beautiful. Also, when established, he holds to the place consecrated by redemption. (1 Chronicles 21:28-30). These two points appear still in souls brought where David was.

Solomon was introduced to further truths, as God's delight in grace, and in the bold faith which enjoys it; for the glory fills the house, where mercy was rejoicing, and where the people were triumphing in it. Solomon accepts it, and seems as one overwhelmed at this disclosure of divine joy.

Luke 19:1-48 – Luke 21:1-38.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, July 1856.

[01:034] The Lord sets himself to make it appear that Jerusalem was not ready for the kingdom. He tests her state in a way that gives her every advantage, entering in full royal dignity.

Jerusalem meets Him with a cold repulse; and the more He is frustrated, the more her unpreparedness for the kingdom is proved. Instead of displaying His glory there, He weeps, and pronounces her doom. Luke 20:1-47 accumulates the evidence of this moral unpreparedness; and then Luke 21:1-38 exhibits the long season of judgement which must precede the kingdom.

Fragments

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, January 1857.

(1st. Edition, January [01 1857 122])

[01 1857 123]

The ground of settled peace, in the midst of a world of sin and sorrow, is to assure my soul that God is true when He says, that He so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, June 1857.

(1st. Edition, June [01 1857 214])

[01 1857 203]

Christ, not my forgiveness, is the object of faith, though my forgiveness follows as a consequence revealed by God.

The more Christ is objectively our portion and occupation, the more shall we resemble Him subjectively. [J. N. Darby]

J. N. Darby, Bible Treasury, 2nd. Edition, Volume 1, July 1857

(1st. Edition, July [01 1857 226])

[01 1857 226]

Sanctification. — The believer is sanctified through and in Christ; and it is his sanctification in Him which is the source of all practical holiness. He is holy; and therefore is to be "holy in all manner of conversation." This principle has ever been the same. God has separated from existing evil to Himself, and then given a variety of directions to keep the so separated person in practical separation. (See, as to Israel's sanctification, Leviticus 20:24-26.) Sanctification now, is God's separation of individuals from the world unto Himself in Christ, so that the so separated are no more of the world, even as Christ is no more of the world, for they are in Him, as risen.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, November 1857.

(1st. Edition, November 1857 [01:287])

[01:283]

God never disappoints faith — He may prove it.

No rule can be laid down for another's faith: the saints are cast on their responsibility to God.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, November 1857.

(1st. Edition, October [01 1857 278])

[01 1857 289]

People often confound the effect produced on man, the effect which makes him own the truth and the authority of the word, with a judgement passed by man upon this word, as upon a matter submitted to him. Never could the word be thus presented as subject to human judgement: it would be to deny its own nature; it would be to say that it is not God who speaks. Could God say

that He is not God? If this cannot be no more could He speak and admit that His word has not its own authority.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, November 1857.

(1st. Edition, November [01 294])

[01 1857 289]

Psalms 42:1-11. — Our only place of blessing is to be spiritually sensible of the evil around us. Still it is most important that we should not in spirit get down from heaven. We should have God between us and our troubles, not our troubles between us and God. We shall then neither be insensible nor breaking down, "While they say, Where is thy God?" — Where is the Holy Ghost in the Church? There is an energy of faith which may be an instrument of display; but there is a dependence of faith which cannot be taken away from us. "Hope thou in God" was abstractedly all that was left. God was between the soul and his afflictions, though he had nothing but God. It is healthful to our souls to be looking out to the glory; no good to know the evil if not in communion with the glory. It would discourage the heart and unsanctify it. Satan is very anxious to tell us of evil, if he can only make it the instrument of his power on the heart. But if we can look out clean beyond it to the glory, we can bear to survey the evil in all its extent.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, November 1857.

(1st. Edition, November [01 1857 294])

[01 1857 289]

When we partake of the divine nature through a grace which has set us in perfect peace as in ourselves, we can love in a divine way and love righteousness in a divine way. Otherwise we cannot. We must have a loveable object to call out a corresponding affection, or it will be an idolatrous passion towards an unworthy object. To love in supreme sovereign goodness is an absolutely divine quality. "God is love. Hence, at once, the apostle says, "He that loveth is born of God and knoweth God;" he derives this from God, and God is supreme object of it. This characterises the divine nature as communicated to us. I can also understand and delight in righteousness in itself, and holiness, being made partaker of His holiness, and renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created me in righteousness and true holiness. But while conscience has anything to say, I cannot love it simply, though the conscience may see it to be right and good, because I cannot and ought not to love to be condemned, nor ought I to be content to be defiled, supposing goodness to be as great as may be A believer knows God's love to be supreme and infinite, because it reached him as a sinner — supreme, because there was nothing lovely; infinite, because nothing is so far from supreme love as enmity against it; and that was the condition of his proud heart.

Christ's Lordship. — We are brought into connection with the Lord Jesus not only in His character of grace, but of Lordship. What is the first mark He has stamped on your heart? This — that Jesus must be known and honoured; I belong to him; I must yield myself to Him in everything. Are you doing your own will or His? If you have large thoughts of grace, magnificent thoughts of glory to come, but have not said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" you are not on right ground. You have to come to this — "my own plans go for nothing, I now belong to another." If you have large

thoughts of grace, has it taught you to yield your own will to God's? If you have large thoughts of your privileges, do you see your responsibility? If you are talking of glory, is it connected with obedience? You may have right thoughts, nicely packed together, as for a long voyage, but they are of no good to you, if there is not in you the spirit of obedience.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, November 1857.

(1st. Edition, October [01 1857 271])

[01 1857 290]

Priesthood. — Jesus does two things in heaven. Besides presenting me in himself before God, He intercedes for me by virtue of his own unchangeable righteousness. Nor does this weaken our sense of sin, but the contrary. Feeling for sin is mostly deeper when we can see it as all put away. If this could be imputed to the believer, Christ must die over and over again, for without shedding of blood there is no remission. We are not justified from one sin today, and from another tomorrow. Justification might then take place ever so many times, the reverse of which is ruled in Hebrews 9:1-28; Hebrews 10:1-39, where it is the question. Righteousness is not by priesthood. Christ is between us and God, and we are in Him as our Head. His present priesthood is exercised as regards our walk; but justification has to do with our persons, and not our works. As my Head, I am perfect in Him; as my representative, He stands and pleads for me. And there is the contrast with the sacrifices, under the law, offered for every sin. If the death of Christ has not finished the work once and for ever, He must die very often. If He has died once for all, it is because the worshippers once purged have no more conscience of sins.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, November 1857.

(1st. Edition December [01 1857 310])

[01 1857 290]

A Scriptural Inquiry into the true nature of the Sabbath, the Law, and the Christian ministry. (Belfast: A. Mayne. 1857.)

This is a plain, straightforward, and useful exposition of the truth of God as to these momentous yet much disputed topics. The law is but cursorily treated. It is a large subject, and the author contents himself with stating the principle, and referring to the numerous scriptures which develop it. The distinctive character and divine claims of the Lord's day and of Christian ministry are opened out, so as to silence cavillers and satisfy upright minds.

Vol 01 - Hope.

Vol 01 - Hope.

Bible Treasury, Volume 1, 2nd Edition, July 1856.

[01 1856 034]

Hope enters the heart, so to speak, as a physician or as a conqueror, to heal in the day of sorrow and disappointment, or to be the ascendant in the day of prosperity.

It is seen in the antediluvian saints, in the Genesis — fathers, in Joseph in Genesis 50:1-26; in Israel, in Exodus 12:1-51; in Moses, in Numbers 10:29; in David, in 1 Chronicles 29:15, in one or other of these.

The Lord had it as a conqueror in John 12:24, as a relief in Hebrews 12:2. We are called to it in each of these ways.

The Spirit forms it in the heart as necessarily as faith,* Exodus 12:7-11, 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, Romans 5:12.

Different objects it apprehends — rest after conflict (2 Thessalonians 1:1-12, 2 Timothy 4:1-22); a pure kingdom after a defiled world (2 Peter); Christ Himself (Luke 12:36, Matthew 25:4, 1 John 3:2-3); a harvest after a first-fruits (1 Corinthians 15:1-58).

{* Accordingly, at the beginning, Adam had no promise given him as to the future and glory, but as soon as he had faith, he had hope, walking as a stranger here, as well as a saved sinner.}

Vol 01 - Joy.

Vol 01 - Joy.

Luke 10:17-24.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, February 1857.

[01 1857 146]

The kingdom, divine power, God Himself, brought in, joy is the element. Be it, in the eye opened by the Spirit, in the judgement or government of the world, in the heavenly citizenship, this is so, — in the operations of the Father, the counsels of the Father, or His ways and methods, this is so. These verses show this.

Earlier dispensations tested man, now God is brought in (see Luke 10:24).

Joy is the element in which the kingdom displays and exercises itself.

Joy at the reception of the Gospel, with Jews, Samaritans, Proselytes, Gentiles. Acts 2:1-47, Acts 8:1-40, Acts 13:1-52.

Joy enjoined all through our course. Php_4:1-23.

Joy provided for our eternity.

All share it — God, Christ, the sinner, the worshipper, angels, heaven, earth. Luke 1:1-80; Luke 2:10; Luke 2:15; Luke 2:24.

Luke has much joy, because much of grace.

Vol 01 - Change No Cure.

Vol 01 - Change No Cure.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, February 1857.

[01 1857 146]

Man changes his way but does not cure himself.

The calf of the wilderness was followed by the Captain; but both were evil.

Idols in the land lead to Babylon; but return from Babylon leads to infidel pride, as in Malachi.

The Lord tells us of change without cure in the swept house. Matthew 12:1-50; Luke 11:1-54.

The Apostle tells us of "latter times" and of "last days," but both evil though different. 1 Timothy 4:1-16; 2 Timothy 3:1-17.

The Apocalypse tells us of Babylon and the Beast; and of the nations giving up the one for the other; but both are evil. Revelation 17:1-18.

Thus change there is but no cure. Judgement therefore closes the scene and makes way for a new thing — not a mended thing. Glory succeeds judgement.

Vol 01 - Our Study.

Vol 01 - Our Study.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, September 1857.

(1st. Edition, September [01 1857 261])

[01 1857 258]

1. Notes présentant des aperçus sur quelques épîtres du Nouveau Testament. Première livraison comprenant les épîtres aux Romains, aux Philippiens, et aux Colossiens. (à Pau, rue St. Jacques, chez Lauga).

These notes, of less than 100 pages, 12mo., it is said in the introduction, were compiled from the MS. results of a meeting of Christian brethren at Vigan, in May, 1856. They are rather incomplete, as they were not taken with a view to publication. Nevertheless, many of our readers would peruse them with deserved interest. Take the opening as a sample. "To unfold the grace in virtue of which God accepts sinful man and places him, by his justification, in everlasting blessing; to show in this grace the wisdom and the acts whereby God magnifies His righteousness, His love, and all His perfections: such is the subject of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. As distinguished from the other epistles this takes man as a starting point. After an introduction, in which the gospel is seen to proceed from the grace of God (for without grace nothing exists), Paul enters on the question of man, and begins by considering his state under sin, before opening out the riches of God's love and of redemption by Jesus Christ. The epistle then is occupied with man, viewing him as an individual. The mystery of the Church, revealed in other epistles, offers doubtless very great interest; but the doctrine which looks at man or the Christian in his individual capacity, is of no less importance: it has its place in the truths of God. If the introduction (Romans 1:1-17) and the salutations which close the epistle (Romans 16:1-27) be omitted, the rest may be divided into three parts. In the first it presents the development of the means by which man can be introduced into the presence of God (Romans 1:1-32 – Romans 8:1-39). In the second, it reconciles the exclusive promises made to Abraham with the levelling of all, Jews and Gentiles, established in the first portion (Romans 9:1-33 – Romans 11:1-36). In the third, it terminates with exhortations and practical directions (Romans 12:1-21 – Romans 16:1-27.) The details which follow will put in a clearer light these first data" (pp. 1, 2). Other remarks of a detailed nature are given, much valuable as exposition, with happy touches for the heart and somewhat for the conscience.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, October 1857.

(1st Edition, October [01 1857 278])

[01 1857 274]

The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians.

London: T. H. Gregg, 24 Warwick Lane.

In making known this new version of 2 Corinthians to our readers, we would cite a few of the notes as a sample of what may be looked for. On 2 Corinthians 1:5 the following remark is made:—

"I would take this opportunity of drawing attention to the difference between 'Christ' and 'the Christ.' 'The Christ' is the designation of a condition, not a name; 'Christ' is a name. Not only these are not used indifferently, but in the gospels, where the word is used alone, it is almost invariably 'the Christ' — the Messiah, or anointed, — while in the epistles it is rarely so. It is used as a name. Some cases are doubtful, because the structure of the Greek phrase requires or prefers the articles. This is the case here. However, on the whole, I believe the article should be inserted here in English."

So, again, it is an interesting observation on 2 Corinthians 3:7 that "it is not said that the ministry was glorious, but that the system was introduced with glory — *egenethe en doxe*. It is in contrast with 'subsisting in glory.'" Accordingly, the proposed versions runs, 2 Corinthians 3:7-8; 2 Corinthians 3:11, "But if the ministry of death in letters, graven in stones, began with glory, so that the children of Israel could not fix their eyes on the face of Moses, on account of the glory of his face, [a glory] which is annulled: how shall not rather the ministry of the Spirit subsist in glory? For if that annulled [was introduced] with glory, how much rather that which abides [subsists] in glory?" That annulled, or done away, as the translator adds in a note, is used sometimes a little harshly here. But the apostle uses it as a formula for the old covenant done away in Christ. If this be borne in mind, the harshness will disappear, and the sense be clearer by adhering to the use of it.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, November 1857.

(1st. Edition (slightly different) December [01 1857 310])

[01 1857 290]

Repentance unto life, what is it? The substance of a Lecture on Romans 2:4

London: G. Morrish, 24 Warwick Lane.

Every one who takes an interest in the work of evangelization and the difficulties of souls, must have noticed how often "repentance" proves a barrier which arrests and troubles the conscientious enquirer; how often it acts in checking confidence in God and His grace; how often it turns the eye from Christ to an examination of self, with all the doubts, questions, fears, which naturally follow. Now, nothing can be farther from the intention of the Lord. Such effects are due solely to an unscriptural view of what repentance means. At the same time it becomes those who know the grace of God in truth not to enfeeble the need and value of that self-judgement before God of the old man and its deeds by the new. This is sometimes the danger, especially in statement.

Vol 01 - Extracts from Correspondence.

Vol 01 - Extracts from Correspondence.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Vol. 1, Addendum (2) re-issued in 1868.

[1st Edition, October, 01 1856 84]

[01:350]

Overflow of the banks of Jordan.

The passage in Joshua 3:15, referred to in a proposed query in which it is said, that "Jordan overflows all its banks all the time of harvest," is a mistranslation. The Hebrew word mala, rendered in our authorised version, "overflows," has no such meaning; but signifies fills, and ought to have been so translated, — "Jordan fills all its banks," etc. That is, it runs with its banks brim-full during that season of the year; which is in accordance with its present state, as observed by travellers.

The righteous dead raised.

For understanding Revelation 20:4, in its literal and obvious meaning, we possess a divine warrant which ought to cut short all controversy on the subject. In Revelation 11:17-18, the same great events are particularly spoken of in language, the literality of which cannot be doubted. From this passage we, moreover, learn, that the martyrs are not exclusively the subjects of the first resurrection, but that all the righteous dead partake therein:— "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, small and great." That this takes place at the commencement of the millennial period, is clear from Revelation 11:15.

[01:351]

The calling of the disciples.

There is no discrepancy between what John relates, John 1:35-42, respecting Andrew and Simon following Jesus at Jordan, and the account given by the other evangelists of their being called at the sea of Galilee. John describes the first interview which those two disciples had with Jesus, but says nothing regarding their subsequent call at the sea of Galilee. That Andrew and Simon, after this interview with Jesus, returned to their occupation as fishermen, is very evident from Luke's narrative, Luke 5:1-11.

Vol 01 - The Red Sea and the Jordan.

Vol 01 - The Red Sea and the Jordan.

Original Contributions

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Volume 1, Addendum (2) re-issued in 1868.

[01:349]

The epistle to the Romans (Romans 5:12 – Romans 8:1-39) supposes us to be in the wilderness. We have been saved in hope, and meanwhile we groan. The creature is under the bondage of corruption, only nothing will separate us from the love of God. In the epistle to the Ephesians we are as clearly in Canaan. This helps to make the matter plain.

In the Red Sea setting forth the death and resurrection of Christ, redemption by it is plain as a basis. We have really died in Him and gone out of Egypt. We are not in the flesh. We were baptised unto His death. We reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God. We have our place thus; and it is deliverance. We know that the old man is crucified with Christ, and so are justified from sin (not sins); but it is never here raised together. When this is used, we are looked at as dead in sins (not as having died to sin), and Christ as being dead by reason of this in grace; and so the purpose and power of God comes in, and we are raised with and seated in Him in heavenly places. On passing the Jordan, we are risen and entered into heavenly places. Then Gilgal comes and conflict in Canaan.

Peter shows us redemption through the precious blood of Christ. And we are begotten again to a lively hope through the resurrection of Christ. Here it is simple, not death with Him.

In Romans 6:1-23 it is "planted together in the likeness of his death," and knowing this that our old man is crucified with Him: so that we reckon ourselves dead to sin, and we say (Romans 7:1-25), "when we were in the flesh." Yet even this is comparatively vague, and reasoned out to be proved as a result: "in Christ" only occurs as an assumed fact in Romans 8:1, and only to have "no condemnation," delivered from the law of sin and death. Then we are in the Spirit, not in the flesh. Christ is in us: if so, the body is dead and the Spirit life. It is an argued out result for one who is in the wilderness. Hence Christ lives to make intercession for us. It is dealing with man in flesh, delivered, no doubt, but showing him that he is.

In Ephesians it is God's work as to one dead, and must take the form He gives it (i.e., heavenly places in Christ); whereas we have a condition and state in the epistle to the Romans — life in Christ but life in the wilderness. There is no condemnation, but then the whole practical demonstration is proof by state — known by faith but state. I was living in sinful flesh; I have been planted in Christ's death; and as a dead man cannot have sin, I am justified from it. The apostle is not speaking of sins here, which we had before, but of sin. We are alive now, married to another. There is therefore no condemnation for those in Christ; but the thing must be proved, because I had been in that evil state. But in Ephesians I am in the place God put me into by a new creation,

according to His purpose, which is Canaan.

Death was judgement in the Red Sea: only Christ underwent it, and so sin in the flesh was condemned. The Egyptians were destroyed and the bond broken, and hence deliverance and redemption. But in Jordan it is non-existence.

I do arrive at reckoning myself dead in Romans, that sin may not have dominion over me; for I am not under law but under grace. But it is reached by faith, sin being de facto known to be there to the last verse of Romans 7:1-25. But in Ephesians it is simply a new creation. I am in heavenly places where sin does not come: even my conflict as belonging to God is with Satan. In Jordan I have ceased to exist for the wilderness. It is not thus in Romans: only Christ is my life for the wilderness. In Ephesians we are not crucified with Christ: it begins with bringing out of death. That is, in Romans the old man is contemplated as alive and having to die — only as dead by Christ, who really died. We are not quickened together with Christ in the Red Sea. Baptised unto Christ, we may be said to enter in to His death, and so reckon ourselves dead, rising through Him.

But raised with Him is another thing. Then I do not get deliverance from my state and condition, but, according to the value of Christ's work and the place He enters into in His person, the purpose of God about us; we are introduced into a new place, Christ's place as gone into the presence of God; we are identified with Him — not merely live through Him. Hence in Romans we have experience, though a blessed one; in Ephesians we have not, save as a consequence — we are in heavenly places, instead of having experience of ourselves as in Romans.

The point at the Red Sea was what they got out of, though really brought to God for faith; the point in Jordan was what they got into (answering to Romans and Ephesians). At the Red Sea Canaan was hope; at Jordan they are entered in. So, in fact, we shall be raised in glory — going to heaven is a kind of necessary consequence. But we are raised up together with Christ and seated together in heavenly places in Him. I am dead to sin in Romans; I was dead in sins in Ephesians. I am clean taken out of the whole condition. The blood on the doorposts met the judgement of God against sins, besides being the foundation of all. At the Red Sea we get out of Egypt. We are baptised unto Christ's death. It is redemption. At Jordan we are in heavenly places.

There is another point to be remarked. Israel came up to the Red Sea, trembling, pressed by Pharaoh, the prince of the world, shut in with death and judgement or destruction before them. God acts for them, and death and judgement are turned into deliverance, because Christ undergoes death and judgement, so securing us and letting us get out free on the other side.

At Jordan Israel are not thus contemplated. They do descend into Jordan, no doubt; but all is contemplated according to the power of God in Him. It is not assuredly their strength: Christ had to go first. Man as man, even as a believer, had not passed this way heretofore. It was a divine person, the Lord, who had been in the midst of them and must go first. The feet of the priests who bore the ark touched the water. It was not the rod of God lifted over the sea. At Jordan it is as John's gospel — the Lord giving them a part with Him, preparing them a place that they may be with Him, not He with them in the wilderness, departing out of this world unto the Father — not as in Matthew, forsaken of God on the cross. He leads, goes on alone with a space between, destroys him that had the power of death, and delivers. That path into the heavenlies is open till all the people have passed over. It is the Lord going first; but the Lord is with, amongst, and at the

head of, His people. It bears the heavenly character; it is a work which refers to Canaan, not to Egypt. Hence, when Israel is through, the Red Sea takes all its terror and power again, and the Egyptians are destroyed; whereas at Jordan a memorial is preserved, twelve stones are set up in the river, and twelve stones taken out of it. It is a blessed memorial of having done with the world. Death is gain, not judgement — death undoubtedly, but death to what?

And if we look at the matter as Christ's death, it was obedience unto death, love unto the end, His closing the scene of sorrow and the world, not simply drinking the cup of wrath. It is every way gain. Hence, too, here resurrection is no distinct state: pass Jordan, and we are in heaven. So we find in John always. Thus Mary Magdalene must not touch Him. He was going to His Father and ours. Yet John otherwise is all manifestation on earth; but when death comes in, it is going to heaven.

Vol 01 - Job_33:1-33.

Vol 01 - Job 33:1-33.

Things New and Old.

Bible Treasury, 2nd Edition, Vol. 1, Addendum (2) re-issued in 1868.

[01:354]

This is a very complete and wondrous chapter. It is Elihu's first word to Job, speaking to him as for God, of God, from God.

Job 33:1-5. His confidence and conscious authority, as from God; "not as the Scribes," or as Job's friends.

Job 33:6-7. His gentleness and sympathy. (See Peter, in Acts 10:1-48, John in Rom 19-21, and Galatians 6:1). Jesus' sympathy offered from these.

Job 33:8-13. After a pause — after this preface, he begins his address, rebuking and exposing Job. This is as the Gospel deals with us. (See John 4:1-54)

Job 33:14. He states man's natural stupidity and insensibility touching God.

Job 33:15-22. He shows God using the plough — of a dream, of a striking providence, of bodily pain or sickness — in order to break up such fallow ground. And such is the work to this day. (See Acts.)

Job 33:23-24. The sower comes after the ploughman. (See Acts.) The seed is the Gospel. Ransom is provided of God, deliverance is brought to the sinner.

Job 33:25-26. The condition of the believer.

Job 33:27-28. A more rapid action on the sinner by the Spirit; an interpreter not used, as in Matthew 9:9. This is so still, as well as the cases in ver. 15-22.

Job 33:29-30. Elihu tells Job these are samples of God's way in saving souls.

Job 33:31-33. He asks Job at the last as at the first, had he anything to say.

Vol 02 - The Love of Jesus.

Vol 02 - The Love of Jesus.

John 13:1.

J.N. Darby, Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd Edition, May 1858.

(1st. Edition, May [02 1858 075])

It is evident that Jesus here addresses the disciples who then were around Him; but what we see there of Jesus draws the soul to Him. What draws out the sinner, which gives Him confidence, is what the Holy Ghost reveals of Jesus.

I desire that we should occupy ourselves with that which is found in the first verse — that is to say, the constancy of Christ's love — a love which nothing slackened or enfeebled. If we think what were the disciples, the world, and the adversaries, we shall find that Jesus had a thousand reasons for giving up His love. We see round Him three kinds of persons — the disciples, the indifferent, and the adversaries. These latter are more peculiarly the children of the devil. These are they who, seeing that the Lord is about to take the kingdom and reign over all things, say, "We will not have this man to reign over us." There are some who from the bottom of their heart have the certainty that Jesus is the Christ, and who will not have Him. The adversaries may ensnare the indifferent. All that there was in this world was calculated to destroy the love of Jesus, if He had it not been perfect and unchanging; for nothing wounds love more than indifference.

Naturally we love sin, and we wish to avail ourselves of everything God has given us for satisfying our lusts. Jesus has seen all that. He has seen the disgusting state of this world and said, "How long shall I . . . suffer you?" When we are in the light of God, it is thus that we judge sin.

What parents would not desire their children to avoid the corruption which they themselves have known? It was because Jesus has known the sad state of man that grace constrained Him to come and extricate men from it. God sees everything. In His compassions He takes knowledge of all, that He may come to the relief of our wants. But what does He meet with? Indifference of heart. The heart of the natural man sees in Jesus something despicable. He cannot own his state, and he will not be indebted to God to get out of it. He prefers remaining in indifference with respect to the God who loves him. Let us remember that nothing repels love more than indifference.

Jesus met with hatred also. All those who loved not the light, because their deeds were evil, hated Jesus. Pride, carnal confidence, self-will, everything in man, drove God back! There was nothing in defilement, in indifference, and in hatred, which could attract the love of Jesus. That love might be punished to despair, when Jesus saw, for example, that Judas was betrayed Him.

If a person were going to betray us, we should be too much occupied with ourselves to think of those who would not betray us. This was not the case with Jesus.

Though iniquity abounded, Jesus shows all His love; but at last His disciples also abandon Him. Those who loved Him were so selfish and so much enslaved by the fear of man, that it was impossible for Jesus to reckon on them. The heart of man is such that, though he loves Jesus, yet his heart is worth nothing. Jesus had to love in the presence of a hatred which never relaxed. He loved us when we were covered with defilements, indifferent, filled with hatred for the light, and having denied Him a thousand times. He that knows himself best, knows the best how true this is. If we treated a friend as we treat Jesus, the friendship would not last long.

What a contrast we shall have if we consider how different that which Jesus found on earth is from what He enjoyed in heaven! There He found the Father's love, and in presence of this perfect love the purity of His own could not so be manifested, because it found no obstacles. But, here below, remembering what He had left, He loves His own people in their very defilements. Nothing turns Him back; but these defilements draw His compassion upon them. The object of grace is where iniquity and evil are found. The indifference of His own people proved to Jesus all the extent of their wretchedness, and the need they had of Him! The very hatred of man showed that he was lost. God is come to seek man, because he is far away from the state of seeking God. What things God has borne with! What indifference, what betrayals, denials! People would be ashamed to do with Satan as they did with the Lord. Nevertheless, nothing stops Jesus — He loves His own even to the end. He acted according to what was in His heart, and all the wickedness of man was only for Him an occasion of manifesting His love.

The Lord has done all that is necessary for putting a soul into relation with God. Sinful as we are, the grace of God is come to seek us. Righteousness and law demand that evil and the evil man be taken away. John the Baptist demanded repentance. There was the beginning of grace, but pure grace, far from saying to man, Leave thy state to come to me — comes itself to man in his sin — enters into relationship with him, that God may be much more manifested than if there had been no sin whatever.

Grace applies what is in God to the need which is produced by the ruin in which we are. Jesus loves unto the end.

What a consolation to know that Jesus is all that is needed for all that we are. That sets us in what is real and true; that disposes us to confess the evil which is in us, and not to conceal it. Grace alone produces sincerity. (Psalms 32:1.) A man who has a career to follow wishes to appear strong even when he is feeble. Grace produces the truth — makes us own our feebleness and infirmity. In Peter's place we should do what he has done, if we were not kept. Jesus loves His own, "in the world," in their pilgrimage, in their circumstances; in spite of their wretchedness, their selfishness, and their feebleness. All that Satan could do, and all that was in man, was well calculated to hinder the love of Jesus. Nevertheless, "He loved them unto the end."

Can you say, I have part in this love, notwithstanding my weakness: I have understood in Jesus the grace, and the manifestation of the love of the invisible God? Have you owned that it was needful Jesus should come to the world, in order that you should not go where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth? Have we taken our side to acknowledge ourselves just what we are? This is disagreeable to the flesh: it is painful; it is the thorn of Paul, something which incessantly tells him, "Thou art feeble;" and this is precisely the reason why God permits that it should remain. Is the flesh sufficiently mortified in us for us to be happy, though Jesus should be all and we nothing,

for us to rejoice in seeing our infirmities, since that is to display the strength of God in us?

Jesus has forgotten none of our wants. The heart set free from selfishness only thinks of the things that love desires to do. Thus it is that Jesus, on the cross, does not forget His mother, but commends her to the disciple that He loves.

Vol 02 - The Discipline of the Witness of Righteousness.

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Abel as the first in faith, on whom by birth was entailed the penalty of sin, is one whose history we might expect to furnish us with outlines of that discipline which a life eminent for faith would require.

It is a mistake, and one which causes no little trial to the soul at times, to conclude, because a train of truth or grace is strong in me, that therefore nature must be less assuming. The fact is the contrary, and it is well to understand the reason of this. If our nature had been of a lower order before the fall, the fall would not have put it lower than it is now; but then its aspirations and assumptions to escape the effects of the fall would not be so violent and daring. It could not aspire to more than it lost. The fact then, of our being made in the likeness of God and not anything lower, gives ground for assumption now that we are fallen from it. A great man reduced naturally reverts to what he was once. If he be a fool, he assumes it without the ability to sustain it. And this is just what our nature does. The more conscious of, or rather the more it is pressed to feel, its fall from a once high estate, the more it struggles for recognition and assumes importance wherever it can. The less its assumption is canvassed and desired, the more it labours to make it good; and here it is that souls who are in earnest to deny its position are opposed by it at every step, and learn practically that they alone who have suffered in the flesh have ceased from sin — that death alone morally in the cross of Christ frees me from the power and thralldom of nature, and that the process of death in discipline physically gives effect to the moral truth of it through God's grace.

That is, we are dead through Christ, and as such freed from the law and before God in Him. Consequently the Father by discipline leads us into the practical advantage of our position in Christ, so that we are not only dead in Him, but we are dead in ourselves — the practical effect of our knowing that we are dead in Him, for which discipline is the instrument. The soul that learns fully its acceptance before God as righteous before Him is taught that it must not be dependent on the nature from the effect of which it is delivered; and that its existence is outside. The apostle could say that he died daily, carrying about the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. If the acceptance is veritable — if it be truly a deliverance from our natural state — ought we not to evidence morally and practically the effect of it? And it must be so, for acceptance in righteousness is above and beyond our natural condition, and the more it is enjoyed and maintained, the more must the other be lost sight of. It would be only a worthy acknowledgement of the service. Would you maintain your natural condition and yet rejoice in deliverance from it? If you rejoiced in deliverance, would you not show it by your renunciation of that from which you were delivered?

If Abel be the first witness of acceptance in righteousness, we shall find that he was the first witness that surrendered his natural existence — a witness in one as well as in the other: of acceptance, to the joy and rest of his own heart; by death, how true and glorious it was — so that he being dead yet speaketh. This is the first and proper order of discipline. Reckon yourselves to

be dead indeed unto sin. Mortify your members which are upon the earth. We have this position of death, because of our life in Christ; for if living in Him, we are dead in ourselves; and discipline in its simplest and primary lessons instructs us in this. No saint but learns what death is, either in the slow process of a continual dropping of constant small trials, or through a last illness or one overwhelming calamity. Death must be learned to make good in our souls the deliverance from it; for testimony it is also necessary. Abel's history is very scanty in details; but it comprises the two grand points of a saint's life in a vividness and vigour not to be surpassed — namely, acceptance with God, and death to every natural tie and sense; the former the easy action of faith, the latter declared, not willingly, but consequent on an altered condition in an evil world, through violence from which death gave relief. God allows the persecution of Cain to afford an opportunity to declare His grace and the giver of it; and suffering for righteousness sake, while it is discipline to ourselves, is the highest place of service in the gospel.

Let it be granted that if I know acceptance well, death is my portion here, and that discipline will never overlook this; for this makes it sure to me and witnesses to others also that the acceptance is true. Thus we shall derive much benefit from Abel's history. Abel started, as we say, in life, not according to the rule and direction given to Adam, "to till the ground from whence he was taken." Abel, on the contrary, is a keeper of sheep. This discloses at the outset that Abel had no intention of improving the scene around him, or of deriving by his own efforts anything from earth which could mediate between him and God. The sense of death was before his soul, and to be delivered from this could alone satisfy him. He was a keeper of sheep. Not listless and unoccupied, he tended his flock, passing from pasture to pasture as their need required. As he expected nothing to spring from the earth to relieve him, so no one place on it was his permanent abode. He was a labourer, a wanderer, and, suffering from the curse, he felt there was one on everything around him, and himself under the penalty of death in such a scene. Tending a living flock brought him into association with life — the very thing his own spirit needed. He therefore * took of the firstlings of his flock, what was the "beginning" and the "strength," and he offered it to God. It was God's OWN, typifying the life of Christ.

This he presented to God, and it met his own sense of death; but he had still more to meet before he could encounter the presence of God. There was the needed acceptance also. This was met and answered by presenting the "fat," which is the excellency of the animal only obtainable through death — the result in resurrection of the death of Christ, which now satisfies the conscience as to its full acceptance with God. Thus Abel entered into the mind of God as to his own state before Him, and thus he obtained witness that he was righteous, not merely as to what he did, but how he stood. Happy as accepted of God, he has to learn the place and suffering of one so blessed down here. If he were accepted of God, he must be dissociated from a scene which was under God's curse. If he were delivered from the sentence of death, death could be no penalty to him; but he must expect it where everything is contrary to the life in which he was accepted; consequently he is called to give unequivocal proof that acceptance with God and deliverance from judgement are such real blessings that actual death cannot deprive him of them. This is his testimony and this is his discipline. As it was with Stephen, the first martyr of resurrection, so it was with Abel, the first martyr of acceptance. Stephen gave better evidence in his death than in his life of the virtue of Christ's resurrection, and his own soul advanced more into its realities in the moment of his death than it could during his lifetime. His last testimony was the

brightest. While they, the agents of the world's evil, were stoning Stephen, he was only responding to their fatal blows by consigning his spirit to the One they denied and disowned, and to prove then how perfect and assured he was in Christ's care and charge of him, he knelt down to expend all the strength their malignity still spared him in their behalf!

*[Is not this liable to be misunderstood? It was not from circumstances or by feeling, but by faith, Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. As the "therefore" might be gravely mistaken, in a way foreign to the writer's mind, I add this note to guard against such a thought. — Ed.]

The witness of acceptance or the witness of resurrection has no part in this evil world. Everything must be death to him, and in discipline he learns this in order to actualise to himself the greatness of the gift of God, which is eternal life outside and beyond it. Try to walk in it any way you will and you must learn this — the Father will have it so. He must have His own life true to its proper instincts. Make a fire of sticks and the viper will remind a Paul that this is a scene of death. It is only from one tomb to another. In a shipwreck yesterday, afflicted by a viper to-day! We need this discipline. We think we can pass on like other men, enjoying the new and blessed portion we have received; but the contrary is the case. And it is well to understand this, that the Father will have us to appreciate our portion in His Son, in contrast to everything here. We shall try in vain to combine both. A great deal of our time is spent in learning that there is nothing here to meet the requirements of our new affections. There is a wandering in the wilderness in a solitary way, and yet no city is found to dwell in. But God does allow this in order that His children may find that their desires can only be satisfied by Him. We must learn that we are not of the world. We cannot trust it. Christ would commit himself to no man. If you had the face of an angel, they would stone you. And though Cain "talks" with Abel, and they are "in the field" apparently in happy unity, Abel soon learns that he cannot trust him, for in that very social moment Cain rose up against him and slew him.

Our profession declares that we have done with earth. God's discipline will always lead us practically into this, as will also faithful testimony. In our discipline we may give a testimony; but it is better, like Stephen, to be disciplined in our testimony. God makes true in either way His blessing to our souls and our history closes.

Vol 02 - Enoch ■ The Discipline of the Witness of Hope.

Vol 02 - Enoch — The Discipline of the Witness of Hope.

[1858 109 1st edition]

In the history of Enoch, we learn one great truth, that the surest path, and the one most exempt from discipline, through outward circumstances, is a life of hope, being by faith translated — actually in expectation and interest having passed away from this present scene. True, Enoch had the secret chastenings which every son in our nature needeth, but by faith as a witness, he walked with God, in the hope of being with him, and thus he passed beyond death without being a victim to it. During his walk of 300 years, hope placed him beyond this evil scene, and therefore he prophesied as to what would be the consummated condition of it. If he was the first man who passed out of it through the power of faith, superior to the sovereignty of death, so was he the prophet of the last moments of death's cruel dynasty. If he were the first who was translated from the world, he (in the enjoyment of hope and the domain it spread out before his soul) could next tell what would be the end of it. Abel took his place as the witness of acceptance in righteousness, and the world could not endure him; he was unsuited to it, and it to him: he fell and his blood was shed on it by the hand of his brother.

Human righteousness is honoured among men, but righteousness through grace, by faith, honestly maintained, is always abhorrent to man, for it gives him nothing to do, nothing to improve, but to receive all from God and with God, and this necessarily places him in isolation to all human interests. Abel was a righteous man in an evil world, and he found a grave in it — a terrible death and an unnatural one. Relationship with God only places me in antagonism to the world. If we be sons of God, the world knows us not, as they did not the Son of God. If in this life, though a son, I only have hope, I am of all men most miserable. Abel must have been happy in his soul with God, but he was miserable in the world, and in the end he suffered a cruel death in it. His very new position entailed this suffering on him; it demanded of him to die to everything around, because if he was righteous everything around was unrighteous. If he did not by faith walk in hope above this scene, then he must die in it, and this is just where Enoch is a witness of a better thing; and he can prophesy of the accomplished glory, while Abel can but cry, by his shed blood, for vengeance on a world that would not bear a righteous man!

It is plain that in an evil world a righteous man must either die in it, or be in the power of translation in passing through it. Enoch was this latter and he walked with God. Nothing can purify us from this world but hope, and the hope too of being with the One whom Enoch saw. "My Lord cometh and ten thousand of His saints with Him". The Lord personally engaging the heart, dissociates more from the earth than anything else. "For their sakes [He says] I sanctify myself that they also may be truly sanctified". For the heart linked with Him outside it would be the most perfect sanctification. Saints pass through much discipline from outward circumstances, because their hearts are only set on being justified ones in the earth, a blessed position beyond all question; but ours is one incompatible with everything earthly; and hence, if the soul does not know this it must

be taught it; as Paul was taught to surrender Jerusalem and all the associations there his heart clung to. He passed through every affliction ere he was morally delivered from his earthly hope. Heavenly hopes exposed him no doubt to other sorrows, but if they did, death could not be one of them, for death would only have realized them, and therefore he longed to depart. If our hope was really translation to see the Lord, beyond doubt the casualties of this life would but little distress us. They never could touch our hope, and our sufferings from present things are not so much from their actual influence and value to us as that they are connected with our real hopes. It is our hope that lends an interest to everything about us and belonging to us. The only discipline that an Enoch publishes is a long walk with God and a prophetic testimony; and therefore it is the path that the well-disciplined child will walk in, and the better he adheres to it the less will he need either a "weight" to be removed, or his unbelief to be admonished. The end of all the Father's discipline is to render us these services.

Vol 02 - Noah ■ The Discipline of the Witness of Holiness.

Vol 02 - Noah — The Discipline of the Witness of Holiness.

[1858 110 1st edition] Noah's history is peculiarly interesting, because it affords us a type of the servant of God on the earth, who is testifying to the world of the vanity of everything here by his preparing an ark to get safely out of it. He is in fact the head of the new order in moral power. Adam was only a few years dead, as were also Seth and Enoch, and therefore Lamech his father might count on God to send them some "rest" — some evidence of His care and government. This supremely Noah proved to be; and consequently his life is very instructive to the servants of God. Abel and Enoch were witnesses of principles, but Noah is the witness of God, in a scene where those principles were declared and now disregarded. Noah therefore is God's patient witness and servant in great longsuffering, warning of coming judgment. The earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence: all the barriers between clean and unclean were broken down. The children of God intermarried (the most intimate intermixture) with the daughters of men as "they chose." The will was the only guide and the only check to these unhallowed unions. The Name of God was lost in the earth.

The religion of Enoch and the fathers may have remained, but the lines and characteristics which the children of God should observe to preserve His name were now surrendered to the dictation of their own will. The children of God in this early day disclosing that the gratification of one's own will (no matter however positionally great we are) will entail our surrender of the testimony to a holy God, which assuredly behoves us in an evil world. Position is valuable if maintained, but aggravates our defection if not. It was necessary to tell Timothy not only to purge himself, but also to flee "youthful lusts" or impulses. The will must not come in if the insular position of God's children on the earth is to be maintained. Hence heresy is simply a determined adherence to your own opinions on any subject. The Lord Jesus and the wilful king are remarkable contrasts in this respect. Now this doing as "they chose" was the ruling influence with God's family (at this time) after the departure of Enoch, whose prophecies were unheeded; and God, now marking His forbearance, raises up a testimony for Himself in the person of Noah.

Noah had been 500 years on the earth before he was called to his especial work, and we are told that he was in his life and age (as generation may be interpreted) a witness of the truths already revealed through Abel and Enoch on earth. It is said that he was a just man or righteous, of which Abel was the witness, and he "walked with God," which was the great and holy line observed by Enoch. Such is the man who is called to declare the name of God — that is, what God is and what God has declared Himself in the world. Principles of truth to bless man had been distinctly witnessed to on earth. Now when all moral obligation to the holiness of God or apprehension of it are relinquished, God comes forth to declare Himself. And His faithful servant devotes himself to trace in new and deep broad lines the nature of God. God is his object as well as his subject. Man may forfeit and surrender his own dignity and position and do so beyond remedy; but the truth of God and what God is which afforded this dignity and position cannot be surrendered, but every

true servant stands by it and maintains it — not to repair the human vessel which ought to have preserved it, but to vindicate His name and goodness which were lost sight of. When principles are enunciated by God, they are for man's blessing, and therefore are peculiarly for men as their object; but when the men who receive them make light of them, and their beauty and value are marred, then it becomes the servant to resuscitate them — not as toward men, though they be still for them; but for God, whose honour is paramount, when indifferentism prevails. And the more distinctly and vividly they are presented, the more are the careless and unbelieving condemned, but the more are the true servants, those moral victors, crowned with honour and blessed. The servant, in such a scene as Noah was surrounded with, had much to learn besides his own acceptance and association with God.

The discipline is suited to the service required. Patience pre-eminently was the great lesson Noah had to learn; but it was patience, too, combined with toil. Enoch had patience, but it was in a separated walk. Noah must have it in practical life, dealing not with that which was grateful to him, but with adverse spirits. Enoch escapes from men to walk with God, and is patient therein for 300 years. Noah has to do with men in daily toil, condemning the world, and a preacher of the righteousness which by faith he had, as believing in God, who was morally denied in it. Instead of comfort from work and toil, as his father Lamech expected, it is work and toil to reach comfort and rest, and toil, too, to condemn the world, on which the curse of God rested. Patiently he went on, and patience had its perfect work, though we may notice how in nature he betrays the contrary. To arrive at comfort and rest in an evil world, I must patiently maintain the name of God and His truth. We often propose a good and valued object to our souls, but we little know the trying and toilsome path we must tread to reach it. That Noah was to be a comfort and a rest concerning the work and toil of man's hands was undoubtedly true, though Lamech never lived to see it. He saw it in progress. The purpose to reach a good and desired object modifies greatly difficulties intervening. Noah, while patiently witnessing the distinctness which ought to mark the children of God on earth, was preparing an ark for the saving of his house and also condemning the world for their unbelief and denial of God. Let him only be the patient servant, and comfort would accrue to his own house by the very toil with which he was condemning the world for their ignorance of God.

God always honours the servant who honours Him. Because thou hast kept my word, and not denied my name, I will bring thine enemies before thy feet, and they shall know that I have loved thee. When God and His truth (at all times as much as has been revealed) have lost their true moral effect on the consciences of men, the only sure and certain means of restoring it, even to oneself, is to declare emphatically, let God be true, and every man a liar! I turn from men to bear witness of the truth — for no conscience, after all, can be rightly blessed, when God is not presented to it according to truth. Therefore if truth be fallen in the streets, the valiant for it, like the most valiant One, avow that for this purpose came I into the world that I might bear witness unto the truth.

After years of discipline and toil, Noah is in the ark. Very often the quality we are most pre-eminent for, and from which we have gained most, forsakes us, and we suffer much. Noah, doubtless, became impatient to quit the ark after it had accomplished its purpose. In nothing is our impatience or wilfulness so much exposed as here. Noah was a witness of adherence to God's mind, in opposition to the wilfulness of man around him. He toiled for many a year to prepare the ark, and now he is impatient to abandon it, as soon as it has afforded him salvation. God has been

vindicated, His truth witnessed to, Noah and his house saved; and now he wants to leave it before it is God's will. It is harder to remain in the place of blessing than even to reach it, for many untoward things may induce or press us to seek it, but if the mind is not satisfied, if the pungent attraction, "the leeks and onions" outside arrest our attention, the saved and blessed one is in more danger of being drawn aside than the unsecured one — the will is at work.

The emancipated raven, going to and fro, is an apt emblem of the restlessness of our impatient spirits. The dove reads Noah a different lesson. The raven had taught him the true course of wilfulness, which he himself had witnessed against, like a dog roaming up and down, and not satisfied. The dove tells first that he must have patience. How humbling when we are rebuked by some weak gentle accents of confiding love! The dove had a home in the ark, why should not Noah? The second time the dove returns with the branch of peace, so that not only must he submit, but patience having had its perfect work, he wants nothing. The olive leaf tells of the fulness of blessing which is his. And when the dove goes forth again, she may tarry abroad. Discipline ended, and he is called into a new scene. — Well if therein you demonstrate the valuable education afforded to you! Noah having come forth from the ark in all the vigour and faithfulness of a victorious servant, he sets out God in His proper place on the earth. God was pleased, and testimony was restored, and with it increased blessing to man.

After this Noah begins to find rest and comfort for himself. Self-pleasing takes the place of patience, and thus and then he exposes the frailty of the greatest servants of God, when they seek their own rest and gratification. The going to and fro of thoughts, like the raven, when we are encompassed with still unabated difficulties, may tell us what our propensity is; but when we have succeeded, and we have set ourselves down to enjoy ourselves, our weakness, in its broadest lines, is exposed — (cursed be he who promulgates it.) Though God has long borne with us, He must teach us His grace. If I betray my weakness, when in the excess of my enjoyments, I learn how frail I am; but a curse, as I awake, is written against the one who exposes me. Noah finds how frail he is after all his self-renunciation and service, and his history closes.

Vol 02 - Abraham

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The discipline which is necessary and suited to the life of faith is what we shall find pre-eminently exemplified in Abraham's history.

Man, at Babel, had disclosed the secret purpose of his heart. He built a city and a tower, whose top was to reach to heaven; he felt he must escape coming judgement, but he determined to escape it by his own works, and independently of God. God confounded him in his attempt, and the whole human family is made to feel that it is debarred from intelligent combination by the loss of a common medium of communication, so that man became estranged from his fellow-man; whatever might be his sense of common kindred with him, his thoughts were checked or became incommunicable. When God had thus confounded the independence of man, He, ever true to the purpose of His love, as soon as the evil is checked, unfolds (and by a man too) how that desire which man had aimed at, in independence of God, can be attained, in a supreme degree, by dependence on God. And this, I may remark in passing, is always His manner with us; we feel our need and attempt to supply it by our own means; the Lord must confound us in the attempt, but, having done so, He leads our souls to find and acquire an inconceivably greater answer to our wishes than even that which we had described for ourselves. The prodigal only sought "sustenance" from the citizen in the "far country," but in the father's house he found not bread merely, but abounding welcome and a fatted calf.

But to resume. The confusion of tongues being executed, God now enters the scene and calls out from it a man — even Abram — to be the witness of faith and of dependence on Him, and to look, not for a "Babel," but "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." And we are graciously given the history of this witness and servant of God, in order to instruct us as to what is our nature in its action under the call of God, and how God deals with it under its many phases of self-will and independence, how He corrects, subdues, and leads it into His own ways, which is for our blessing.

The word of God to Abram is, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land which I will show thee," and the word becomes the discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. We never know the real intent of our own wills until we demand them to submit implicitly to the expressed will of God, which His Word unfolds. We may not see any very great divergence in our course from the mind of God, until we measure it with the exact requirements of the Word of God: and, mark not the requirements of a part of that Word, but of the whole of it. In fulfilling it partially, we alter or qualify His mind as revealed; in departing from the spirit of it, we lose the instruction; but it is in adopting it, and adhering to it as a whole, that the soul is delivered from self-will, and led into the blessing which its instruction proposes; but then it is

here that comes in all the trial and exercise, for exercise and conflict there must be from the continual effort of the natural mind to evade or qualify the Word of God, and the inflexibility of God's purpose (because of His love) to confine us strictly to His own mind; and this conflict necessitates discipline, and thus explains incidents in our history which would otherwise be inexplicable to us. —

The call of Abram was very clear and definite. It required him to relinquish locality and all kindred associations, and to enter on a scene prepared of God. The accuracy of his obedience tests the measure of his strength; he begins to obey the call; he went forth from Ur of the Chaldees to go into the land of Canaan; he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt at Charran. He received the Word and undertook to obey it, and yet we find he did so imperfectly; he only relinquished his country, and not his kindred associations; he remained at Charran till his father was dead. Nature had come in to check full obedience to the call of God, and this is a great warning to us. We approve of and adopt the call, but it is only as we walk in accordance with it that we discover the demands it makes on our nature. Nothing so proves our want of true energy as inability to accomplish what we readily undertake. How many enter on the life of faith eagerly and cheerfully, who find ere long that they cannot "let the dead bury their dead," and though they are ready in heart to seek "another country," are detained and turned aside by some link to nature. Nothing is so difficult to man as to relinquish the ties of nature without compensation, because such relinquishment must produce isolation, unless he has found some other absolute association; and this is first what the Lord proposed, when He added, "follow thou me." But if a relinquishment of these ties be an isolation and a denuding of the nearest communication with natural existence; so much the maintenance of them be the maintenance of all the most direct avenues to the human heart, and hence it is written, a "man's foes shall be they of his own household." There is no escaping nature outside grace. When Barnabas chose his nephew Mark, he also chose Cyprus, his native country. His failure was not only in nature, but unto nature.

Abram, then, failed at first in performing the second part of God's call; he did not leave his "father's house," and consequently is detained till his father is dead. This is the first stage in the life of faith, and though he entered on it readily and heartily, as it is written, "he went out, not knowing whither he went," he found that he could not perform it until death had severed the bond, which still attached or connected him with nature. Faith is dependence on God, and independent of everything human to sustain it. The path proposed to Abram accordingly demanded the distinctest expression of dependence on God alone. It could not be without sacrifice, neither was it meant to be; and besides the exercises which his own heart must have passed through in treading this path of faith, he is taught that death must practically sever the tie which detains him on their way. This first stage is not traversed without the heart tasting of sorrow through death, but death which brings its own deliverance. If Abram had not been detained by his father, but had pursued the unknown path without halting till he reached the place to which God had called him, he would have escaped the sorrow which death entailed; but having allowed himself to be detained, nothing could relieve him but death; and therefore under that discipline he passes. Thus it is in mercy with many of us; our dependence on God is not simple and distinct; we halt in the path of faith and are detained by some link to nature, until it dies, for die it must, if we are to pursue our course with God, unless we die to it.

Death then having dissolved Abraham's tie to nature and freed him from it, he must renew his course, disciplined, no doubt, by that which has removed the weight which impeded him, a discipline which he might have escaped, had he walked in more energy of life, but by which he was nevertheless a learner; (and how wholesome the lesson!) that faith does not sway the natural will in the recesses of the heart, that, though the blessing is great, if it submits to the dictation of God without exposure, yet it rarely does, and even if it does, for a while it is ever contending for an open expression of itself; and, if openly acting, it must be openly subdued.

To young believers, to all, it is important how we undertake and accomplish this first stage of the life of faith, for failure and vacillation here may entail sorrow and indecision throughout our course; for we never diverge from the path of faith without picking up "a thorn" from that nature which we are called on to repudiate. It will be either nature gratified, or nature exhausted, or nature bereaved; and though we may be freed, as was Abram, by the death of his father, the failure, though amended, may not be eradicated in its effect, and if so, the discipline which it demanded must be continued. Lot went with Abram, but not only was he ever a trial to him personally, but his descendants were the great scourge to the descendants of Abraham; and their malignant enticements at the instigation of Balaam are set down in Scripture as a type of the worst machinations against the Church of God. (Revelation 2:14.) Wherever we fail once, like a horse that stumbles, we are likely to fail again, consequently there must be, through God's care of us, a continual reminder to warn us of our tendency. Thus Abram, not having "let the dead bury their dead" in the first instance, must bear with him a constant thorn in his brother Lot, as a needed discipline for the detention from which death alone had freed him.

Abram now enters on the second stage of the life of faith, and is a stranger in a strange land, depending on God: and he builds an altar for the strangership into which faith leads us, fixes our souls on God, and worship follows. But when the consequences or circumstances of our strangership occupy us, we lose the rest which faith supplies, and seek relief elsewhere. Thus Abram, when he found that there was a famine in the land, turned aside from the path of faith in which he had before halted, and went down into Egypt.

How humbling is it to find how vacillating we are in that path; and however happily and firmly we seem to be walking in it, how needful to say, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall!" Although Abram is graciously restored to the path from which he had departed, and even returns to the place where he had the altar at the beginning, we find that the thorns which he picked up in his wanderings pierce him in his restoration. The cattle, the fruit of Egypt, provoke a collision between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot; but restorations always advance us in moral power, for true restoration sets us above that from which we are restored; and Abram, now truly restored, looks not to consequences or contingencies, but, depending on God, maintains the path of faith in high moral power. My first difficulty in a walk of faith is to get clear of nature, (place and kindred,) and, being delivered therefrom and in felt strangership, my next is the tendency to advance or exalt myself, or find rest in this new position, even as an emigrant to a wild and distant land seeks to make a home for himself as speedily as possible. This desire to advance, so strong a passion in the human soul and the moving principle of all the great efforts of Babylon, may be designated ambition, but must be subdued by the man of faith, as God's witness in this evil world.

Thus Abram's ambition is tested by the cattle, the fruit of his own failure; but discipline has done its work, and his restoration is now complete. Does he seek any acknowledgement or advancement in this new country? No! he is walking by faith and resigns all present superiority to Lot, who, gratifying his ambition, chooses the well-watered plain, while Abram is blessed with a fuller revelation as a reward for his faith. But even this is not to be enjoyed without suffering, for the moment I am on the path with Christ, I am on the path of one sent of God to minister to His people down here; and Abram, the dependent man, pursuing his unseen and separate path, has now come forward and renders the very service which Christ fulfilled, and rescue his brother Lot, who, on the contrary, had gratified the ambition of his nature by mixing himself with the course of this world and had been consequently embroiled in its sorrows. And if, in the dangers and exercises of this service, Abram was made to feel what he had to suffer from this natural tie which he had brought from Ur of the Chaldees, his soul was at the same confirmed in the path of dependence on God, and, as his faith had on the former occasion been rewarded by a fuller revelation of the promised inheritance, his conflict and service are now rewarded by the refreshment and blessing of Melchisedec in the name of the Lord God, possessor of heaven and earth; surely more than enough to compensate for the renouncement, of the ambition of mere nature!

Here let me add, that though we separate from home and kindred, and still further take heavenly standing, yet if the tendencies of our nature be unsubdued and we seek in any wise to distinguish or advance ourselves in our new position, we shall be as Lot; while on the other hand, though we may often need discipline and be taught to renew our course after failure, yet if we really seek to maintain the path of dependence and separation, our faith will be strengthened by increased revelations, and our service will be invigorated by association with Him who is the forerunner within the veil, even Jesus, an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

We now enter on the third stage of Abram's history in the path of faith and one in which he is brought under an entirely new line of instruction, even in the exercise of his affections. The ambition of his nature had been tested before; now his affections are to be put under discipline, and this is brought about in the first instance by the promise of a son, which is the subject of Genesis 15:1-21. Let me say, in passing, that in tracing the history of this servant of God, I confine myself, to the one subject, even discipline. I pass over many episodes on which others have dwelt largely, such as his communion with God, intercession, etc., most interesting as it all is, but which has already been entered into fully.

It appears to me that the true state of Abram's heart is exposed in his reply to God's most gracious appeal to him in the commencement of this chapter. True, it was quite right for him to wish for a son; it was a wish responding to the counsels of God respecting him and the lack of which would not have been according to the mind of God. But still his reply, "What wilt thou give me?" does not arise to the elevation in which God sought to establish him, even in perfect contentment and satisfaction with Himself, for what could He "give" Abram greater than the assurance of being Himself his "exceeding great reward?" Nevertheless, God in His grace meets Abram on his own level and promises that which He had before counselled to give; but a long course of discipline lies between him and the fulfilment of the promise, and as Abram must learn in his own home a preparation for that trial to his affections which awaited him so many years afterwards, and which it was necessary for him to pass through in order to perfect him in the life of faith. It was not at all that he undervalued the fullness and nearness in which God had revealed Himself to him, but he

disclosed the secret feebleness of the human soul to rest in God apart from any human link. God knows this and offers graciously to supply it; but if he promises and gives Isaac, Abram must hold him from God, not as his link to God, but God's link to him, foreshadowing that perfect Antitype who would for ever link us to God and God to us.

Abram believed God, but his heart needed preparation and discipline, as we see by the impatience of nature which he evinces while waiting for the fulfilment of the promise, and this he is subjected to in his own private circle. Perhaps there is no greater cause of delay to what the accomplishment of what God purposes to confer on us than the natural mind (if I may so say) getting a hint of it; for as it is with Satan to spoil what he cannot defeat, so is it with the wilfulness of our nature, which would fain adopt and accomplish what originated entirely outside itself and with God; just as Eve, interpreting a spiritual truth by a natural mind, takes Cain for the promised seed. In everything it is beyond the heart of man to conceive the extent and nature of what God prepares for them that love Him. An Ishmael was Abram's measure, an Isaac was God's. In the meantime Abraham must learn, through contention, strife and sorrow what is the fruit of his impatience, and in the end do what was very "grievous in his sight," even to banish his son. Thus our inventions do but postpone our real blessings, for it is necessary that we should see the end of them. It must have been a period of nearly twenty years from the time of the promise to the birth of Isaac, and many were the exercises Abraham had to pass through during that time, as well as many and great communications made to him by the Lord.

But we are now come to the fourth stage of Abraham's path of discipline. (Genesis 21:1-34) His cup seems to be full — Isaac is given — the bondwoman and her son cast out — the Gentile powers typified by Abimelech come forward to acknowledge that God is with him in all that he does, and he plants a grove and calls on the name of the everlasting God. But more discipline was necessary to ensure to his soul that the filling of that cup was entirely from God, that He could fill, empty, and fill it again, and that He alone was the filler of it. Abraham had given up expectation from the world — can he now surrender the object of his affections and hopes? and not only so, but will he be the actual perpetrator of the wrench himself? It was "very grievous in his sight" to cast out Ishmael; what must it be now to hear the word, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of!" The surrender is not like Jephthah's, viz., of his own proposing, but is distinctly required of him by God; and required not only that he should assent to it, but that he should execute it himself! Abraham obeyed.

He treads the path of dependence on God, high and elevated, above every influence either of ambition or affection. But what discipline! what denial of long-cherished hopes and affections? The object to be surrendered was not like Jonah's gourd which grew up in a night and withered in a night, but the fruit of many years of patience, trial and interest, and now he was to be himself the agent in dashing the full cup from his lips. Where was nature? — where its demands? Was he like Jephthah, "very low" that day; or like Jonah, "very angry?" No! the man of faith, in that moment terrible to mere nature, rose up early in the morning and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went to the place of which God had told him. What a continuance of calmness and dignity does faith impart! There was nothing sudden or hurried here: the period for reflection was lengthened, for after the third day the place was still "afar" off. Who can traverse in the spirit of his mind such

exercises as those of a soul which faith held true in obedience to the Word of God and not wonder at the transcendent vigour which that faith confers? The surrender is complete! Abraham with his own hand takes the knife to slay his son, but he reckons on God, "accounting that He was able to raise him up, even from the dead."

Dependence on God has triumphed over the demands of nature, and now follows the reward. "The ram caught in the thicket" — Christ, the true burnt-offering, who places us in an excellency before God, which none of our own offerings ever could — He is the compensation to us after all surrender, and also the true, real, and entire satisfaction of our hearts. And thus the place is called Jehovah-Jireh, it is the "mount of the Lord," because there the Lord provides what fully meets our need, and in addition, there also Abraham receives the largest and fullest revelation of blessing ever communicated to him. Nature was so silenced, and dependence on God so true and practical that the Lord can unfold to him the deepest counsels of His love. He was so perfect and full-grown that he has an ear to hear, and a heart to understand wisdom. God's discipline, had effected all this; and this, according to the measure of His grace, is what He is leading each of us into. May we indeed have grace and wisdom to discern the path of faith, and so abide in it that our walk may be to the praise and glory of Him who, in all His education of our souls, seeks our blessing and joy.

Vol 02 - Isaac.

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Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were distinctively the "fathers of Israel," the heads of a people called of God, to walk in the earth, as happily dependent on Him. Abraham leads the way; and while most exemplary for the faith which characterised him, he had also to contend with peculiarities of natural character and conflicts, unknown to Isaac and Jacob. If the path was higher, the difficulties were greater; if the faith was more vigorous, the resistance and denial of nature were more obstinate and severe; but in leadership, this became him. The mighty agencies of divine faith engaged in fatal conflict each daring opposition, which wilful nature, struggling for existence, raised against it. The combat was a close one:— dependence on God, wresting the creature from the government of his own will in order to subject it to God's will, must have evoked nature's bitterest antagonism. Abraham properly presents the leadership in this momentous engagement. Isaac follows: a leader, to be sure, but in a subordinate degree. Abraham, as it were conquers the country; Isaac is required to retain it. Abraham storms the fortress, endures all the contingencies of a protracted siege, effects an entrance, and possesses it; Isaac must hold the position against the common foe. Abraham suffers while contending for possession; Isaac, while keeping it. Abraham's hindrances are generally from the force of circumstances outside him; Isaac's, almost always from personal weakness. Isaac presents to us the inability of nature, in its best and fairest condition, to hold the path of faith, on which, through grace, man is set. His failures are not so much the strength of the enemy turning him aside, as the mere weakness of humanity. The disciples slept when the Lord asked them to watch, not from evil, for "the spirit was willing," but because "the flesh was weak," and it could not demonstrate the very feelings it commended. Isaac teaches us how weak and rickety the best part of our nature is in the path of faith, how it fails therein, and hence the discipline necessary for it.

Isaac enters on the scene as the child of promise; and, as his name indicates, under the happiest moral auspices. No wonder that we should be prepared to see in him a pleasing sample of fallen humanity, obedient, affectionate, and domestic. Our first notice of his opening manhood being the ascension of Mount Moriah, a scene so wonderful, that we hardly know which may most rivet our solemn gaze, the elevated and self-possessed action of Abraham, or the lamb-like acquiescence of Isaac. Though it may be said, that he did not know beforehand that it so fatally affected himself; but, even when he did know, by being laid on the wood of the altar, and the knife in his father's outstretched hand to slay him, we do not find that he in the least resisted its accomplishment. To obey in ignorance evinces unlimited confidence in the one to whom I yield such unsuspecting submission, and, still more, proves that I can bend and set aside my own will, in subjection to the one who has claim on me. Obedience must stand at the head of the list of all the activities which would conduce to order and blessing. The demand (even as it was in the first instance with Adam)

is to surrender the will to one rightly invested with a claim to it. Subjects, servants, wives, children, come under it; and the first commandment with promise is such, because the surrender of the will to one having a just claim to it, is an activity contrary to the very genius of our nature; and this activity, God owns and blesses. The path of the Lord Jesus was one of unqualified obedience, but He had always vividly before Him what the consequences of that obedience would be; so that He submitted because of the service He should render, and the joy He should contribute to His Father, and not as did His type, Isaac, because He was ignorant of the issue, or only sustained in his obedience by confidence in the one who required it. This obedience of Isaac in the opening of his history, however, warrants our estimate of him; but if (like the young man in the gospel, whom the Lord loved) it proceeded only from natural character, it must be (even as was his) subjected to an unequivocal test.

The more lovely the character, the more unmistakable must be the evidence that such an one has renounced all of himself. He is required to sell all that he has and give to the poor whence it could not be recalled; and thus, bereft, and denuded, to follow the Lord. Isaac then, the gentlest of natures must in figure pass through death! Death! That end of all nature, the only true goal for it, to which unreserved submission to the divine mind unfailingly leads; a discipline, so necessary and blessed for him, in the very opening of his history. It is not, as with Abraham, separation and self-mortification; but it is nothing short of death, moral death. The more refined and perfect the nature, the more complete must be its negation; where there is nothing very manifestly to be denied, all must be denied. Where there is something manifest, the denial of it will always break the will, because the will is expressed in the palpable passion, and breaking the will is really moral death to nature, which all must pass through, only with some it is accomplished directly through the crushing of some prominent feature or evil; while with others, of a more even nature, such as Isaac's, where nothing stands out prominently to be broken; the whole thing must be negated (I mean, of course, practically).

The next notice we get of Isaac is also one of death; but death of a different description, and which prepared him for a new order of life. The gift of Rebekah, is connected with the removal of Sarah, his mother, as if to repair the blank of one who had suited his gentle nature, and he emerges from the gloom and sorrow of death to enter as it were, on the consolation which the Lord has provided for him; but even then, so true and faithful are the dealings of our God with His people, Isaac, the promised seed, has no heir; nor has he, until cast on God, he is taught to look to Him instead of to nature. He must learn that God's blessings, whatever they be, will not yield desired results apart from Him. But, when this lesson is learnt, the preordained purpose may be accomplished, and thus to Isaac children were given. At their birth is vouchsafed a revelation of their destinies, sufficient to guide an ear open to God's mind and counsels, as to what the divine mind respecting them was, and what should be their respective place. Isaac should have understood this, and acted towards them accordingly; but he does not appear to have done so, or else his habitual nature swamped the counsel of God in his mind, for he does not seem to have discerned in Jacob the heir to the promises, and "he loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison." The divine intimation is overlooked, because the father's heart is gratified in the attentions of the son, and is more influenced by the dictates of nature than by the counsel of God. Natural and paternal as this feeling was, it was man's will, opposed to God's will, and therefore Isaac must be taught to relinquish it, — for the word of the Lord, that shall stand!

But this does not happen in a moment. He appears to have enjoyed his preference for Esau for a long time. In the course of discipline to which God subjects His people, we often find that there is a manifest reluctance on His part to deprive us of simple natural enjoyments. Nay, we are often allowed to share in them, until we attempt, in the presumption of nature, to give them a place contrary to God; until, like King Uzziah, we seek to give that which has only a place in nature, a place with God; and accordingly invest it with dignities only applicable to another. This almost necessarily occurs where there is disposition to follow the Lord, and even where pleasing God is the approved motive of the soul; in fact, where the conscience is in exercise, but the will is not subject. Hence, the Lord's demand may be acknowledged in the soul, without the will being really subject to God's will; and, when this is the case, there will be an effort (and often a momentarily successful effort) to appropriate for the creature that dignity and province which the divinely-appointed alone should occupy. In Christendom we see remarkable examples of this, right names attached to the most unfit exponents of them. For instance, "the church," as used in common parlance, no more represents the true thing than the golden calf did the God who brought Israel out of Egypt; and yet the majority of consciences are satisfied because the true and scriptural name is retained. Alas! we may all fall into this in our way and practice. We may calm our conscience, while we gratify our will, by offering to what is but its own offspring, a divine characteristic. Where this tendency is at work there must be discipline; but for some discipline we are not prepared, until we pass through that of another order. And mark, while Esau, by his hunting, is ingratiating himself with his father, and so far annulling the word of God in his mind, the effects of that very hunting oblige him to sell his birthright to the one whom God had designed it for: thus, at the same time, preparing the needed discipline for Isaac, and the fulfilment of the Lord's own purposes. Satan's most apparent success always contains the seed of his own ruin. As in the death of Christ, his power was at once concentrated and lost; as in every minor assault of his, we should find, if we had but patience to wait for the issue, that his direst plot against us eventuates in our sweet deliverance. "Out of the eater comes forth meat."

The next notice we have of Isaac, is of a different order. There was a famine in the land; and Genesis 26:1-35 gives us a detailed account of the exercises which he passed through, from the time he departed from the land until he returned to it again. This famine is expressly distinguished from the "first famine," in the days of Abraham. The first tried Abraham, the leader; the second tried Isaac, the occupier. Abraham had turned aside through it, and gone down to Egypt. Isaac takes the same direction, and goes to Abimelech, king of the Philistines; but God there warns him not to go further, but to sojourn in Gerar. He allows him to sojourn there, in order to test the possibility of it; but adds, "Dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of." Isaac not only

sojourns in Gerar, but dwells there, and, as a consequence, his troubles commence. He has another lesson to learn here: even that however prosperous he may be in the land of the Philistines, he can never enjoy the peace and calm which his soul desired, while he is mixed up in association with them. He attempts, at first, to secure an undisturbed residence among them by false representations, which falsity, being discovered, humbles him before them; as one not able to trust God in the circumstances in which he had placed himself. Still he does not leave the place. We often strive to remain where we have been unfaithful, as if we could regain what we had lost; but if our position be one of unbelief, no course of conduct there will ever alter its character. The Lord teaches Isaac the unprofitableness of gain in Gerar. He may be blessed, his corn yielding a

hundred fold, until he becomes very great. But what of it all? The Philistines envied him! The position of stranger would be happier for him, for he might then eat his bread in quietness, and drink from his own fountain in peace; but with all his greatness and possessions these mercies are denied him in Gerar.

Isaac, by a slow and painful process, is taught that he must abandon the land of the Philistines in toto: each successive well which he had to dig, marking the stages of this process. First, "contention;" then "hatred;" next "room;" but having found "room," and being debarred from the association which hampered him, he advances to Beersheba, which is on the confines of the land. He again takes the place of a stranger and pilgrim, depending on God; and the moment he does so, he gets his reward. "The Lord appeared unto him the same night," and blessed him. The discipline had produced sanctification, and he builds an altar and worships. It had taught him that it is better to have a little with God, than great possessions in a position outside his calling; and now he enjoys his mercies and his well in peace. It is the same lesson, only in a milder form, which Abraham had to learn; even to crucify his ambition and desire for eminence in this evil world. Ambition seeks to be an object of consideration to others; affection seeks an object of consideration peculiar to itself. Abraham had to pass through the trial and crucifixion of both; Isaac also, only, as we have said, in a milder form. He is brought to the end of the one, even ambition, in a way very common to the people of God, by finding that no acquisition with evil association can be enjoyed, and by being driven, after various struggles, to abandon the wrong position, for the untroubled waters of Sheba, and the presence of the Lord.

But the greater discipline, that of affection, awaits him; one for which he was being prepared, as it were, for a long time; indeed it was the grand discipline and lesson of his life. It was commenced when, on Mount Moriah, his whole nature, the good as well as the bad, was negated by passing, in a figure, through death; and is never lost sight of throughout his course. For all that we hear of him, in connection with his favourite son, Esau, bears the same character, and seems to be a preparation for the trial of his affections, which he was to undergo respecting him at the close, for having unduly indulged nature in preference to the counsel of God. The weakness of the flesh was Isaac's lesson, often a more humbling one than its evils. It caused the beloved disciple to sleep in Gethsemane, and allowed Peter to curse and to swear that he knew not the One whom he loved best on earth!

But, to resume:— Esau not only had disposed of his birthright, but he had socially disintegrated himself to heirship by marrying a Canaanite. This being known to Isaac, is, as we read, a "grief of mind" to him. Yet even this did not displace Esau from that place in his father's affections which he had held for so many years. Esau was forty years old when this marriage took place. Years after this, as we may suppose, when "Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see," he calls Esau to him, and says, "My son, . . . Behold now I am old, I know not the day of my death; now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out into the field, and take me some venison, and make me savoury meat, such as I love, that I may eat; and that my soul may bless thee before I die." Thus, to the last, does Isaac cling to the son he loved, overlooking, in the strength of his natural affection, every divine intimation, and every act of his, which should have influenced him to a different course; and he here comes before us in a truly humbling point of view, as the saint always does, when uncontrolled nature rules the day.

But God will subdue nature, unjudged nature, and in Isaac too! And not only this (so perfect and complete are God's ways), but He will use that very gratification, the indulgence of which had served to pervert Isaac's mind and judgement, as the direct instrument wherewith to discipline him. He is allowed to be deceived. Through means of the "savory meat," his mind was diverted from sound judgement; and through the "savory meat" he is compelled, unconsciously, to act according to the will of God; not as in the elevated and intelligent action of Jacob, who, in pronouncing his blessing, did so in full accordance of spirit with the mind of God, but as failing, humbled, deceived — carrying out the will of God, almost in spite of himself; and without any intelligent communion with Him — the sad effects of nature unjudged, and unmortified.

However human counsels are frustrated. Jacob, the rightful heir, the appointed of God, receives the blessing, and Isaac must bear it. And now the conflict between the natural will and the word of God takes place in his soul. What is the result? Nature surrenders. "Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it to me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea (the word of the Lord is triumphant), and he shall be blessed." We should note here a fact of great moment, viz., that the walking after our own will may not, as it cannot, vitiate truth in our souls, yet, if our spirit is not in subjection to God, we shall attempt to apply truth very erroneously. It is only when nature is subjected that we can happily accord with the only true and right application of the word of God.

In conclusion, note how the discipline of the Lord works. Isaac has now submitted to the counsel of God; but what a scene of sorrow surrounds him! His affection for Esau wrenched; and the now rightful heir, the hope of his house an exile! All this the bitter fruit of natural affection indulged, contrary to the mind of God!

Yet we hear no expression of impatience from Isaac, he blesses Jacob, and sends him to Padan-aram, in the vigour and faith of his best days. And his history closes with the account of how his last days were cheered by the presence of Jacob. Thus we see what is the "END of the Lord," even "very pitiful and of tender mercy," restoring to the bereaved one, when discipline has done its work, all, and even more than it lost. May this comfort all who mourn in Zion!

Vol 02 - Jacob.

Vol 02 - Jacob.

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(1st edition, [02 1859 347])

[02 1859 361] The history of Jacob is peculiarly interesting to us, for in it are developed the activities of the natural will, not so much in contravention of the expressed counsel of God, but rather in an attempt to secure, by its own instrumentality, what was pre-ordained of God. The more intelligent and impressed the mind of man is with the purpose of God, the more does it need subjection to God; for otherwise, it will seek to accomplish, by natural means, what ought to be left to the ordering of God; and this produces restlessness.

The mind, thus active, has great need for self-judgement; for its error is not refusing or misapprehending the will of God, but in attempting to promote and secure it, by its own unaided efforts. Now, when this is the case, the Lord allows His servant to find, by sorrowful experience, the fruits of his own plans. And though the purposes of His love remain the same, they must be reached by the intelligently wilful, in circumstances which declare, that He who blesses, and addeth no sorrow to it, has not been the undisturbed agent in the scene. "The fear of the Lord is wisdom, and the knowledge of the holy, that is understanding." If I have not God before my eyes, I never can, with a natural mind and in a world of evil, walk wisely: for God is the fountain of wisdom. Therefore mere knowledge in itself is nothing; that is, it never leads a man to walk with God.

Faith comes before knowledge: the link to knowledge is lost, if faith does not precede it. If I am depending on God, all true knowledge must increase that dependence; for, if I learn correctly, I find out that there is none so worthy of dependence as HE. If I love God, I know Him, but my love supplies my knowledge: otherwise, "Knowledge puffeth up."

Jacob is a remarkable example of one appreciating blessing, but ever and anon intercepting and anticipating the ways of God by his own plans. The heart was right, we might say; but the mind was unsubdued, and the natural mind cannot act, but according to its own perversity.

Thus, in the first act of his life presented to us, he evinces a greater regard for the blessing, and the position which the birthright would confer, than for the means by which he should secure them. He takes advantage of his brother's destitution to seize the valued, the justly valued, prize, which Esau ought not to have surrendered for any gain. Yet the possession of the birthright failed to give Jacob that assurance of the blessing which it represented; for if it had, he would not afterwards have so readily complied with his mother's unworthy expedient to secure it for him. And why? The desired mercy had been grasped by him in a natural way; and he derived none of the satisfaction from it which he would have experienced, had it reached him in a divine way; for a divine way always connects the soul with the Lord. If a mercy is not connected with the Lord, it may often

make me more miserable; but if it is, if I know that it flows from His love, the heart receives it in tranquillity and peace; for I know that though I may lose the proof of His love, I cannot lose the love itself, and that the love cannot exist without declaring itself.

Moses was soon discouraged in his effort to rescue Israel from the bondage of Egypt. He appreciated the service, but, by not connecting it with God, he soon lost assurance in its success. The Lord in His grace will bring us sooner or later to connect all our mercies or services with Himself; because He knows that without this we cannot reckon on His strength in supporting us. Thus Moses is forty years in the land of Midian, being prepared for the tidings of the burning bush. Paul in prison, at Rome, is confirmed in the reality of truths, which had been communicated to him long before. And Jacob, when he wrestled and obtained through grace the name of Israel, was confirmed in the assurance of blessings, which he became entitled to, many years previously. The possession of the birthright, his father's blessing, the vision at Bethel, the dream at Padan-aram — all failed to assure Jacob's soul of the reality of the portion which he so prized and needed. The wrestling at Mahanaim, where he was brought into personal nearness and subjection to God, alone established him in the assurance of it.

The dream at Bethel was the divine communication of the blessing; but not until Jacob is made to feel the bitter fruits of his own wilfulness, during a period of twenty years in Padan-aram, is he brought into that closeness of exercise with the Lord, which, though successful, results in personal disparagement.

What a course of discipline to subdue a wilful soul! Jacob is blessed in everything that he desires, although often thwarted, and always in what he most prizes. His elder brother surrenders him the birthright; his father blesses him with the best of blessings; the Lord reveals the purpose of His love towards him, when a wanderer from his father's house; in Padan-aram everything succeeds, but through hard labour and a series of thwartings, and, when he returns to enjoy the accumulated blessings in the land of promise, he is met at the very entrance by his brother Esau, and the question must be decided whether he is really possessor of the blessing after all. What a moment of agony and suspense this must have been to his wilful spirit! Still unable to trust God, he fears that the cup, which God Himself has filled, is about to be dashed from his lips, and all his blessings annihilated. The issue was now at stake. All the previous education of his life was in reference to this moment. He was the blessed one; but was he self-renounced enough to be invested with full and satisfactory possession? Has he come to such an end of himself that he rests on God, and God only, for the security of those blessings?

This the wrestling determines. From that struggle he emerges as an Israel, but with the deep sense of personal weakness, the marks of which he bears in himself. The sinew of his thigh shrank. A loser personally, he is a gainer positionally; or rather, he loses in a natural way, but gains in a divine way. Jacob had sought to appropriate to himself the blessings of the land in the strength and resources of nature; and after twenty years of discipline, when about really to enter it, he is brought to such straits and exercises of soul, that God is his only resource. He is cast upon Him and cannot proceed after all, unless God not only blesses but subdues him. But this being attained, Jacob enters the land, by faith, and as Israel; blessed, humbled, and having the mark of personal weakness.

And in this character, as the Israel, though halting, can he meet Esau, or any one who may dispute his title. All the toil and success of twenty years are lost, as to their bearing on that title; for it is God's blessing, not the proof of it, that really establishes his soul and sends him forth as the humbled Israel, the indisputable possessor of the land! A history all this of ourselves! Seeking for blessings, but too unsubdued to confide the ordering of them to the Lord alone: apprehending the loss of them, and finding our own insufficiency when the demand is made on us. But the God of Jacob is our God, and He will not only discipline but bless us.

This properly closes the first stage in the life of Jacob. He now takes the place of faith, the only true link to blessing, and is a pattern to us of the honour set on one who surrenders his own will and comes out of the conflict prevailing with God and man. We then find that, worthless as the will is in itself, the breaking of it is what God distinguishes with the greatest eminence, even giving such an one power to prevail with Himself and man.

We have now to consider Jacob in the land. Though the will must be broken, in order to facilitate our entrance into a sphere of blessing, we seldom abide in that sphere, without exhibiting a recurrence of the same wilfulness which delayed and obstructed our entrance. The path, to be a true one and suited to us, must ensure that suppression of nature which would exert a counter-influence; and hence the sphere of blessing which I have entered on, through the denial of my will, must be retained and enjoyed in the same spirit. If I think or act otherwise I must suffer, and learn, by God's discipline, that the subjection, which fitted me for entering, I must not relax one whit, because I have entered and am in possession.

How often do we observe, and know, too, the very contrary to this, in ourselves! How often, after using great watchfulness, treading softly, and really humbly seeking to enter, do we, when we obtain and enjoy what we have sought, forget the mode and spirit by which we have obtained it, and thus, fresh discipline becomes necessary for us! Israel fought and suffered in order to reach the blessings of the land, but when those blessings were obtained, and enjoyed, Israel waxed fat and kicked, and forgot the God who had exalted him. It is more difficult to nature to walk with God in the fullness of mercies, than in the dearth of them. The water was a greater test to Gideon's army than any of the sufferings consequent on the undertaking.

Jacob now, in peaceful enjoyment of all the blessings with which God had surrounded him, and in that land with which every blessing was connected, ought to have repaired to Bethel, according to his pledge. But, instead of this he considers for his own immediate necessities, and builds a house at Succoth. It might be asserted that his necessities required this; but still it was a departure from the principle of faith by which he had entered on possession. It was a divergence, however small, from the path of a pilgrim, and moreover, a halt on the way, which should have been steadily pursued onward until Bethel was reached. And as one shortcoming always leads to another, the next thing that we read of him is, that he bought a parcel of a field, of the children of Hamor. He requires some other guarantee for his possession than the will and arm of the Almighty. It is a repetition of that wilfulness which so characterised him; always seeking to secure by his own means the blessings which were derived from God, and which he, doubtless, owned as such. This is a very common tendency, and much more difficult of exposure and correction than that which seeks what is simply of the world. God Himself is not the first object of the soul. His gifts, alas! too often shut out God Himself; and where he is not paramount, will must be somewhere at work, and

we are in reality thinking of enjoying ourselves with the gifts instead of with Him.

(1st edition, [02 1859 365])

So with Jacob at Shalem. Having yielded to nature, and departed in wilfulness from the path of simple dependence on God, he now erects an altar, and calls it, "El-elohe-Israel;" not surely forgetting that he was Israel, the blessed one; but magnifying this fact more than the grace of God that made him so. The true state of our souls is revealed by the title of our altar, if I may so express it; or, in other words, the character of our worship, and nearness to God. When the soul is occupied with itself; that is when its own condition is more before it than the greatness and excellency of the Lord, it is evident that the latter cannot be fully apprehended, or its superiority would necessarily supplant the other. When we are in the presence of God, we cannot be occupied with our own state, save as to the exaltation we have received by being admitted to such a place. When really with God, we are lost in God, and in His interests: but when we are occupied with our own blessings or necessities, it is an occupation, right in its place, but lower than that which makes Him the supreme object; than that which Paul knew when his aim was to "win Christ."

Jacob is here not only occupied with his blessings, but indulging his wilfulness, and for this discipline is needed. The weight must be removed. He must learn that his own plans only produce sorrow and discomfiture. Thus, his residence at Shalem entails shame and sorrow on his family, and the only relief from it is to obey the word of the Lord.

Jacob is made to feel the shame and humiliation of the position which he had himself chosen, and then the word of the Lord falls freely on his soul, and the discipline has prepared him to respond to it. "Arise," says the Lord, "Go up to Bethel and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee, when thou fleddest from the face of Esau, thy brother." In pursuing "the race set before us," all goes right! Jacob, on departing from Shechem for Bethel, leaves all his defilements behind him. The idols must be left at Shechem; they cannot be taken to Bethel. The moment we take God's path — the way to God's house, we must be clean; "holiness becometh his house, for ever." Now the title of Jacob's altar is "El-Bethel." He has become enlarged in the purposes of God, and sees himself merely as an agent in expressing and unfolding them on earth. His thoughts now dwell less on Jacob, the blessed of God, than on God, the blesser of Jacob. Another step on the path of faith has been taken.

But now, although he has apprehended the Lord's teaching, he is not subdued into accurate adherence to His word. The Lord had told him to dwell at Bethel; instead of which we find that, after a little, he journeyed from thence; and, consequently, fresh discipline awaits him. The trials in his circumstances, up to this, had been many and various; but now it is the trial of his affections which he is called upon to suffer. Death created a blank that can never be supplied, for his bereavement, in the loss of Rachel, was not forgotten for the remainder of his course. Compare Genesis 35:16, with Genesis 48:7. In the latter passage Jacob alludes to his sorrow as if it had closed his own hopes as to earth. "As for me," he says, "when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan, when yet there was but a little way to come to Ephrath, and I buried her there, on the way to Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem." He buried the object of his affections, where Christ, the real balm for every bereaved heart, was to be born. If he leaves Bethel, the house of God, the place where God had appeared unto him, and told him to dwell, he is taught that there

must be nothing but a desolate path outside. The clouds gather round his path. The immorality of his first-born, and the death of his father quickly follow. How deeply the former affected him, we learn from Genesis 49:3-4, where the bitterness of his heart, unnoticed here, finds a vent in reviewing all in the light of God's counsels.

The next notice we get of Jacob, is in Genesis 37:1-36 where we read that "he dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger." This was his proper position, the one to which faith had called him, but nevertheless, the discipline, after a respite, is continued. It was still necessary that he should be weaned from dependence on any object whatever. Though Rachel be gone, her two sons remain; and, through them, Jacob undergoes a continued process of crucifixion to his affections.

If we were more careful to observe the manner and links of God's dealings with us, we should find, that though there may be a suspension in the sorrow, and often a long interval of repose, yet, that the trials are continued very much in the same line, until the desired effect is produced.

We might have thought that Jacob's spirit was so broken, so shaken out of his interests and affections, that his path would, henceforth, be one of easy subjection to God. But no! when the strong will is the man of natural might, there is not complete surrender while any link of nature remains; and all the sorrow of heart which we read of in Genesis 37:1-36 and Genesis 43:1-34 touching Joseph and Benjamin, is necessary to bring Jacob's heart and will into entire submission. That the discipline produced this effect we cannot doubt, if we compare his expressions in Genesis 37:34-35, and in Genesis 43:14. In the first instance he rent his clothes, put sackcloth upon his loins, and refused to be comforted. "For," said he, "I will go down into the grave with my son mourning." But in the last he says, "If I am bereaved, I am bereaved;" in other words, "I submit." What a difference! what a desolation, when the heart is wrenched and there is no resource in God, but what a contrast, when the Almighty God is a refuge, and the bereaved one can say, "If I am bereaved, I am bereaved!" "I take that place." It is simple submission to the will of God, and effects, for us, what God so much desires — even, that we should find our resources in Him; and the soul, brought to this, is never unsatisfied. The happiness of His people is the great purpose of God; and we often find that, when a trial has effected the necessary discipline, the tried one is given back the objects, the loss of which had occasioned its sorrow, and which it is now prepared to use and enjoy in dependence on God.

Jacob receives both Joseph and Benjamin again. But so unprepared is the heart of man for the tender mercy of our God, that the very announcement of it caused Jacob's heart to faint. So great had been the depth of his sorrow, that the unaccredited attempt to relieve it, for a moment almost annihilated him. Much discipline had been needed to break his strong will and unsubdued nature, but it had amply done its work. How broken is he now! To bind up the broken heart is one of the special services of Christ; but many a Jacob cannot believe it possible that such tender mercy awaits him, and even when known, it often causes more fainting of the heart than did the very discipline itself.

But the Lord always makes sure of His work. He stoops to our weakness and gives us evidences. The nobleman (John 4:1-54.) was assured by evidences, that it was at the very hour that Jesus said to him, "Thy son liveth," that he was made whole. And so here: Jacob is first convinced by evidences of the reality of the mercy, and then, after recovering Joseph again, the relief is so

complete, that he utters sentiments similar to those of the aged Simeon, when he held the infant Jesus in his arms: "Now let me die," he says, "since I have seen thy face," etc. The cup is full! The heart, already so broken and subdued, is now satisfied, having received back what it had lost, directly from God, and with increased honour and glory to Him. Discipline having done its work, we find that fullness of joy is the great desire of the heart of God for us.

Jacob's life in Egypt is, properly, the third stage of his chequered pilgrimage, and a bright stage it is. His last moments are the great event noticed by the apostle as the highest evidence of faith: "By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph, leaning on the top his staff." He there appears before us as the witness for God, intelligent as to his counsels, broken in will, holy and elevated in utterance. What a bright and tranquil close to his distracted, self-willed and disciplined life! How much we have to learn from his history! Valuing blessings, but ever resorting to his own means and modes in order to secure them; learning, by sorrowful experience, the folly of his own plans, and that in whatever measure a man metes, it will be measured to him again. But on the other hand, he learns also, that God is the only true rest and resource in sorrow; and this priceless lesson he reaches, to the satisfying of his heart, before his course ends.

Oh! how sweet and instructive it is, to retrace all the ways and dealings of God with us, when we are at last "settled in Him" as our sure resource.

Vol 02 - Joseph.

Vol 02 - Joseph.

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The history of Joseph unfolds to us the trials and duties of a servant of God. The evils and failure of human nature, are not brought before us in his course, as in that of some we have already studied. Joseph is regarded, primarily, as a servant and instrument for God's work; and, consequently, we have to trace the exercises and purgation to which he must be subjected, in order to fit him for that work.

The first notice we have of him is respecting his position in his father's house. "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age, and he made him a coat of many colours." Thus loved and signalled by his father, his heart was enlarged. Tasting the sweetness of affection its own was drawn out; for nothing generates affection in us so much as the assurance of its existence for us; as it is written, "We loved him because he first loved us." When love asserts its claim, every other claim is acknowledged and valued as only opportunities for its expression. So Joseph's heart in tender age expanded in the genial atmosphere of his father's love; but this, at the same time, exposed him to the envy of those who had proved themselves unworthy of it. "His brethren hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him." While on the one side he learned the tenderness and resources of his father's affection, on the other he suffered reproach and persecution for being so favoured. If the one attracted him to his father, the other painfully warned him that he must be dependent on his affection, for, outside it, and on account of it, he was a sufferer.

Thus, early in life, and in the domestic circle, did Joseph learn (as indeed of all God's servants) the elementary principles of that truth which must sustain him, in the highest services by and by; even that as the loved of God, he is the hated of man. The love of the father, conspicuously indicated by the coat of many colours, must compensate him for the hatred of the brethren; must nerve and prepare him for all their opposition and envy, and this is the first and greatest lesson which the servant of God has to learn on entering his course, that which Christ (of whom Joseph is the type) so fully and perfectly apprehended; He who, ever dwelling in the full consciousness of the Father's love, was thereby enabled to meet unmoved all the hatred and malice of man. And still further, the one who best knows the father's love must be the best exponent of that love — the best qualified servant for the father to send on a mission of interest to those who were ignorant of it. "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Joseph, still bearing out his character of type and servant, is deputed by his father to see how his brethren fared; but before this event there are two intimations given him of the position which he must occupy by and by with respect to these communications. He receives no support from his father, who rebukes him, and this, with the concomitant and increased opposition of his brethren, laid the groundwork

of that dependence on God and dependence of man which so distinguished his after course. The prospects which divinely occupy my soul may be ill-received by all around me, even by valued friends and guides; but they are mercifully given in order to confirm the soul, and still more to convince me, when the realisation supervenes, how true and constant has been God's care of me.

How little we notice or value the small circumstances of our early life and the large effect they exercise on us! From infancy we are forming for the place destined for us of God; and our whole history is but a succession of processes preparing us for the end, the very first of them, in all material points, bearing strict analogy to the one which closes our course. Thus was it with David. The first notice we have of him is, feeding sheep in the wilderness; from whence he was taken, after an intervening process of discipline, "to feed Israel his people, and Jacob his inheritance," a position which he held, in many a varying circle, to the end. So also with Moses. Alone for God, with God, and under God, in the ark of bulrushes, every era of his life is of the same order, whether in Midian, in the Mount, or on Pisgah at last.

Joseph then starts on his mission, assured of his father's love, aware of the hatred of his brethren, and secretly impressed with an unknown, and as yet incomprehensible, idea of future greatness. Responding to the will of the father, he did not shrink from the post of danger which the father did not apprehend for him. If the One greater than we are, in love and in wisdom, appoint us a path of service, which would be grateful to Himself, and He, knowing all, apprehends no danger for us; we may surely enter on it in simple confidence. It is the only true and happy spirit for any path of service. Emerging from the private home — known expression of our Father's love — to launch into the tumultuous ocean of unreasonable and unloving brethren, and be messengers of the Father's interest respecting them. Thus Christ came and thus must every true servant of His be sustained or be useful. Joseph pursuing this path of service, bearer of his father's message, and exponent of his father's interest, came to Shechem, but is checked in the execution of his mission by finding his brethren not there. Such checks often occur in order to test our reality as to whether the Father's will is wholly our desire. Joseph's heart was evidently set on its accomplishment, for instead of returning when he could not find them, he lingers at his post until he gets tidings of them, and then follows them to Dothan, unprepared for the murderous and malicious reception which awaited him.

After various modifications of these evil purposes, (for wicked counsels must always be multifarious, whereas there is but one fixed way for doing right) Joseph is sold to the Ishmaelites, and again sold by them into Egypt, unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, and captain of the guard. What a change for him, from the glow of a parent's love, uppermost and chief, to be first murderously assailed by his own brethren, and now a bondsman in Egypt! Had the divine communications vouchsafed to him in his dreams made him independent of everything from man, (be it love or hatred,) and dependent only on God? If they had, he needed it at this juncture; and, undoubtedly, that was the value of the discipline he was now undergoing. Truth is communicated to us first, and we may greatly value the acquisition of it: but the winter can alone season the succulent growths of spring and summer. The great reality of the truth must be learned by us; Joseph must be cast on God.

But the winter is seldom without some gleam of sunshine; and often before its depths, as well as before its conclusion, a bright season intervenes. Before the sternest part of the discipline befalls

us, we are often cheered by an unexpected reprisal. Thus Joseph is a prosperous man in the captain's house. But from this he is soon driven — a snare being then prepared for him by the adversary of souls, which he has integrity and dignity to fly from; for it only addressed the depravity of his nature, and offered no alleviation to his condition as a slave. We may regard Potiphar's wife as a type of the world, the allurements of which she symbolises; and, failing to attract the prosperous servant of God, she becomes his direst and most unscrupulous foe. Evil association too often accompanies prosperity; but prosperity in evil association cannot remain for the God-fearing soul. The latter will extinguish the former if there be faithfulness. But how great is the compensation for the loss of both! God remains — unto whom, and before whom, Joseph now so distinctly acted. How chequered is the life of this future witness for God! First sold as a bondsman for being the messenger of his father's love unto his brethren; and now cast into prison by his master because he was the righteous guardian of his master's property.

He learned that neither love nor righteousness could be comprehended by man. To God alone he must look, and on God alone be cast. And God did not disappoint him. "The Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. "The one who is really cast on God improves the circumstances of trial in which he is, whether they be temporary, or permanent. No adverse circumstances can crush the true living energy; they may limit and determine it. The scene may be changed, but not the spirit of it. Moses in Midian helps the woman and waters their flocks, when no longer allowed to help and serve the Hebrews. He is a saviour in Midian, as well as in Egypt to the nation of Israel: and the Lord becomes a sanctuary to him and provides alleviation for him in his bondage and sorrow. And Joseph also is found ere long to be as useful in prison, as he was in the house of the captain of the guard. "The keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was under his hand, because the Lord was with him, and that which he did the Lord made it to prosper." In every trial, however gloomy, there are gleams of light and relief; but full deliverance is often delayed by our anxiety to obtain it. God is to be the satisfaction of His servant, and not the deliverance; consequently, the latter is often postponed until we are without prospect or expectation of it: and then, it may be accorded in a manner so transcendently beyond our perception, that we must see and understand the love and interest which surrounded us during the whole period of our trial.

Thus was it with Peter in Acts 12:1-25, with Paul and Silas in Acts 16:1-40, and with Joseph in the sequel of what we are considering. His abilities as God's servant, and as the one acquainted with His mind, are first in the most distinct manner displayed in the prison. Trials, the effect of man's enmity, do not obstruct the truth of God. Opportunity for its development will occur, in apparently the most disastrous circumstances. Paul, in gaol, is blessed to the gaoler: Joseph, in prison, reveals to the chief-butler the purposes of God; but he probably errs in soliciting the latter to negotiate for his release; and two full years longer must he remain a captive. He is again taught that no confidence can be placed in man. The prolonged incarceration must have deeply tried one who was conscious of having done nothing to merit it. It must have almost seemed as if God had forgotten him; and nothing is so painful as the sense that one from whom you expect much knows of your need, and does not come forward to your help. This was Job's great trial — that God did not manifest care for him, and John the Baptist's, when he heard in prison of the works of Jesus. Whether Joseph felt thus we are not told; but we know that God had a purpose in his prolonged imprisonment: and when that purpose was answered, "the time came, and the word of the Lord

tried him; the king sent and delivered him, even the ruler of the people, and let him go free."

How little we understand the exercises and purgation to which the fruitful branch must be subjected that it may be fit for God's work! Chastening is needed, to take out of the way that which we do not seek to remove; and purging, to rid us of what we desire and seek to be rid. Joseph underwent a deep process of purgation, from the day he left his father's house, clad in the coat of many colours, as a distinguishing mark of love. He had to learn, through a remarkable series of sorrow and discipline, that in order to be fit for God's service he must find the favour of man is deceitful: he is allowed to taste of it from time to time, in order to show him how little it can avail him in any moment of need; and slowly, but surely, he learns what it is to be from God, and to God. But deliverance comes in the end; and Joseph appears before Pharaoh, in the highest sense, as a servant and witness of God. He declares things to come, and receives the distinction and position to which righteously he is entitled, and which the world even is compelled to accord him. All this time, probably, he knew little of the service which he was to render to his brethren, or how fully that which he once attempted to render to them, and which was so cruelly rejected and requited, would now be offered and so humbly appreciated. God all the time was working for his people, and preparing for them; and in process of time, Joseph knew this and admitted it.

In his several interviews with his brethren, he presents to us the loveliest portraiture of the man of divine wisdom and judgement, struggling against the finest emotions of his heart; restraining the expression of his affection until he was assured that the right and safe time for the denouement had arrived. How touching the anxiety and distress which he inflicts on his brethren, in order to secure to them the ways and doings which his heart craved! His love for them prompted it all; and, in surveying his behaviour, we cannot but see how self-possessed and controlled he had become, and how fitted for the service he was called to render and maintain. What a moment it must have been to this long-suffering and humbled, but now exalted and disciplined man, to present himself to his father, fall on his neck and weep! What a course of preparation he had passed through, before this great climax of his life and service was obtained! But attained it was. He had, through mercy, accomplished and provided for every need of his brethren, evincing, at the same time, how equal he was to the mission he first entered on, at the commencement of his course: namely, to convey to them a just idea of their father's love.

In conclusion, we have only to observe the faith for which he was distinguished. After all the eminence he had attained in Egypt, and all the service he had performed, by faith he sees a better and a greater inheritance beyond it. When about to die, he makes mention of the departure of Israel, and gives commandment concerning his bones. Thus, as a faithful servant, he closes his course, testifying the proper object of hope; serving the people of God to the full, and according to their need, while he lived; and, when dying, leading them to the only true prospect and hope of their souls; even the inheritance of the promised land. No present advantages must cloud or intercept this. Faith overlooks the brilliancy of present things, and faithfully serving his people to the end, he enjoins on them with his latest breath, their proper hope, and future course.

And thus determined the career of one of the most disciplined and honoured of servants; after great trials, but greater successes; great sorrows, but greater joys; great humiliation, but greater exaltation; and a grateful study it is, for every suffering servant of our God — to whom be praise for ever and ever.

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Moses being in a special sense the type of Him who is the servant of all, we should be prepared to find in his history the most peculiar discipline, in order to suppress his nature, and make room for the expression of that grace and service, which was exemplified in perfection in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Born at the period when Pharaoh's interdict against the male children of Israel is raging, no exception is made in favour of him: he enters on the earth to find that earthly place is denied him. There was no room for the Lord of glory in the inn, and Egypt's king enacts that his type, Moses, should die the moment he is born! By faith only his parents rescued him. "They saw he was a goodly child, and were not afraid of the king's commandment." They knew by the deep and peculiar conviction which the Holy Ghost effects, that God was to be trusted for this child. Faith in God thus bears him into life. How must he in riper years have derived strength from this godly acting of his parents and have been indebted to them for this their first training him in the nurture and admonition of the Lord! The commencement of our course gives a colour to the whole of it; and the earliest tuition we receive in the divine school gives a mould and a tone to our characters, which after years can never obliterate. Moses' first breath on earth was secured to him only through the faith of his parents. He was hid three months. Sorely must their faith have been exercised during these ninety days, but they endured; and then, in the ark of bulrushes, they consign him to the waters. All place on earth being denied him, the older he grew, the more difficult it became to screen him from the ruthless edict.

When we act in faith, and have endured sufficiently so as to establish our souls in the assurance that it is faith, then the Spirit which gives us the faith gives us also wisdom how to act. In this wisdom the parents of Moses now act. Faith is no hindrance to their affections; but it loves to sustain those affections, which, acting alone, would be too anxious and distracted; it supports the heart in quiet, unflinching persistence of the conviction and purpose which it inculcates.

From his perilous position in the ark of bulrushes, Moses, the weeping babe, is taken by no less a person than the daughter of him who would have been its destroyer, but not before the impression of the coldness and desolation of this world had been made upon his tender spirit. We read, "the babe wept." Thus, in earliest age, before the mind could be intelligently impressed, is he made to taste of that sorrow and pressure to which he must be no stranger throughout his course. The mind of the babe could not recall it, but the soul, nevertheless, consciously entered on that line in which it was afterwards to be so exercised, and his tears were no doubt the firstfruits of a sorrow with which, in after life, he was so deeply conversant. But the answer to this is the Lord's tender care and consideration for him; and this we see exemplified in the most touching and interesting

way. Not only is the daughter of his enemy made the instrument of his deliverance, but he is consigned to the care of his own mother and then installed in Pharaoh's house in ease and honour. The desolation of the world and the unfailing compassions of God are the first lessons of discipline traced on his unconscious mind, and which are never to be erased; for God teaches early, decidedly, and enduringly.

The interval which intervenes between this first notice and the next, when Moses is "full forty years," is briefly but significantly summed up as the time during which he was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in word and in deed. He was introduced into all the attractions of Egypt, that in relinquishing them, he might have sympathy with any extent of surrender which the people of God might be called to. Many might have much to surrender, but not so much as he had and did. If the people felt it hard to relinquish the leeks and the onions, how much more should Moses, who had moved in all the luxuries and honours of Pharaoh's court! In God's discipline and education he was being prepared for the leadership he was to be invested with by and by. The great magnitude of his own surrender qualified him to ask others to follow him; the renunciation of all Egypt's attractions entitled him to take the lead out of Egypt; for if he "chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin," he did so, after having participated in their greatest magnificence. And more than this — by this education, he was made conversant with every thing that was delectable in nature, and had experiences of what nature could yield, in a way which none of the previous characters which we have been considering could have known. Neither Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, or even Joseph, had such a training as this, and justly so, for none of them was intended for such a mission as Moses; and God's education and discipline with His people is always suitable and preparative to its peculiar end. Solomon tested the vanity of every thing on earth; the Lord Jesus at once felt it in His own moral perfection; Moses is surrounded by it to mature age, and then refuses it.

And now it comes into his heart to visit his brethren. A right impulse moves him in a right direction; but we are not always morally prepared for the expression of our impulses, even though they be right ones. Our humanity being the vessel through which they must be expressed, it is often unequal to the trials which the impulse may expose us to. But, if the impulse be right, we may rest assured that the vessel will be prepared for its expression, sooner or later. It may be postponed, and necessarily so, while the vessel is preparing; but this being done, the right and true desire will be owned and gratified.

When Peter first proposed to the Lord to follow Him (John 13:1-38), the Lord warned him that he could not do so then; and, on the contrary, that he would deny Him. But when Peter was fully restored, and had his soul strengthened in the love of Christ, the Lord lets him know that he is to follow Him; and that the desire which he once so fearlessly and ignorantly avowed, he should yet distinctly substantiate. Thus with Moses here. He has got the right idea and desire, but he has not learnt from God the right way of sustaining and establishing it. He knows not the trials which beset his path; and, consequently he has no provision to meet them when they occur. His attempt only proves how insufficient are his resources for the work he had entered on; and he has at last to abandon it, and relinquish that on which his heart was set: the inevitable consequence of attempting to carry out a right purpose in our own resources. I think a servant of God is generally acting in his own resources when he engages opponents on a level with himself; he thus aims at the tail instead of the head. Moses now directs his vengeance against an Egyptian, but when he

returns in the power of the Lord, it is levelled against Pharaoh; even as Christ, who, in accomplishing eternal deliverance for us, first encountered Satan.

Moses fails, as he might be expected; and not only so, but his own life is in jeopardy, and for very personal safety he must fly. "Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian, and sat down by a well." What an accumulation of distressful feelings must have oppressed this zealous servant of God! What anguish to a faithful heart to be thus baffled in its sincere attempts to serve his brethren! May not all his sacrifices and surrender of the glories of Egypt have appeared to him now as useless to others and unprofitable to himself as he sat there, a wanderer and exile, like a blighted, fruitless tree in the desert. But if such were Moses' thoughts, they were not God's. The mission was not forfeited, but only postponed. The vessel was not yet "meet for the Master's use." Nature was not sufficiently purged from it. On the other hand, God's time to deliver His people had not come; neither were the people themselves prepared for the deliverance. But one subject is Moses himself; and he, as God's instrument and servant for the work, need forty years' more preparation ere he can be thus used. And already, sitting by the well in the land of Midian, is he under that discipline which will form for the great service designed for him in the counsel of God.

Forty years of exile are appointed for Moses; but whether those years should be one uninterrupted season of sorrow and gloom, or whether they should be mitigated by sources of solace and cheer, depends on the manner in which the disciplined one receives the discipline. Will he bow himself and accept the will of the Lord? Will he prove himself here a deliverer of the distressed, in principle and heart, as well as for his own people? If he will, he accepts God's discipline; and, therefore, his lot may be less trying and oppressive. The moment subjection is established discipline becomes effective, and may be relaxed. Though not removed, the scene may be brightened. And thus was it with Moses. He acts the part of a deliverer to the women at the well, who were driven away by the shepherds. Although he has been denied to declare himself as such in a large circle, he does not refuse it in a very insignificant one; he does not brood in listless sorrow over his own reverses, like the fool eating his own flesh, but he submits to his circumstances, and rises above his own feelings, in his interest to serve others. Until I am superior to a trial I must be under it; and, while under it, not free to serve with whole-heartedness, or cheerfulness of spirit, which latter is always the mainspring of service. Nothing proves more the divinity of our mission than ease and readiness to accord it in the most retired and unknown quarters, as well as the most attractive and congenial. And when we fully surrender our selves to the position the Lord has ordered for us, serving Him therein, He makes the desert land (the place of discipline), to brighten up, and provides rest and solace in that on which we entered in sorrow and desolation of heart.

At first Moses' service to those Midianitish women meets no requital, even as Joseph's to the chief butler; but it must not remain so. Reuel, their father, sends for him in virtue of his service to his daughters, provides a home for him, and gives him his daughter Zipporah to wife: and we read, "she bare him a son, and he called his name Gershom; for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land."

This name reveals to us the secret sorrow of Moses. Though provided with a home, he still felt himself a stranger in a strange land; therefore, his son, who linked him to the scene, must bear a

name which will perpetuate before him his exiled condition, which no present mercies could exclude. They could not obliterate the deep and earnest purpose of his soul, to deliver his people. Nor SHOULD they; for, as we have said before, the purpose was right, yea, divine; but the vessel was denied its expression until further preparation. Paul does not adequately express what he receives and exults in for more than fourteen years afterwards; and thus, in prison at Rome, he was peculiarly prepared and fitted for doing so.

For forty years, then, does Moses fulfil his daily toil, perfecting subjection to the will of God. Useful and exemplary in the common duties of life, the qualifications which he demonstrated as a servant were a sure indication of those of a master, for which he was being educated; for none can rule well who have not learnt to serve. His occupation was evidently a toilsome one — seeking pasturage for the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro.

In the natural routine of it, he leads the flock to the back-side of the desert, and comes to the mountain of God, even to Horeb, little thinking, no doubt, that the days of his exile were about to close. The moment had come when God could use him, according to the desire which had induced him so many years previously to attempt the deliverance of his brethren from the yoke of Egypt; and now we have to consider the closing scene of that long period of preparation, which the Lord in His wisdom saw fit to order for His servant, and which He is now about to insure by the revelation of Himself. "The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed." Moses' attention is arrested. Though occupied with his natural duties, they did not incapacitate him from recognising the manifestations of the Lord. Nor need they ever. On the contrary, if rightly entered on, they guarantee assiduity to higher duties. The shepherds, watching their flocks by night, are the witnesses, chosen of God, for recording the greatest manifestation ever made to earth. It is one of the greatest proofs of subjection to God, to fulfil our daily toil patiently and perfectly; and yet to have the eye ever ready to observe the ways of God; which I apprehend is the force of that exhortation connected with prayer — "Watching thereunto with all perseverance," etc. And this is the effect of a single eye, one that has the Lord's glory simply and wholly as its object.

"And Moses said, I will turn aside to see this great sight; and when the Lord saw that he turned," when it was evident that he desired to know the meaning of the Divine doings, "God called to him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I" The revelation of the Lord here is in grace; in a flame of fire, but consuming nothing; the glory of God coming near to man, and man finding nothing but mercy and loving kindness flowing from it. And yet, it was holy ground; and only unshod worshippers could draw near to it. It was, moreover, an expression of God drawing near to man, and not of man drawing near to God. It was to unfold, that from God's side there was nothing to perpetuate the distance and alienation which existed between man and God. And this was a great and precious and needed lesson for Moses. He must, in his own experience, learn God in His love for His people; and also, how man can be brought nigh to Him.

Thus the Lord presents Himself in a flame of fire in a bush, and reveals His tender feelings and interest for Israel. How grateful must such communications have been to Moses. After the long and dreary interval in which it seemed that God had forgotten His people, he is instructed of the infinite love and interest with which He had regarded them all through, and of His gracious purpose of delivering them. And now, Moses is conscious of his own inability for such a service. He sees

that it is not his own feelings that he is to act on and to gratify, but Jehovah's; the One who, though before him in a flame of fire, will consume nothing; and the immensity of whose eternal love and mercy must have contrasted strongly with the impulsive and erring impetuosity with which he demonstrated his own, forty years before. He is now deeply sensible of his incompetency, and says, "Who am I to go before Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" God will reassure, instruct, and prepare him; and we read in the following verses how this is done. He first communicates His intention and purpose to His servant. This must reassure him; not only in the proof of confidence which it evinces; but the soul, entering into the mind of God, is more ready and eager to undertake when the process and issue are before it.

But more than this (for the teaching of God is perfect), Moses is taught to feel in himself the power of God; and this is grace and life. The link must be established between his own soul and God before he can fully enter into that between the people and God; and this soul-assuring lesson he is taught in three different ways. First, he is made to feel his possession of power, superior to that before which his nature would succumb. His rod having turned into a serpent (the symbolical form of Satan), Moses flees from it; but the Lord causes him to grasp it, and it again becomes the rod of power in his hand. Secondly, He learns that if his hand be leprous God can present it sound again; and, thirdly, he is instructed that the water of the river (the great source of blessing) if poured on the dry land by him should become blood; showing that God had the power of life. In all these three points he is taught in order that he might be qualified for the mission entrusted to him, and also feel himself equal to it. Moses still demurs. Though strengthened in soul he is deficient in utterance; but God is gracious and considerate in preparing his servants for the work in small things as well as great. He will relieve whatever embarrasses them. Aaron is provided as a mouthpiece, and all being arranged, "he took his wife and his sons and set them upon an ass and returned to the land of Egypt, with the rod of God in his hand." How different from the manner in which he had left it, and how indicative is the contrast of what those 40 years of discipline must have wrought in and for him. Instead of an ignominious flight, fearing for his own life, the result of previous self-confidence and acting FOR God and independently of God, he now comes, small and weak in his own eyes, but invested with the power of God, in the calm easy dignity of one who feels that his only strength is in dependence on the Lord whose work he is about to enter on.

But ere this is entered on fully, there is one more question which must be settled between the Lord and Moses. And this gives us a remarkable instance of the exactitude of God's discipline. Either compromising to the habits of the Midianites, or despairing of ever again associating with his own nation, Moses had neglected to circumcise his son; and now, without repairing his error, which was a great one (considering his wife was a Gentile), he proceeds to enter on the Lord's service as if it were a matter of indifference. But, no; he must learn that nothing will be overlooked in one appointed to so high a post. His responsibilities must be equal to his calling. The Lord seeks to kill him: so inflexible is His holiness, and so strict is He in demanding obedience to His laws from one who fills the post of a servant, more than in any other. His wife repairs the inconsistency, but she does so reproachfully, and returns into her own country, while Moses pursues his way in company with Aaron.

What a finishing lesson this was just on the very scene of his long wished-for service. What an impression it must have made upon his soul, as the long-desired morning, with all its interests, was breaking in upon him. No eminence in service, no amount of knowledge in the deepest things

of God, will excuse his overlooking any of God's commandments. Nay, he must feel that, as to him much had been committed, of him much would be required. Implicit obedience to the word must mark the life and ways of the most eminent, and best instructed of servants. And with this, Moses' last lesson in this stage of his history, (one, moreover, which had been severely instilled into him), he passes on to the field of his labours. Emerging from the solitudes of Midian, he is to stand as God's witness before Pharaoh. Being prepared and made ready in a private school, as it were, he is now to demonstrate in a large and honourable sphere the result of his tuition. We shall here leave him for the present, as the varied activities of his service, fully considered, would lead us beyond the limits of this paper.

We shall now look at the varied exercises which Moses passes through in fulfilling his service. We have looked at those which qualified him for service; but the servant of God needs a continuance of discipline to keep him ever and anon in dependence on God. With Moses this new order of discipline commences very early, indeed, we may say immediately on his entrance into the path of service.

Accompanied by Aaron he presents himself to Pharaoh, and announces God's summons to let His people go; but not only does Pharaoh refuse to comply, but he increases the burdens of the people in consequence of the demand. Here, then, was a disheartening commencement to a servant in his noviciate, after making a just appeal and conscious that his message was from God. All it seems to effect is an open disavowal of God's rights, and an augmentation of the people's sorrows. Nor was this all. The people themselves do not hesitate to reproach him, as the cause of their increased troubles; the more sad and severe to him, doubtless, were these upbraidings, because they came from the very people whom he desired to serve. What can he do in such a strait? He returns to the Lord, and in bitterness of spirit refers the difficulty and discouragement to Him, the consequence of which is, that another page of instruction is opened to him. This was a moment for that peculiar discipline in a servant's life which, when effective, enables him to pursue his service independent of results. The general tendency is to judge service efficient if the results are satisfactory, and vice versa; but the real servant must keep his eye only on his Master's word and leave the result to Him. Our Lord, when He felt that His word and works were in vain, so that He reproached the cities where most of His mighty works were done, turns to the Father and says, "Father, I thank Thee, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

Moses must learn this self-same spirit, or his service will be characteristic of his own state, 1:e., weak and unstable. A man without faith is double-minded, and a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.

The Lord's instructions to him on this point are detailed in Exodus 6:1-30. He is there brought into an enlarged knowledge of God, as a preliminary to all further instructions. The more we know of God the easier is it to depend on Him. "Acquaint thyself with God and be at peace;" and the deeper our acquaintance with Him, the greater is our calm and steady dependence on Him.

God, as Jehovah, the covenant God, here reveals Himself to Moses, a revelation not made to Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, for none of them were called into the same line of service, or conflict with adverse powers. With them God had established his covenant to give Israel the land of Canaan, etc.; and this covenant He now brings forward in addition to the fresh revelation of

Himself, in order to confirm the soul of Moses, and enable him to bear up against casual reverses, assured that the result would be satisfactory, because it rested on God's word and covenant.

In a measure reassured, Moses presents himself to the children of Israel, but they hearken not to him for anguish of spirit and cruel bondage; and, still unequal to the service, he replies, when the Lord tells him to go again to Pharaoh, "Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me, and how shall Pharaoh hear me, who am of uncircumcised lips." He had suffered so much from his own attempts to deliver in the energy of nature forty years before, that he is now more prone to despond, and the further he enters upon service the more does he find out its difficulties, and his own lack of qualifications for it. But the Lord will make His servant perfect and happy in His work; and accordingly He now gives Moses and Aaron a "CHARGE unto the people of Israel, and unto Pharaoh, King of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt." The CHARGE is the first thing to service. No certainty of character or purpose will do without it. "That which is committed unto thee," (as Paul wrote to Timothy), is that which gives distinctiveness and point to our service. A man who knows not what his line of service is can never expect to fulfil it, or adequately to pursue it; but when he knows that he has received from the Lord a distinct charge or line of work, there is a sense of trust as well as the responsibility of trust. This charge is now given to Moses, Exodus 6:13, but still he feels his own insufficiency; and, mark! according as he is made to feel it, is he supplied from God with that which will counteract it.

First, He is made to rely on Jehovah, the covenant God, who had bound Himself to bring this people unto the land of Canaan.

Second, A distinct charge is given to him, and if he believes that he is acting for Jehovah, he has now the prescribed result and effect of his mission, his appointed work marked out for him; and,

Third, To silence every hesitation and sense of unfitness, he is invested with power. The Lord says to him, "See, I have made thee a god unto Pharaoh;" and still more, he is commanded to repeat unto Pharaoh the miracle which had before re-assured his own soul at the burning bush — that of transforming his rod into a serpent. There, however, (i.e. at the burning bush) he was made to take the serpent in his hand in order that his own individual faith might be established; here, the object is more to exhibit Moses before Pharaoh as invested with the power of God, so that this part of the miracle is not repeated.

This gracious instruction of the Lord perfects the discipline necessary for Moses' soul, in order to enter on his service so fully and fixedly that nothing can divert him from it, or make him doubt as to the result according to God; and after this he fulfils it with faithful and unflinching labour, strong in the power of God before Pharaoh, and without reproach from his brethren, until he reaches the grand result of this first stage of his service — that is, the deliverance of the people out of Egypt. From the time that his soul was thus really established in service until the night of the passover, when he, with the people, marched out of the land of their captivity, was an interval highly honourable to Moses. But we don't dwell on it, as he was then acting uninterruptedly as God's instrument, the effect of the previous discipline which we have noticed, but no fresh phases of individual exercise are brought out.

Behold, then, the Israelites, having left Egypt with a high hand encamped between Migdol and the sea; but what a testing there awaits them. What a crisis for Moses, at the moment of the

successful issue of all his toil and anxiety! Success was all but attained when apparently insurmountable obstacles present themselves: Pharaoh and his host at one side, the sea with its raging waters on the other; and once more he is challenged by the unbelieving multitude for having brought them there to die because there were no graves in Egypt. But how calm and strong in faith is Moses at this critical moment. How different from the timorous notices we have had of him before! "Fear not," says he, "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." This was what he himself had learnt during his forty years of discipline. Nature was to "stand still," and faith to wait for God's salvation. He first calms the people, and then cries unto God himself. This scene describes one of the most important exercises in which a faithful guide to God's people is schooled — that is, to maintain unswerving confidence in God's succour in moments of embarrassment, and at the same time to receive from God the power and mode by which this succour can be successfully directed. He does both; he calms the people and honours the Lord by expressing the fullest confidence in Him; and then, looking to Him to realise his faith, he is directed by Him as to how the succour is to be afforded. How fully and blessedly is this direction given. "Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward; but lift thou up thy rod and stretch out thine hand over the sea," etc. What a strength and elevation this event must have afforded Moses; and how must such an extremity have taught him afresh the wisdom and magnitude of God's resources; and what a result! We read, "the people believed the Lord and his servant Moses."

In Exodus 15:23-26, we see him passing through another exercise, and of a different order. Scarcely had the last echoes of the song of triumph died away, when the people murmur against Moses saying, "What shall we drink?" The servant of God must be prepared for every shade of trial and disappointment. No matter what the amount of his services, he must expect no appreciation of them from the congregation, or at best be prepared to do without it, and look to the Lord alone. Moses must have felt this deeply, after the song of praise that had just passed their lips; but by such means and discipline the faithful servant is led into fellowship in spirit and in power, too, with man's best and greatest servant. He cries unto the Lord, and again is he instructed in the amplitude and perfection of God's resources for every variety of man's need. What a distinguished place, to be the medium through which all these mercies flow! The exercise and the pressure may be very great for a moment. It may be *Marah*; sowing indeed with tears, but it is only "to reap with joy." If the servant finds that there is not a moment in which he may rest from service on account of the need of the people of God, he is, on the other hand, made acquainted, in the deepest and truest way, with the resources of God; and is also made the channel of those resources himself. Thus was it with Moses here; he is told to cast the tree into the waters and they are made sweet.

In Exodus 16:1-36 we are presented with another order of service which this well-trying servant learns and records. The trials of the people become a school to him for learning and attaining that service which was to meet their need, and while so doing his own soul was necessarily enlarged in the wisdom of which he was the minister. It is interesting and important for us to see, that for each need and trial Moses is taught a distinct and suited lesson, so that his own soul is growing in God while his service is affording the needed relief to the people.

In this chapter they felt the dearth of the wilderness so intensely (and this we must bear in mind was on the second month after leaving Egypt) that they murmured against Moses and against Aaron, and said, "Would to God that we had died in the land of Egypt where we did eat bread to

the full." Moses was the one who, under God, had led them into these circumstances; and must he not have felt how critical was the position? Yes, truly; for human help there was none. But so much the more must his soul have depended upon God, who thus exercised him, to cast him upon Himself and His own resources. And again the Lord communicates to him instruction suited to the occasion. "Behold I will rain down bread from heaven for you," etc. This is the revelation to Moses. But the way in which he evangelises it; (if I may so say) is also recorded, and worthy of notice, in connection with our subject, as showing the nearness to God, and consequent searching and humbling of heart, which revelations of God's mercy effect. He desires the people to "come near" before the Lord who had heard their murmurings. He had known the effect in himself; and, as a wise master-builder, he would lead his brethren into the same, though it be by a different path. The glory of the Lord, and the resources of the Lord, had already instructed him; and now he seeks that the people may receive the same blessed instruction, though it be drawn forth by their discontent and murmurings. "And they looked toward the wilderness, and behold the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud," etc. And they then hear His gracious provision for their need.

Let us note that a servant's discipline must always be in advance of the service required of him. He cannot lead beyond that point to which he himself has been led. But when the depth and reality of the truth has been established in his own soul, he is made the channel of it by various modes; sometimes by an unexpected revelation — sometimes as an answer to his own prayer — sometimes, as we shall see in subsequent instances, by the manifestation of gift. Of the two latter we find a record in Exodus 17:1-16.

At Rephidim he again suffers from the congregation, who are ready to stone him; but the Lord, even a very present help to him in time of trouble, invests him with peculiar power to effect relief for the rebellious people. Since he has been personally assailed, he must be personally honoured — and by those, too, who had reproached and threatened him. The elders of Israel are called to see the water gush forth from the rock as Moses strikes it. Thus the Lord approves His servant before the heads of the people: and the servant's own soul is confirmed and enlarged in apprehension and appreciation of the power which God had given him for service.

At Rephidim, too, was it that the children of Israel first encountered mortal strife with any of the human family. Amalek comes against them. Moses is now placed in new and untried difficulties; and he determines that Joshua must encounter man, but he, in spirit, must be engaged with God. He will betake himself to the top of the hill, with the rod of God in his hand.

What a season of blessing to him, thus separated unto God — storing his heart and filling his soul with the assurances and evidences of God's might and mercy for His people. But at this very moment the sense of his own feebleness is made more convincing than ever. If he held up his hand, (an expression of dependence on God,) victory was secured to Israel; but if he let it fall, Amalek prevailed. A place of eminent service this, without doubt. But how humbling to Moses to know and to feel that he was too weak in nature to accomplish what the spirit of his mind so desired. His hands were heavy, and would have dropped but for the help and intervention of others. In the primary sense, we learn by this, as has often been before remarked, that the priesthood is necessary to sustain any service, however devoted; but in a secondary sense, and regarding the scene in its individual relation to Moses, we are taught that, when contending with man, the greater the eminence with regard to God, the more must our own insufficiency in nature

be made to appear. No wonder Moses should have built an altar there, and called it, "Jehovah-nissi." The conflict was with man — an unnatural contest. "Love not the world, because of offences: and woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh." But when it does come, there is no banner to shield against it but Jehovah. And at that stage of the soul's experience, Jehovah-nissi is its altar, or, in other words, the character of its worship.

The next incident recorded in Moses' history brings him before us in a lower point of view. He is influenced, and, in a measure, perverted by man. He had reached great eminence in service; he had just erected an altar in record of what God had been to him in his conflict with hostile man; but now he has to encounter the voice of nature, in the well-intentioned but pernicious advice of his father-in-law; and yielding to it, he morally sinks. In converse with Jethro, he seems to forget the lesson just taught him by the conflict with Amalek; and surrenders the service to which he was called, or part of it, without any counsel or even sanction from God. The assistance which he sought here from the heads of the people was of a very different order to that which he rightly accepted from Aaron and Hur in the conflict with Amalek. The latter was a help to himself personally; whereas the former was a transference of the duties imposed by the Lord on himself to others. Jethro had heard of all that the Lord had done for Moses and for Israel; and he comes to re-engage Moses with his wife and children, who it appears he had sent back. Jethro, I think, here morally represents the association amongst men which a servant of God may be enticed into by relationship; and who, while owning in common with him the work of the Lord, assumes an undue importance; for it was an assumption for an uncircumcised Gentile to arrogate to himself leadership of the people of God, by inducing Moses and Aaron and the elders of Israel to join in fellowship with him. When the soul gets into a clouded position before God, it is comparatively easy to divert it from its responsibilities on the plea of inability. Moses is here induced to consider himself unequal to what God did not consider him unequal for. And though the arrangement is permitted, it must have been with loss to him. He is now at the mount of God, experiencing the fulfilment of God's promises to him at the burning bush, after, having traversed a strange and wondrous path. But here, now at the end of it, after all the Lord's dealings and communications to him, he appears before us as susceptible of the influence of nature, even as other men — proving how little, in any position, is man to be accounted of.

Now, however, at the Mount of God, Moses is to enter on a new office, and fulfil a different mission. Up to this he had been a deliverer and a ruler; now, he is to be a lawgiver and a prophet — one who, as revealing the mind of God to the people, is thus, in a sense, a mediator between God and them. Moses, as a highly favoured servant, must be instructed in this blessed line. God had met His people in their need and delivered them, but as yet, like many a delivered one, they do not apprehend the nature of God. The pressure of impending ruin had been removed, but they have yet to learn God, and how utterly ruined they are in His sight, and Moses, the instructed of God, is now to instruct them in this.

He is, therefore, called up into the mount, and brought into a nearness to the Lord, and given a revelation of Him different from what he had previously seen in the burning bush. There it was all grace. Though "holy ground," the aspect of the Lord was one of grace and compassion; here, it is God's terrible majesty, the claims of a holy God on man, and how great must His distance be from a man. Both these lessons were necessary for Moses in order to fit him for the place assigned him towards the people of God; and it is always that manner of God's discipline to make His servants

practically pass through and learn in a fuller and more vivid way that particular line of truth of which He designs them to be the channel. Stephen saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, before he made his announcement that heaven was open, and that he saw the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God — that is, he saw a greater and a fuller truth than he communicated; but the greater only qualified him the more for communicating the lesser, which last was the suited measure for his audience. So Moses, now in the mount, divinely instructed in the nature and mind of God, is thus qualified for revealing Him to the people. He sees Him in His righteousness making a demand on man on earth and still in the flesh.

Having pronounced the law, and in type and figure sprinkled the blood of purgation, he is called (Exodus 24:1-18.) to receive not only the law, engraven on stones, but also a much fuller revelation of God's interest for His people; the provision of grace based on the Lord's foreknowledge of their inability to keep the law. In these interesting scenes it is not the subject of them which must engage us here, but the blessed way in which Moses is prepared and qualified for the fulfilment of the task entrusted to him. He is called up into the mount, on which the glory of God rested. Six days the cloud covered the mount, and on the seventh day God called unto Moses out of the midst of that glory which was like devouring fire in the eyes of the children of Israel; and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.

A fit preparation, truly, for one who is to be commissioned to set forth on earth a pattern of the things which he saw. Thoroughly detached from earth, and enwrapped in the cloud which surrounded the glory of God, his soul was impressed with the wondrous subject and detail of his commission. Then it was that the Lord said unto him, "Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them, according to all that I show thee." Thus we have an insight into God's manner of educating His servant for His own purposes; and let us here especially note two things: First, That Moses is near God while learning the truth, and knows in himself the effect of being near Him; and, second, he learns the truth consciously from God; he is not only near Him while learning it, but he knows that he has learnt it from Himself. If we be not near God while we are learning our knowledge will be profitless; and if it be not from Him that we learn we may rejoice in the truth for a moment, but, like the disciples, it will require to be recalled to our remembrance by the Holy Ghost, which we know is very commonly the case.

But before Moses has entered on this new mission, the people of Israel have made an idolatrous calf, and he is summoned from his exalted position in the mount to witness the departure of the people from the covenant just made; and here he gives expression to sentiments which testify to us how deeply he had learned to care for the glory of God. (Exodus 32:11-13.) In this point of view, it is an utterance hardly equalled in the whole of Scripture; but the previous forty days and forty nights enabled him thus to appreciate it, and every step he takes in this trying moment declares how fully he had entered into the mind of God.

He breaks the tables of the covenant, for they had already been broken on man's side, and this is no time to publish them. Then he took the idol which they had made and burnt it with fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it on the water, and made the people drink of it. Their sin must not only be put away, but they must taste in themselves the reality of it. Then, he insists on separation from evil, and requires every one who is on the Lord's side to slay the recreants. In a day of universal failure, the witnesses of repentance and returning allegiance cannot too strongly

enunciate their severance from their former associations, annihilating every trace of them, even unto death, and Moses, the well-prepared vessel, leads the way in this.

Thus having, so to speak, prepared them for God, as repentant and separate, he returns to God for them to make an atonement. The Lord refuses to go up with them, and desires them to strip themselves of their ornaments, that He may know what to do with them. In this moment of great suspense, while the people are waiting under the hand of God, Moses, learned in the holiness of the mind of God, knows what to do for the people, and how to restore relations.

He pitches the tabernacle afar off from the guilty camp, in order that every one who, humbled under a sense of sin, desires to seek the Lord, may seek Him there, apart from the defilement. This act met the mind of the Lord, and restored His presence to Israel; the cloudy pillar descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord speaks to Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend, and not only promises that His presence shall go with him, but also accedes to his request that He will resume His place in the midst of Israel. How blessedly Moses is enlarged in the mind of God! Difficulties the most serious, are only unfolding to him the more the resources of God; but he only reaches those resources by first responding to the holiness of God.

At this conjuncture, he learns both God and man; the latter as unreliable and failing in every circumstance, and the Lord, as the resource of his heart and his portion for ever. And hence, when God had acceded to all his desires, he breaks forth in the earnest entreaty, "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory." "I have seen enough of humanity to recoil from it. I have seen enough of the blessed God to desire to see Him in consummated glory." This desire was partially answered here; but still more distinctly when, on the Mount of Transfiguration, he, with Elijah, talked with the Lord about his decease, for, and on account of, this very stiff-necked Israel, as well as for all the redeemed.

We have now followed Moses in his ascent to the highest point, which was ever accorded to man. To the Apostle Paul, a man in Christ, greater, and clearer, and peculiar glories were revealed, but "there arose not a prophet in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." Paul (though unconscious of being in the body) must needs have a thorn in the flesh, lest he should be puffed up. We need not, therefore, be surprised to find Moses ere long demonstrating that he is not able, through a sense of his own infirmity, to maintain the great position assigned him.

He who had seen so much of God's power, forgets and ignores it, when pressed by the evil and unbelief of the people, (Numbers 11:1-35,) and exclaims, "I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me." Man cannot sustain the high position God calls him to, without notices now and then of his own weakness. If we have not the sentence of death in ourselves, we shall trust in ourselves. Had Moses, who had been in the glory, known this, he would not have looked to himself either in strength or weakness, but to "God who raiseth the dead."

He is now humbled before the seventy elders of Israel, before whom he had previously been exalted. The spirit which was upon him is put upon them. We have seen that at the suggestion of his father-in-law he had before allowed this leaven to enter in a milder form, but now, as is ever the case when yielded to, it has worked to a fuller development. This is a time of humbling for Moses, but no less interesting to us than the time of his exaltation, as illustrating the nature of the divine

school in which he is. His submission and acknowledgement of the hand of the Lord is very instructive, and his interest in the work nothing abated by being in a measure supplanted. He rebukes Joshua for envying for his sake. But though the Lord had thus dealt with the unbelief of His servant, He will not allow man to undervalue or slight him. The cause of reproach appeared just, for he had married an Ethiopian woman, and it appears that Aaron and Miriam were encouraged by the late humbling which Moses had undergone; but the Lord in a most signal and terrific manner avenges him and makes him the intercessor for the guilty parties. The Lord may rebuke him Himself, but man must not; and the way in which Moses bore these taunts evinces how deeply learned he was in God's interest for himself and how humbled in spirit. We have seen his righteous anger burst forth when the glory of God was at stake; but when personally assailed, he is silent.

Another instance of this we find in the case of Korah. (Numbers 16:1-50.) Instead of vindicating himself and his office, Moses refers the decision to the Lord, who pronounces it by terrible judgement on the offenders, and then instructed in the mind of God, he knows what will stay the plague among the people, and he makes use of the priesthood here, as before in the case of the golden calf and the unbelief at Kadesh-barnea. He had himself mediated on their behalf before God.

We now come to the last scene which we shall notice in the history of Moses, and that is his forfeiture of his right to enter Canaan, because he failed to sanctify the Lord in the eyes of the people. This occurred in the thirty-ninth year of their wanderings, just as he was about to see the happy termination of all his labours and the fulfilment of God's promises. Moses seems here to have failed in those very points in which he has before appeared most eminent. He speaks "unadvisedly with his lips" and fails to sanctify the Lord in the eyes of the people, (that Lord whose glory was so dear to his heart,) and thus disqualifies himself from planting the people in the land of their inheritance, when on its very borders. When the congregation murmured for water, God tells him "to take the rod and gather the assembly together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes, and it shall give forth his water." But instead of this, Moses, carried away by his irritation, first upbraids the people, and says, "Must WE fetch you water out of this rock?" and then he lifts up his hand and smites the rock twice. The Lord was now acting in grace, and through the priesthood towards the people. The rock was not to be smitten again. Moses is not at this moment in fellowship with the mind and ways of the Lord — he has failed in his mission and he must forfeit his leadership. Such is the manner of God's discipline! No amount of faithful service will mitigate or divert the penalty of assumption in that service. Paul, contrary to the warning of the Spirit, would go to Jerusalem, and a prison was his penalty for many a day afterwards.

God may and will, no doubt, use His servants in the place which their own failure has entailed on them; (Paul was thus used in a new and special service — as his Epistles were to him, Deuteronomy was to Moses:) but he must subdue the wilfulness of their nature which has led them to act independently of Him. Moses began his course by attempting a right work in his own strength, and endured many a day of exile on account of it; and now he lays himself down on Pisgah, after beholding the glorious land, from which he is excluded because in acting for the Lord he acted independently of the Lord, whose servant he was. His first failure bears a close analogy to his last. But though thus chastened as to his service and mission, he loses nothing of his

personal nearness to the Lord, and, indeed, gains in this way, for the Lord Himself shows him the land. So was it with Paul; while suffering the penalty of his failure in prison, he found more than ever that Christ was everything to him, and more than service; and, no doubt, Moses on Pisgah must have felt that God was greater to him than even the promised land, or than leadership thereto. At any rate, his submission to the Lord's will is very beautiful, and his transference of his own dignity and office to Joshua.

But, nevertheless, this transference WAS a chastisement to Moses as a servant, and while his very eye feeds on the inheritance, he is suffering crucifixion in his vile body. But, for that body Satan may contend in vain. Michael rescues it from his grasp, for the Lord claims all of him. The body is the Lord's, to whom be honour and glory now and for ever. Amen.

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The first notice which we get of Joshua is in Exodus 17:9, where he is introduced to us as appointed by Moses to lead the choice men of Israel against Amalek. From the appointment we must conclude that he was the best qualified for the post; but what interests us most in studying the history of any of God's servants, is the peculiar aspect or condition in which they are first presented to us; for in these first presentations we may behold the grand characteristics which will distinguish their course.

So with Joshua — type, as well as servant, of Christ, he is presented to us on the outset as a warrior chief, prepared to encounter the adversaries of Israel, a fitting expression for one so eminently typical of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Captain of our salvation. His first recorded engagement is against Amalek, who represents to us the flesh or the natural man in active opposition to the progress of the people of God. Egypt is more properly the world, Amalek is the flesh personated, Assyria is nature in its attractions and influences. The conflict with Amalek was the first intuition of warfare to Israel and characteristically Joshua, for the first time, appears on the scene as leader. He discomfits the enemy by the edge of the sword; but while thus victorious he is made to know on what his success depends, even on Moses who is on the hilltop with the rod of God in his hand. He learns to lead the people to victory by being himself subject to the vicissitudes of conflict while depending on an unseen agency for success. Success wanes, not uncertainly, but still wanes; and in the very alternations of the conflict he learns to depend on God, and succeeds because he depends.

This illustrates to us very pointedly the true manner of conflict, and how needful it is for us to be disciplined in order to ensure success. It exemplifies to us practically that word, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." The conflict is a real one, literally a hand-to-hand engagement, and success oscillates alternately in favour of each of the combatants. God is the energizer in us both to will and to do. Faith sustains Joshua. He knows that Moses is on the hill-top with the rod of God in his hand, and thus is he taught at the outset of his history to endure the vicissitudes of actual warfare in dependence and to be wondrously victorious. It gives great vigour to the soul to have grappled with the actual difficulties of our onward march, and in the strength of the Lord to have conquered: to be able to say, "I know how to be abased and how to abound . . . I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." This Joshua learns and expresses in this his first essay as captain-general of Israel; and as it was his first achievement and indicative of all which should follow, even as David in slaying Goliath, the Lord directs that it should not only be written in a book, but rehearsed in the ears of Joshua, "for the Lord will utterly put out the remembrance of

Amalek from under heaven." What an encouragement such a memorial must have been to him in his many subsequent engagements! Well might he fall back upon it, if tempted to be discouraged. If the Lord had sworn to annihilate this his first enemy, would He not be equally faithful as to the rest?

We next hear of Joshua in Exodus 24:1-18, and he there appears before us as minister to Moses, when the latter is called to the Mount to receive the tables of testimony. This notice, though scanty, is very important, for it shows us that the man of action down here was no stranger to the solemn and wondrous manifestation of the invisible God. He not only learned how to war against the enemies of God's people, but he learned also the realities of God's glory, for which in His people he continued down here. In secret he was (even as was the Lord Jesus more perfectly) in communion with God's glory, but outwardly a warrior from his youth; and in both aspects was God forming him for subsequent service. Communion with glory on the Mount was as necessary as the uncertainties of conflict on the battle-field. There are what we may call circles, or distinct forms in the school of God. The warfare with Amalek was one circle, or one class of service already passed by Joshua; and in the Mount he is in another, that of communion with God, an enlarging of his acquaintance with the mind of God — a most blessed season of instruction; but even in this high association, Joshua retains his peculiar characteristic. When Moses turned and went down from the Mount, and the sound of Israel's apostacy reaches their ears, Joshua's comment on it is, "there is a noise of war in the camp."

His mind, evidently imbued with warlike scenes, interprets the shoutings of idolatry, according to its leading impression. But when the idolatrous scene is unfolded before him, and Moses pitched the tabernacle outside the camp, Joshua evinces the value that the blessed season of instruction in the Mount had been to him, by taking the place of separation and refusing to mix himself with the defiled camp. We read, "Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle." He had learned what it was to abide in the secret of the Almighty, and though the service of Moses might call him to go to and fro, this young man whom God was instructing, knew it better for him to remain with God in the separated tabernacle. Service did not call him to the camp, and therefore he remained entirely set apart unto God from it. If there be not a distinct call for service, it is better not to associate with the defiled thing at all. Moses has a service to render, and he can enter and tarry in the camp without damage; but if we go like Peter "to see the end," we are sure to suffer loss, because we thus gratify a true desire, in a human way. As a rule, if there be no room for service, let us be as separate as possible, for the separation will prepare us for good and effectual service by and by; and even if we be not introduced into this, our souls have drunk in more deeply of the mind of God.

Mere expressible knowledge of God's will and counsel is not the full effect of nearness to Him; but rather the sense of what suits Him and meets His mind: in fact, holiness, the highest attainment, and the great end of the Father's discipline.

But Joshua is still a learner. The next notice that we get of him (Numbers 11:1-35) is in the self-same tabernacle; but here he openly exhibits a misapprehension of the mind of God. That very truth which had before saved him from defiled association, and preserved him in unison with God's mind, here contracts his spiritual vision when he makes use of it to circumscribe God, instead of regarding it as only in part a revelation of His mind. This is a very important connection,

for it is God Himself, and not any single line of His truth which is to counsel me, or determine my walk and judgment. To remain in the separated tabernacle was plainly the truth and way of blessing, when Israel was in apostacy; but when Eldad and Medad prophesied in the camp, God's Spirit must be acknowledged, though they do not come to the separated tabernacle.

Hence Moses rebukes Joshua, as really caring for the things of men, and not for the things of God. But a rebuke of this kind is not intended to dishearten, for mistakes, in personal attachment, never debar us from the highest and closest confidence the very next moment. The heart is right, but it has taken counsel from the flesh and must be rebuked; but this being done, it is set free for God. Peter expressed the mind of Satan as to the Lord's death and was sharply rebuked for his misapprehension, but he is not disqualified from accompanying the Lord to the holy mount, nor is Joshua here disqualified for the special service of a spy. Error is dealt with very much according to what it springs from. It may be from natural, and therefore unacceptable, affection, or from indifference or from malice. The ignorance of Mary Magdalene is met and counteracted with a tenderness very different to that which the seven apostles who went a fishing, are corrected and enlightened.

Joshua, then, in spite of his late error, is appointed to go and search the land, and Moses distinguishes him by the name Jehoshua instead of Oshea. This intimates to us that he was now, according to his new name, entering on a new line of service. He had hitherto been only Moses' minister or servant, to carry out his instructions. Now, he with eleven other heads of the people, is sent on a special mission to inspect the land, and report accordingly. Caleb and Joshua alone report favourably, and bear witness for God and for the goodness of that which He had sworn to give them, in the midst of the unbelief of their associates. What a trial they had to pass through, and how deeply they felt the sin of the people is evinced by their action. They rent their clothes, and while beautifully bearing witness to the good land, they declare that their entrance therein depended not on their own strength, but on the Lord's delight in His people. But all the congregation bade stone them with stones, when the glory of the Lord, bursting on the tabernacle, "in sight of all Israel," arrests their evil intention. Let us state here, the peculiarity of the education to which Joshua was subjected. He had already been associated with God as the Deliverer, but this was his first acquaintance with the place which God had promised His people, and to which he himself was eventually to lead them.

Moses and Joshua, as servants, had a different mission. Moses was to lead the people out of the world — out of Egypt; Joshua, to lead them into Canaan. Moses, typifies the Lord combatting the devil down here; Joshua, as leading us into all the blessed results of life and rest: and to fit him for the high mission Joshua must be disciplined. He must simultaneously see the land and see and feel the nature of the people he has to lead thither. And not only so, but having seen the land, proved in his soul, and confessed with his mouth, his faith in God's purpose and power to bring them in, and endured the opposition and persecution of this very people on account of it, he must wait the lapse of 40 years before he can behold and realize the works which his faith reckoned on.

What a trial of faith! what a prolonged education must this have been! A break seems now to occur in his history — a break in the narrative, but surely not in the moral of it. Failing to animate the people to a sense of their calling, he retires, as it were, from public life; but only to resume his place and function there the moment it would be acceptable, and consequently we do not hear of

him again till he is commissioned to lead the people into Canaan.

These forty years must have been a time of great deepening of his faith. As he saw the unbelievers, one after another, die off, until he with Caleb was left alone of the former generation; each death must have confirmed to him how blessed is faith, and how fatal to all blessing and service is unbelief. Like Moses in Midian, but far more honourably, he had to lie by for forty years, waiting to be the champion of a faith which the people would not receive, though nothing else could bless them.

He would not be employed on any lower occasion, and therefore he remains for this lengthened period waiting until the time should come when an opportunity would be afforded him for proving, that "holding fast the beginning of our confidence" has great recompense of reward. No number of years can wear out faith. The wilderness had to be traversed all that time, not that faith should lose its origin, but that it should sustain him until the moment came for its fulfilment.

There never was a faith without a corresponding work, sooner or later, and this explains that passage in James, "the scripture was justified when it said Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." The faith must not be surrendered until the work declares it. It sustains the soul in the interval, in the blessing of the work, according to the strength and vividness of it.

The thread of Joshua's history is resumed where it broke off. He had assured Israel that they were well able to go up and possess the land; and at the end of the wilderness journey, when Moses is disqualified for leading them into it, Joshua appears on the scene again; the time is come; he is ordained for this special service. (Numbers 27:18-22.) He might often have wondered to what end was the faith which forty years before had lighted up his soul, and enabled him to proclaim the glories of the inheritance, but every germ of the Spirit produces its fruit. Faith must always verify itself. The less prospect there is of a declaration, the more is the soul thrown back on the convictions which faith produces; and this action necessarily increases faith, because it confirms its reality unsupported by anything outward. If held at all, it must be held from God. The visions presented to one's soul by the Holy Ghost, are not dreams, merely affecting us for the moment, but if of the Spirit they must be realized sooner or later.

Very fully was Joshua's faith realized; and now, "full of the spirit of wisdom," and prepared by all these years of discipline, he is not only ordained by Moses, who laid hands on him, but personally commissioned and encouraged by the Lord for this high and honourable mission. "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread on, that have I given you," was now the Lord's word to Joshua.

Traverse any of the endless domains of glory, and that will be yours for ever; traverse it, and the verity and value of it will be ensured in testimony down here, even as the sight of Jesus and the glory was to Stephen.

We must remember that Joshua, properly speaking, is the continuation of Moses, both typifying the Lord Jesus in different aspects. Moses conducts me unto the death of Christ; Joshua conducts me victoriously out of it, carrying his spoils with him; and therefore when the Lord commissions Joshua, the son of Nun, "Moses' minister," He says, "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give them . . . Be strong and of good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land,

which I swear unto their fathers to give them." According to the terms of this commission, he was not only to lead them into possession, but, by dividing the inheritance, to invest them with assured occupation; and this typified the closing act of our Lord, which He intimated on earth when He said, "I go to prepare a place for you." Joshua's service is not consummated until this is accomplished, and therefore we should be prepared to find in the second part of his history the trials and difficulties which occur to hinder this settlement; and how interesting to us to have these hindrances. He encounters and overcomes them, and herein instructs us; for though we encounter them, it is often very slowly that we overcome them.

Joshua, years before, had believed that God could and would bring them in. This was his foundation, for "without faith it is impossible to please God." But he is now realizing that faith which he had so long enjoyed, and he is not indolent therein. He announces to the officers, "Within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in and possess the land." There is neither dilatoriness or imprudent haste in entering on what God had called him to. "Prepare you victuals," he says; the onward path was to be entered on calmly, preparedly, but heartily, and we may add, holly. "Sanctify yourselves, (says Joshua) for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders for you." I pass over the wondrous scene of the passage of Jordan as to its import, which has been fully dwelt on elsewhere; the relation to Joshua is what we have to do with here. The Lord's object in it with regard to him may be seen in Joshua 3:7; Joshua 4:14. "This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel," etc. Almost singly had he forty years before stood firm for God's purpose and power amid the opposition and unbelief of the people. Now he was to be magnified before all Israel, and the Lord's presence with him proved to be as veritable as it was with Moses. It was a glorious passage in his history, and corresponding to the strong and elevated character of his faith. Joshua, while typifying the Lord Jesus in his success, is, on the other hand, a sample for us in the struggles and conflicts which he passes through ere he arrives at success. The difficulties, our difficulties, are there; but our Joshua has surmounted them for us; and, blessed be God, the practical success may be ours too, for "it is he that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

I do not undertake to write the life of Joshua, and must therefore confine myself (after first merely enumerating his great achievements) to the exercises which his soul passes through.

His first rehearsal in leadership is passing the Jordan; 2nd, the rolling off of Egypt's reproach at Gilgal; 3rd, the fall of Jericho, or taking possession of the land; 4th, Joshua 15:1-63, dividing the inheritance. These comprise his great successes. His exercises we shall now consider in detail. Foremost of these is the discomfiture at Ai. This was the first check in his bright career. Jordan passed — the reproach of Egypt rolled off — the walls of Jericho fallen to the earth, through faith — the possession of the land entered on in the most distinguished way, what must have been his distress and disappointment when he saw Israel flee before the men of Ai! Joshua is little prepared for any reverse. Blessing and success had followed him like a swelling tide; and he is now in agony. He rends his clothes and falls to the earth. He must now learn for the first time how much man may fail in scenes of the fullest blessing. He had seen their failure in the wilderness; but here is failure and discomfiture in Canaan. And this brings strange and peculiar distress on the soul. How well can the heart understand the cry, "O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turneth their back before their enemies?"

The greater the blessing and truth known and enjoyed, the greater the dismay does discomfiture cause to the heart most true to the glory of God. But Joshua, like many of ourselves, had to learn an important lesson in this stage of his history. It was this — that no amount of previous acquisition or enjoyment can secure us against defeat and overthrow, if in spirit we have connived at, or become associated with, principles or practices contrary to God. In ignorance of the cause, he prays, mourns, and even remonstrates with the Lord. His faith wavers in the intensity of his distress. But it appears from the Lord's rebuke to him that he lacked spiritual wisdom in so doing; for such would have concluded from a previous knowledge of God that he would not have permitted defeat to have overtaken His people, had there not been some grievous departure from Him. He ought thus to have searched for the concealed evil, instead of upbraiding the Lord. Prayer will never compensate for neglected action; it leads to action — seeks light and strength for action. But if I use not the light I already possess, no amount of prayer will obtain more for me; for if I believe not the lesser revelation, I am not prepared to receive the greater.

The Lord chides Joshua for lying before Him in ignorant, inactive mourning. He says, "Get thee up. Wherefore liest thou before me? Israel had sinned," etc. And goes on to announce what must be done in order to retain His presence among them, and consequent success.

Let us note here that Israel was now entering on the inheritance — representing to us God's kingdom and the heavenly portion of His saints. They were as one people. The sin of one affected the whole; not spiritually, but nationally. With us it is spiritually; and we should be warned, that if such manifest disaster was occasioned on account of the sin of one man, among those who were only united nationally and in the flesh, how much more is it so in the Church, where each one is a member of the one body in Christ, and united in spirit, and not merely in nature.

It was new to Joshua to hear that the secret departure from God of one man in the army could so disastrously interrupt the progress and blessing of all Israel. And he is crushed by it, and almost loses hold for the moment of the faith that so characterized him. But in his deepest distress mark how true to his sense of God's greatness, and how anxiously God's glory is before him! "What wilt thou do with thy great name?" is his first anxiety.

The first line of action prescribed by the Lord is enquiry. There must be a full presentation of all the congregation before God. Great scrutiny, patient and anxious investigation, is necessary. The lot is cast; but the whole decision is of the Lord. And the guilty party, being convicted and exposed, confesses — after Joshua's touching appeal to give glory to that Lord whose glory was so dear to his own heart, confesses how and when and where he had taken of the accursed thing.

Joshua, after his deep exercise, has proved himself equal to the emergency. Having "risen up early" to discover the cause, he is prompt and decided in judging and executing judgment on the transgressor. Summary and unrelenting must it be! Not an article belonging to the originator escaped the flame of extirpation. Joshua now expounds and witnesses to the principle, that the nearer a man is to God, the more he is within the circle of His greatest blessings, the more distinctly and entirely must he denounce everyone and everything derogatory to His glory. The Joshua who fears not the external foe — who has seen all creation bow to His conquering tread, is the same as he who is valiant and faithful and effective in subduing and purging out the internal evil. The two are inseparable. Power is power, in whatever form it may be exercised. Power over the Canaanite — the opponent to our realization of our heavenly inheritance — insures power over

internal evil. If Joshua had learned the one gloriously, and with a high hand, he now learns the other deeply and sorrowfully, in secret counsel with God, and no less wondrous intervention of His power. Let us remember that the greater victors we are as to the inheritance, the stricter separatists shall we be from everything unsuited to the mind of God, which pervades and reigns in those holy places.

The sin of Achan was no common sin. It had a two-fold enormity. It was a double transgression against God, and of a character which, when successful, insures the fall of the heavenly warrior.

Achan had taken a garment accursed of God, and gold and silver, which were devoted to God's treasury; thus, in symbol and essence, disclosing the corruption of the heart, which, while advancing into the fairest displays of grace, has the treachery to seek its own gratification at God's expense. It was the selfsame spirit of those who "serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies;" and, at the same time, by fair speeches (by a respectable outward walk) deceive the hearts of the simple: thus embarrassing the congregation of God by departing from the truth declared to them for their own private ends.

Joshua, having graduated through this great exercise and its results, is now taught how he is to succeed against Ai: no longer in all open and distinguished way, as at Jericho, for failure entails results even after the breach is healed. The conquest, however, is no less effective, and faith can discern the same amount of spiritual power, although the army is less distinguished. But Joshua had yet more to learn; and Joshua 9:1-27 unfolds another, and a difficult, order of trial, which harasses and besets him. And one brought on, too, by a temporary lack of dependence on and reference to God on his part and that of the princes. The snare is not now from inside, from false allegiance or unfaithfulness, but from outside. The Gibeonites "did work wilyly," and Joshua deceived by them made peace with them, neglecting to ask counsel of the Lord. Here was the real cause of the snare proving efficacious, for whenever dependence on God is lost sight of for a single moment, even in the very flush of victory, failure must ensue. This was Joshua's first lesson, as we have seen in his past conflict with Amalek; and even now, after so many years of discipline and victory, it causes a flaw in his onward course. Achan's sin was against God; that of the Gibeonites more against Israel. Man assuming before man to be what he is not, in order to be accepted. The sin being different the punishment is different; the former was total and unsparing condemnation; the latter perpetual and public infliction. The deceiving party are the most severely dealt with; they are made subservient to the interests of Israel; but the deceived, 1:e., Israel, also suffer, for had they followed the Lord's way and mind, the subjugation would have been much more perfect.

No doubt, Joshua learnt much of God's mind in all these peculiar trials, and immediately after he enters on a glorious and unbroken career of victory, in which no check occurs to the remainder of his course. Highly honoured and owned of God, foe after foe is subdued, and the Lord even stops the course of creation (the sun and moon stand still) "at the voice of a man." What a moment that must have been, when, after treading on the necks of all their enemies, Joshua and his host smote and utterly destroyed them from Kadeshbarnea to Gaza — Kadesh, the scene of the people's former unbelief, and of Joshua's firm and enduring faith!

The next important era in this history is the allotment of the inheritance to each, Joshua 13:1-33; Joshua 14:1-15; Joshua 15:1-63; Joshua 16:1-10; Joshua 17:1-18; Joshua 18:1-28; Joshua

19:1-51, according to the special commandment of the Lord; and this being done by Joshua, he himself is given a personal inheritance, (Joshua 19:50,) in which he builds a city and dwells therein. It was in perfect keeping, the possessions being marked out and plans prepared, the leader properly rests; even as did the Lord Jesus Christ, who, having perfected His work, sat down until His enemies be made His footstool. The heavens received Him, though earth rejected Him, and He now rests until the whole universe shall bow to His own.

Joshua, in practical achievement, presents to us four distinct blessings connected with this new and heavenly inheritance:

1st, the triumph of the waters of Jordan;

2nd, the rolling off the reproach of Egypt consequent on which was eating of the old corn of the land, the produce of the heavenlies;

3rd, taking possession from Jericho onward;

4th, dividing the inheritance to each tribe, and assuring each of his own; which exemplifies to us that acquaintance with the inheritance which God only reveals by His Spirit, "for it has not entered into the heart of man to conceive what God has prepared for them that love Him."

On the other hand, he had three great conflicts and painful pages of instruction in connection with his leadership into Canaan.

1. He had to learn how the whole army could be enfeebled and shorn of strength by the defilement of one man.

2. How he himself could be deceived and ensnared by neglect of asking counsel of the Lord.

3. (And this is his last). How little he could depend on the congregation of Israel, adhering to the place and path of blessing to which they had been called.

This trial is presented to us (Joshua 23:1-16; Joshua 24:1-33) as the closing scene of his service. He had, through God's goodness, led them to wondrous blessing. God had been faithful, but they will not be faithful or a witness to His mercy to them. What a sorrow to Joshua after all had been accomplished according to God's promise and his own faith fully answered, to know of a certainty that no reliance can be placed on the congregation! Its conviction must have been early and deeply instilled into him from the time that he had heard the idolatrous sounds emanating from the camp as he descended the holy Mount with Moses; so that, as we often see, the trials of the commencement and end of his course closely correspond to one another. How afflicting to the spirit after being used largely to make known the blessing of God, and after seeing souls in the enjoyment of them, to foresee that ere long there will be few or none to appreciate them! This trial the Apostle Paul was enduring when he laments that all Asia had turned from him, and the same now awaited Joshua.

But what was his resource? He took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord, and said unto all the people, "Behold this stone shall be a witness unto us, for it hath heard all the words which he spake unto us; it shall therefore be a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God." This stone typified Christ, and looking to Him as the only sure Witness,

"the faithful and true," Joshua closes his career. His heart earnest to maintain the works and truth of God, hopeless as to man, but assured and at rest because of the one great and chief Corner-stone, the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, to whom be glory for ever and ever.

Vol 02 - Gideon.

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In order to understand and appreciate Gideon's history and line of service, we must survey the condition of God's people when he was called out to be a witness and a servant among them.

Israel had been under the oppressive rule of Midian for seven years. For a perfect period they were ruled over by their enemies, because they had rebelled against the rule of God, and are thus taught in the land of blessing and privilege the contrast between the rule of God and that of man. We are always ruled by some one or some thing; and, if not by God, by that power which is inimical to God and His people; and to this power we are often brought into subjection, in order that we may learn how much better is the sway of God where our passions are controlled, than that under which our very nature is worn out and harassed. This is a discipline to which all the people of God are liable, and of which the Church has had bitter experience; for instead of enjoying her privileges and blessings, she has brought herself under the power of the world, to be harassed and disquieted, searching here and there in the dens of the mountains and the caves and strongholds, how to enjoy a momentary respite from the grinding oppression which has judicially been inflicted, because of her rejection of the Lordship of Christ.

The servant and the witness must always be equal to the state of things on which he is to act. He must have suffered with the people from the circumstances of trial; he must have known the depths of misery to which they have been reduced; he must know what he is to emerge from, and reach unto, or he cannot witness or serve the people according to their need. He must have endured himself, and know the sorrow of the judgement, or he could not appreciate the deliverance which he is appointed to conduct. Paul was the most bigoted Pharisee, and of all men knew most of the evil effect of their prejudices. Hence he was able, when taught of God, most effectually and accurately to expose and confute them. In nature he had gone into the depths of prejudices, that in grace he might leave none of them uncorrected or undisclosed; for the very evil our own nature has led us into, the Lord will use to make His servants skilful in denouncing and repudiating it. "When thou are converted; strengthen thy brethren."

Gideon was thus prepared; not, as yet, by a knowledge of his own evil nature, but by a practical identification, in the circumstances in which the people of Israel were plunged through their own failure. He suffered with them, and no doubt had joined in their cry to the Lord on account of the Midianites. But before he, as the deliverer, is introduced on the scene, the Lord answers that cry by exposing to the people (by the mouth of a prophet) how they had departed from Him. (Judges 6:8-10.) The first great dealing of the Lord with the soul is to show it its direliction and failure. The word of God pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and is a "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Its great action is to reveal to the soul its condition, and in the

former dispensation the prophets acted the part which the word does now. By them the secrets of hearts were made known and convicted. So when the Lord has disclosed to the woman of Samaria her moral condition, she immediately pronounced Him a prophet.

Here, then, we find the people prepared for approaching deliverance by the conviction of their consciences; and this being done, the angel of the Lord immediately opens communications with the appointed deliverer, whose fitness for the work is evidenced by the position and occupation in which he is found. "Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites." This was characteristic of the man. The iron had entered into his soul, but his strength had not failed him in the day of adversity, and real strength is that which is equal to the demand for it, and the emergency tests an otherwise dormant ability. Gideon's energy was equal to the emergency; he was strengthening the things that remain that were ready to die, and while evincing his faithfulness in that which is least, the angel of the Lord, after silently watching him, reveals Himself and addresses him thus, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour." A strange address apparently to a poor thresher of wheat! But the Lord estimates not as man; He knows the vessel which He can use, and what it is able to perform, as the apostle says, "He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry." He designates Gideon "a mighty man of valour," because He appreciated the efforts which Gideon used to maintain the residue of blessings; and while thus employed, calls him to enter on a higher mission and a greater service.

Gideon was evidently a man who had pondered over the ways of the Lord, for his reply is, "Oh, my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why is all this befallen us, and where be all His miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us out of Egypt, but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites?" In this rejoinder we see that he not only knew how the Lord had dealt with Israel in time past, but also the judicial position in which they now were. He saw God alone on either side. Consequently the angel "looked upon him," or was turned towards him, and commissioned him to "go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites; have not I sent thee?" The servant of God must know and believe that God is the power which alone can set up or pull down; it is the foundation-stone in the soul for any deliverance. "Twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God."

Gideon knew this; but there is a great difference between owning all power as belonging to God, and seeing it acting on our behalf; and often the consequence of the former conviction is to make us feel our own powerlessness the more; which, unless we can rest on God's acting for and through us, will produce despondency. Gideon cannot see how the link can be established between God and man, so that man can be made the administrator of God's power and will, and pleads his own insignificance and insufficiency. And the Lord, in order to establish this link in his soul, gives a promise: "Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man."

Great as was this promise, Gideon could not yet appropriate it; however wonderful and suited, he could not embrace it, until he feels in his own soul the link between himself and God, and is assured of his own acceptance, and therefore he exclaims, "If now I have found grace in thy sight, show me a sign that thou talkest with me." And then having brought his offering and set it forth according to the angel's directions, as we read in Judges 6:18-22, the Lord accepts the offering, causes it to be consumed by miracle and disappears from Gideon's sight, thus giving him an unquestionable proof not only of His own presence and power, but of His servant's acceptance

with Him.. He had sought a sign to enable his soul to trust in the promised succour of God; in a word, in order that he ought to depend on Him in the great service appointed to him. For as a fallen man estranged from God, he could see no ground for dependence, and the acceptance of the sign is almost too much for him. The Lord's manifestation of Himself convinces Gideon of His nearness to him, which naturally must be death to him, and of which he has the sense; so that he exclaims, "Alas, O Lord God! for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face." The word of the Lord now calms and settles his soul. "Peace be unto thee, thou shalt not die;" and thereon Gideon builds an altar, which denotes the relation in which he now stands with God, and which is the groundwork of his soul before he enters on his service. The altar or place of access is Jehovah-Shalom.

Thus is Gideon prepared for the work unto which he had been called, and it is profitable for every servant, in moral power to ascertain how far he has been prepared in like manner for service. I have dwelt thus minutely on the preparation, because, if the soul has not found an assured acceptance and rest with God, it cannot be free, because unembarrassed by its own interests, to engage in the interests of the service unto which it is called.

Many attempt to serve the Lord, hoping thereby to acquire rest and peace for their own souls. Consequently they continue, and value the service, according as it contributes the desired relief; for it is true that every true soul, acting for God, must establish the sense of relationship with Him; but when this is the object, the service is diverted from its true aim, and the proper spring of it is lost. Service must be undertaken by one happy in God, and therefore happy to be a fellow-worker with Him; and it must be pursued and executed quite independently of its effects on myself, and entirely with respect to the will of God. Again, others do not attempt to serve, because they allege they have no ability, and their minds when engaged in divine things are invariably engaged about themselves. They either do not know where to find rest and peace, or having found it, they do not believe in it; that is, they do not walk in the power of it — that power which faith confers.

Gideon having learnt to worship God at Jehovah-Shalom, (for the name of the altar indicates the worship,) he is directed as to his line of action "the same night." Mark, blessing is never deferred when we are ready for it. Night is not the time for action; and man might say, "To-morrow thou shalt have it;" but with God the very moment we are ready for it, that moment we receive it. As with Isaac, as soon as ever he had reached Beersheba, the true place of separation, the Lord appeared to him "that same night;" or as with Jacob, when he went on his way from Padan-aram, "the angels of God met him." The moment we get on God's line, that moment we find ourselves in the light and strength of God. "In the same night" Gideon is directed to be a witness of the grace he had learned, and after this manner:— "Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it." His own home is the first circle in which the true servant will testify the great realities of his heart and service, and the power and distinctness with which this is done defines and prefigures his future course and ability. The Lord Jesus opened the divine record of His mission in "Nazareth, where he was brought up." Barnabas brought Saul from Tarsus. So here now, Gideon in a bold, determined manner is to declare to his father's house, and through it to all his city, the light which had dawned in his soul, at once demanding from him, and empowering him to bear the testimony. The false worship in his father's house he was utterly to abrogate and abolish.

Gideon obeys; but he does it by night, fearing to do it by day. Here is an inroad of nature. His faith was as yet not such as to enable him to testify openly and boldly; but what his faith did enable him to do, that he did.

Even where the word of God is received and obeyed, there is often a deficiency in the testimony. Many a true soul is not prepared to testify as openly as he might. It is better when obedience and testimony go together; but though the flesh may hinder testimony, it cannot prevent obedience, if there be faith. Paul was both a minister and a witness. It is the highest privilege for a servant, not only to obey, or minister, but to be able to testify of his identity with the ministry. If flesh works — if our own nature is allowed a voice — our testimony is compromised; we have lost our self-possession, and the personal control which is necessary for a witness. But faith insists on obedience; even in secret. In our patience we must possess our souls. Practically, our hearts and minds must be kept in peace, or we cannot, without loss of testimony, perform the very acts of faith. The emotions of the flesh are no excuse for not obeying what we have faith to do. We may submit, on account of them, to lose the higher place of testimony, but nothing must hinder obedience to God's word. Moreover, if we are faithful, without affection, our acts will declare themselves, and thus testimony will follow, though it did not accompany them. Thus was it with Gideon. And, on the outset, he learns the hostility of his own people to faithfulness for the truth. But how little the world knows that its evil opposition always evokes from God's witness an amount of power more than sufficient to suppress it! The cry of the populace for the execution of Gideon is met by the challenge of Joash to let Baal plead for himself, if he be a god; and Gideon is surnamed Jerubbabel, in consequence of this challenge.

How graciously and wisely the Lord was preparing His servant for the work in His counsel assigned to him! And how identical are His dealings with ourselves! His purpose is to assure the soul that, as surely as Christ hath triumphed over every power of evil, so surely may we conclude that every expression or manifestation of evil is properly only a guarantee to us that there is a power at hand for us more than superior to it. And, furthermore, the greater the amount of the evil opposition, the more marked and manifest will be the power which will overcome and silence it. We should comfort ourselves in every circumstance of life, that "when the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord raiseth up a standard against him" — a branch of truth most important to the faithful servant in times of difficulty, and, therefore, implanted by the divine hand in the soul of Gideon, and now to be declared when all the Midianites and the children of the east were gathered together, and pitched in the valley of Jezreel. "Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet, and Eliezer was gathered unto him." He had already passed through the two great experiences of soul which qualified and prepared him for his work — the first his own relation to God established at the altar, Jehovah-Shalom; and the other in his faithfulness to the truth of God, in the utter annihilation of all false worship. Thus qualified, he enters his public service. But here again, although he has gathered by divine energy the men of Abiezer, Asher, Zebulon, and Naphtali around him, and prepares for acting in sight of the foe, he has to learn that, unless he be assured of God's support, he cannot proceed.

How vacillating and humbling is the secret history of the soul, so graciously detailed for us with reference to this faithful servant; though, outwardly, nought can be discerned but boldness and energy, as is true often with ourselves! And well it is for us that we have to do with a God as gracious and considerate of our weakness as had Gideon. By peculiar signs and intimations the

gracious Lord confirms His servant's mind in the verity of those promises which he ought to have rested in at once, in mercy giving and repeating every proof or evidence required. It is a very different thing to seek for a sign to establish belief in God, and to seek for one to confirm us in the rightness of the path on which we have entered, and of God's support in it. The former the Lord will not grant or allow. "There shall no sign be given you," He says to the Jews, when they asked for a sign as a ground of belief. The divine path must be begun and entered on in faith, and without signs; but the Lord continually vouchsafes evidences to confirm the soul that is in the right path, and that it will succeed therein. The soul, when really depending on God, and entering on any signal work, seeks not to be conscious of its own ability, but of God's — God's, if I may so say, in the abstract, 1:e., that it has to do with One whose power, and ability to apply that power, is equal to any demand.

This is the discipline which establishes the soul, and fully places it in the line appointed. In different ways it is granted to every servant; but the sense communicated to the soul is this — that God's power is versatile according to the requirement of it, and able and ready to interrupt any established order of things to manifest His will. This, I repeat is learned in many ways — sometimes practically, sometimes didactically. It may be learned by a soul realizing the wonders of prophecy. One walking in faith, and following out in spirit the great actions there foretold, must be impressed with the majesty and disposibility of the power of God; and when thus impressed and confirmed, as by a light shining in a dark place, it will be prepared to confront the hostilities in the path. Or it may be learnt in a humbler way, and through the weakness of our faith, as, no doubt, it was with Gideon. Flaws in our faith become more apparent as the strain on us is greater. And how many break down in their course, because they have not learned the universality and ready applicability of God's power.

Gideon finds what we shall all find — that God is gracious enough to instruct him in this point, in any way that he may suggest, or which will establish it most clearly to his own satisfaction. Whether it be dew on the fleece only, and dry on all the earth beside, or dry on the fleece only, and dew on all the earth, God vouchsafes it, and Gideon is confirmed.

Thus ready, "he rose up early, and all the people that were with him, and pitched beside the well of Harod." Here the Lord interposes, in order to declare the work as His own. Israel must have no room to vaunt against God, and say, "Mine own hand hath saved me." Consequently Gideon must proclaim in the ears of the people, "Whoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from Mount Gilead." It must have been a trial to Gideon's faith to see 22,000 of the people retire from his standard: but this is ever the demand where there is faith. If he have believed, he must not be confounded because he sees the means, which he had expected to secure the desired end, almost entirely melt away. But Gideon is now strong in God, and through God's gracious dealing and education, and he is not discouraged; nor need he be, for it is better for a man of faith to be in company with a few faithful, than with many who are weak and wavering. But though less than a third of the original number remained, even that number the Lord pronounces "too many;" and He orders that the whole remaining company be put to the test, in order to sift it, and prove who was really fit to war and testify for Himself.

This test is a simple and unimportant one to man's eye, but searching in its spiritual application. Like all the arrows in the divine bow, which by one cast made sure aim, and effect what all man's

efforts and discernment could not, it discerned the thoughts and intents of the heart. It proved whether they were wholly set on the one object — the one mission; or whether they could be distracted from it for a moment in order to take natural refreshment. This was the meaning of the test of the water. And what a result! 9070 were found not whole-hearted: they went on their knees to drink. Though doubtless most anxious for success, that purpose and anxiety did not entirely overrule the desire for personal refreshment. And 300 only are found so single-hearted, that they will but take what is necessary to sustain them, and hurry on! Alas! if such a test were put to us, how few of us would be numbered in Gideon's band! Many of us might rank with the 32,000 who set out with him, or even the 10,000 who have stood the first sifting; but how few have that abnegation of nature which would enable us, regardless of personal need and refreshment, to hurry on, and fight the good fight of faith. It may be but taking a little more of nature than what is necessary for us. There was but a little difference in those who lapped and those who went on their knees to drink. And surely water was a necessary refreshment for thirsty warriors. But the manner of taking it laid bare the condition of the heart; and it teaches us this great lesson, that unless we make the Lord and the Lord's glory our sole object and aim, He cannot use us as deliverers, though He may graciously allow us to share in, and benefit by, the deliverance which He has wrought by more faithful hearts.

To Gideon also, as well as his followers, must this sifting have been a test of faith, for the decrease of numbers must have cast him still more in dependence on God; and many would be confounded by such searching education: but the untaught one is never equal to the trials of warfare. "The same night," (for now that the company is prepared, there must be no delay,) the Lord tells him, "Get thee down into the host," etc., but with peculiar graciousness and willingness to meet and invigorate any wavering in Gideon's faith, he adds, "If thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah, thy servant, and thou shalt hear what they say," etc. How manifold are the ways of the Lord on behalf of His servants! In the enemy's camp the interpretation of a dream announces Gideon's success, and he hears how they already reckon on their own overthrow. And, surely, with ourselves these evidences of coming confusion in our daily foes might often be gathered if we would but hearken to them. If we did, we should perceive that these intimations are afforded us not without an object, and that object is to encourage us in a bolder perseverance. Gideon was greatly encouraged by this.

The God of the dew was again brought nigh to him, and he worshipped, and returned in full assurance of victory ere the conflict had begun. The details of that conflict (or rather conquest, for it was a pursuit rather than a fight) I need not dwell on, except to say, that it was truly strength made perfect in weakness. Lamps within the pitchers — treasures in earthen vessels, and trumpets to announce that their cause was the Lord's — were the only weapons of the little band until the enemy's swords were all turned against themselves. Gideon's success was complete, and he was proved a ready instrument in God's hand to effect deliverance for His people. But what varied discipline he required before he was so! How little does one know of the antagonism of our nature to the will of God, who thinks that service can be undertaken without that self-renunciation, which can only be learned by experimental knowledge of the superiority of God's ways and counsels! We never surrender what we value until we find a better; and man is so full of himself and his own will, that until he finds the superiority of God's, and this, through slow, painful and varied processes, he can be neither an obedient nor a suitable servant; 1:e., one who carries out

the mind and intentions of his Master. Jonah was taught obedience in the whale's belly, because he learnt there to be reliant on God solely: but the gourd taught him the mind and nature of God. The true and disciplined servant always finds a way to do his work, however difficult it may appear. The greater the difficulties, the greater must be the evidence that our resources are of a different order and character from those arrayed against us, and this will be found true in very small matters as well as great ones.

The Midianites being overcome, Gideon was to meet with another difficulty and one of a different order; i.e., to encounter the opposition of those who rank as his friends, an order of opposition which it requires more wisdom to surmount than even that of acknowledged foes. The manner in which he deals with the two classes of his contending brethren is instructive to us to notice. With the men of Ephraim, (Judges 8:1-35) who chide him for not calling them to the battle, he takes the lower place — that of grace, the true, wise and godly position to hold towards those who seek to be conspicuous. Gideon might have replied that himself and the 300 were specially called and chosen of God; but he does not, and leaves the Ephraimites to the satisfaction of that measure of honour which God had put upon them. But towards the men of Succoth and Penuel, who refused to supply bread to the "faint yet pursuing," he acts very differently. They must receive no quarter. Their conduct in refusing sustenance to the 300, when contending with the enemy, was antagonistic to the cause of God and taking the part of traitors to His name and glory. The principle is the same in both dispensations. There are cases which we must meet and deal with in grace; but we are, on the other hand, earnestly to contend for the faith. "I would, (says the apostle) they were even cut off who trouble you." "If any man bring not this doctrine, (i.e., of Christ,) receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

In Judges 8:22, once more and for the last time, Gideon is presented to us in a new and peculiar line of discipline. Great services often engender self-satisfaction and desire for an exaltation which the unspiritual are too ready to accord to us. The multitude solicit Gideon to rule over them, but he replies, "I will not rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you." How could he take the place of that God who had so blessed and honoured him." So far he spoke in the wisdom of the Spirit, but his request for the errands of his prey evinces a covert desire to commemorate his services, though he had refused the place of power and dignity. What could such a desire produce but a snare; whether in the form of an ephod or anything else? And such it was to Gideon and to his house.

What a lesson and warning for us to see a servant of God after such protracted teaching and forming for the work, in a moment as it were, lose himself; and after attaining so high and distinguished a place through service, sink from human gaze behind a cloud! It teaches us that, though we may refuse a public place of exaltation, still we may not be proof against the most subtle and more dangerous snare of supposing that the memorials of our service can in any way contribute to the worship of God; for this is using service as a medium for self-exaltation, which thing must "become a snare to us and to our house."

Vol 02 - Samson.

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Samson was the last of the judges; the last of that dynasty, as we say, during which the Lord was proving Israel as to their ability to trust in Him for government without the intervention of any established order.

They had continually failed, and in consequence had become tributaries to those who ought to have been tributary to them. There is no neutral place for the people of God. They must either be above the world, testifying against it for God's glory, or they must be servants to it. If Israel be not sustained by God above the nations, they are led away captive by the nations: they can never exist as equals; they must be either masters or slaves. Slavery was their chastening for not retaining their rights, as masters, which could only be done by having the Lord on their side. When they departed from the Lord, they were weaker than the nations. A Christian is always weaker than the world, if he be out of communion, simply because he has lost his strength, that strength which his conscience approves of; and therefore he is easily baffled by that of the world, which assails him with all its reckless violence.

Judges were raised up by the Lord to deliver the people from their enemies, when they felt their sin in departing from Him, according as He required them to feel it.

The people of Israel, at the time of the birth of Samson, had been under the hand of the Philistines for forty years, the longest term of captivity which they endured during the time of the Judges. To deliver them from this protracted captivity, Samson is raised up; and because it was the last and the severest during this eventful period, (this period of testing the national faith and conscience, as to how far God's people would accept the government of God, as Lord and King, without the intervention of any one, whose power could be only derivative like the nations around,) it is necessary to introduce to us (as the word here does) not only the manner of the birth of the deliverer, but the mind and expectations of his parents previous to his birth.

Samson must be a "Nazarite to God from the womb." In order to be the deliverer of the people of God from the unholy subjugation in which they are involved, he must be entirely separate from all enjoyments among them. His mother is taught this, and trains him in accordance thereto. Our early training has a peculiar and continuous effect on us in after life, 1:e., the associations which surround us. Samson was a Nazarite, but he grew up in intimacy and acquaintance with the Philistines; consequently, he never seems to be aware of the great moral contrast which should exist between a Nazarite and a Philistine. Much of this sort of ignorance or non-perception we see among Christians in our own day. There is an admission for individual Nazariteship, while there is habitual intercourse and association with the world.

Thus Samson's first act recorded is an attempt to establish a union where there could be no union. His father and mother cannot understand how, nor that this proposition "was of the Lord," that he sought an occasion against the Philistine.

Mark! it was not the union that was of the Lord, but the intended antagonism to the Philistines — not the means, but the end. Union there could have been none. On the contrary, in any attempted union where the elements are positively antagonistic, the revulsion and intrinsic differences are the more manifestly evinced. The means Samson proposed was no divine way for the neutralisation of evil forces; but the intention was divine while the means were manifestly human; and consequently the marriage never takes place; while the intention and divine desire is perfectly declared and answered. It is a great thing to start with a right intention; for if it be of God, sooner or later it must be accomplished, though necessarily at the expense of all that self which we have mixed up with it.

Moses desired to deliver his people from Egypt, but when he first attempted to ratify it, he trusted to resources of his own, and he failed, though eventually he gloriously succeeded, through the help of God. In like manner Peter was ready to die for the Lord, which he did eventually; but how much humbling and cowardice had he to pass through before he reached the realisation of his desire!

The Lord teaches in such a way, and after such a manner, that the human element is eliminated and His own power fully vindicated in us. This truth is beautifully exemplified in the page of Samson's history, which we are about to consider. "Samson went down to Timnath and came to the vineyards of Timnath, and behold a young lion roared against him. And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand." Here the Lord teaches him that it is not by an unholy alliance with evil, but by downright opposition to it that he must overcome; and to this at length he practically comes in the long run.

The truth which grows out of this lesson (a "riddle" to the world) breaks up the union and sends Samson forth in open and violent hostility against the Philistines. Let us consider this discipline a little more minutely. Samson, as we have seen, starts with a right intention; but in consequence of natural association with the Philistines, from which he judicially suffered, he attempts to marry a daughter of these uncircumcised people; but just as he reaches the place where he is to consummate his plan, a young lion roars against him. And God in this way appears to teach him that God's Spirit can enable him to overcome the direct foe, without any intervention, for he had "nothing in his hand," much more without any human plan of unsanctified union. Unaided, Samson confronts this terrible foe and succeeds so completely, that through God he "rent him as he would have rent a kid." What a moment that was! A moment when the soul is in the balance — in the struggle for life or death! How necessary for the heart to be educated in the power of the life-giving God in the dark valley of death — to know His power in delivering us from the jaws of the lion! Such a scene and such education ought to have been to Samson a vision of the character and nature of his mission, as the vision of Damascus was to Paul all his life long; for he was to be a minister and a witness of the things which he had seen. The nature of our first acquaintance with God properly indicates the line He desires to sustain us in, in our course down here; therefore it is well worthy of consideration.

But Samson was slow to learn; and untaught by this marvellous instruction, he pursues his own plan, enters into a contract, and in due time returns for the purpose of ratifying it. But in doing so, he must re-pass the spot where he had known such signal deliverance, and which was to yield still further instruction for him, if he would but give heed to it. Turning aside to contemplate his conquered foe, he finds honey in the carcass of the lion and shares it with his parents who knew not from whence it came. This gives rise to the riddle which Samson knew, but could not apply to his own circumstances. Alas! how often is this the case with us, and how much sorrow and wilfulness do we entail on ourselves because we do not receive it in faith, so as to grasp it in its entire adaptability to ourselves; for it is evident that we never adopt any truth we know practically, unless we are convinced of its suitability to our own circumstances; nor, I believe, does the Lord intend us to use it until we are thus convinced. And this explains why we are so often permitted to persist in our own plans, after we have learned truth which, if properly applied, would supersede them altogether by casting us more consciously and distinctly on God. The secret of our strength with God must ever be a riddle to nature, for it is in a state of hostility to the new nature, as much as the Philistine was to Israel, or to Samson, as representative of that people.

Samson propounding his riddle, showed that there was a great interval and uncongeniality of mind between the Philistine and himself, and his intended wife is in the same moral distance. A union attempted under such circumstances must issue, as it does here, in the cause of the Philistine being preferred to her acknowledged lord. Her devotion to him dissolves before the fear of her own people, who threaten her with ruin unless she betrays him. Had she but clung to him as she ought to have done in true devotion, he would inevitably have saved her from the catastrophe she dreaded; but failing to do this, she betrays and compromises the one she ought to have suffered for. A sad and true picture of Christendom, and with a moral voice to each of us! Samson is betrayed by the one whom he most trusted, and where he naturally expected least treachery; but the Lord turns it into blessing, and the projected union is broken off. He must relinquish it in order to pay the penalty to which he had subjected himself by revealing his secret to the Philistine. Thus the conflict with the lion in the way had at last worked out what God had purposed it should, with regard to Samson, who had been so slow to learn it, when he ought to have done so. The riddle of the eater producing meat — 1:e., the truth revealed to Samson through that conflict — was the eventual cause of his unholy alliance being broken off, while the divine intention which he had thereby proposed to himself was ratified, the rupture of the union becoming an occasion for its exercise.

The Philistines now use the knowledge they have acquired through Samson's betrayal of God's secret, in contravention to all that is sacred between man and man. And their violent injustice authorises him, as invested with the Spirit of the Lord, to render a righteous recompense to them. Before grace came, righteousness was God's rule of action for His people toward man in general; though He Himself was ever in grace toward any soul that owned His righteousness in blood-shedding. But the Philistines were no subjects for grace; and he wreaks on them a double vengeance. First, he goes down to Ashkelon, slays thirty of them, takes the spoil, and gives the promised change of garments to those who had expounded the riddle. And afterwards, in consequence of their unjust disposal of his wife, he lets loose three hundred foxes with firebrands in their tails, and burns up all the standing corn, the vineyards, and the olives. The first of these exploits unfolds gracious discipline on God's part to Samson. His mistakes are mercifully

counteracted, and true service vouchsafed to him. The debt, which the Philistines had made him liable to by unrighteous means, is paid by retribution on themselves. So should it be now with the servant of Christ. If Christendom has unrighteously acquired his divine secret, and asserts a claim on him therefrom, he should avenge, in true, spiritual, uncompromising conflict, all false acquisitions in position or doctrine which the worldly mind seeks to make use of in a carnal sense. I feel that this is very peculiar and mysterious discipline. The servant finds himself in association with Christendom outwardly, but in possession of God's truth and power, which, to the natural man, is a riddle, but sought by him for carnal purposes, and used as a claim on those who possess the reality. But by means of this very truth, the time servant not only discharges his debt to his oppressors, but works a way of deliverance out of them, and involves them in signal confusion.

The second exploit, occasioned by Samson's wife being given to his friend, excites the Philistines to greater violence, and they wreak their vengeance, not on Samson, but on the one who had betrayed him and her father's house, which they burn with fire — the very fate which she had so feared, and the threat of which had caused her to act unfaithfully to Samson; teaching us that whatever we seek to escape from, through unbelief and unrighteousness, is sure to be our eventual doom. We may escape from it for a moment, but our escape is, after all, the sure road to it. This act, however, increases Samson's right of vengeance, and we read, he "smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter; and he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam."

Samson had now, after varied exercises and trying services, risen to such eminence as a determined foe to the Philistines, that they muster their forces and demand his life. When the servant of God will give no quarter to the world, and they can in no wise circumvent him, then their open hostility will burst forth. The same spirit that in all its malignity cried against the Lord, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" now in the Philistines seeks the life of Samson: and Judah, that tribe from which Shiloh should come, manifests toward him the same feebleness of godly principle which afterwards characterised them when they delivered the Lord Jesus to Pilate. Three thousand men of Judah went to the top of the rock Etam, and said to Samson, "Knowest thou not that the Philistines are rulers over us, and what is this thou hast done unto us?" "And they said unto him, we are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines." What a trying moment to Samson! His purposes and acts so little appreciated by his own people on whose behalf he had fought. How similar (only in untold moral distance) to Him of whom it is said. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not!" What peculiar sorrow must the true servant endure from those he is serving in the most earnest and perfect manner! To be disowned and condemned as useless after having wrought the most distinguished service, is a bitter trial; but Samson is equal to it. And still further, in the power of the strength and the gentleness of God, he will not touch his own people, however ungracious to him, and therefore he engages them solemnly that they will not fall upon him themselves. Notwithstanding this, they bind him and bring him down from the rock. And the Philistines shouted against him, and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands. And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and he took it, and slew a thousand men therewith.

Now, mark! Samson had been delivered from both association with, and subjection to, the Philistines, and had retreated to the rock Etam in Judah, as at once Israel's deliverer, and the Philistines' terror; but Judah is unbelieving, and delivers him over to the enemy. This leads to the

manifestation of Samson's power, and his right or title to judge Israel, which is noted in the last verse of this chapter. He has now reached the position which he was appointed to fill, and which the Spirit in him was leading him through many exercises to occupy. We must not omit to notice the conclusion of the above manifestation and victory. After he had, by means of a jawbone, laid heaps upon heaps, and sung in ecstasy of soul after his work, he threw away the jawbone, and then his own personal wants afflict him. "He was sore athirst." Great services for others will not supply the soul's necessities, which can only be supplied from the Lord. However brilliant our services, our own souls will famish unless directly sustained by the Lord, for mere service never sustains. On the contrary, the fresher the service, the more shall we be conscious of our own necessity and dependence on God for personal support. No great deliverance vouchsafed will supply one drop of relief to the weary soul. From God alone must that come. And thus, in answer to Samson's cry, God relieves him, and he calls the name of the place En-hakkore, "the well of him that called." He commemorates, not his service, but his dependence on God; and established now in this dependence, as well as practical ability, it is recorded that Samson judged Israel twenty years.

We may now pause in the narrative to review this early stage of Samson's history in the double light which it appears to me to bear. We have said that his projected union with a Philistine was an unholy alliance, and that God had to discipline him, in order to teach him its unsuitability; and we have traced the discipline. This is true regarding him as a Israelite and a Nazarite; but I think the action also bears another aspect, which appears in the words "they knew not that it was of the Lord," that is, that it was almost a necessary consequence of the judicial position to which he was born liable, even that of subjection to, and association with, the uncircumcised. Though a Nazarite, and a separate man, he was, on account of the condition of the nation, exposed to this corrupt association, and was responsible for it; and while, on the one hand, he is taught to deliver himself therefrom, on the other, he is allowed to propose a union which was an admission of the liability entailed on him, but which he personally had no manner of part in creating. This union was not allowed to be consummated, because in itself unholy; but the proposition answers the double purpose in the instruction of God, on the one hand, being an admission of the consequences of the nation's sin, and on the other, an opportunity for Samson, through God's power and training, to extricate himself therefrom, and to become the deliverer of His people. In the same sense, a man is born into the world liable to the penalty of Adam's sin before he has committed any act of sin. So in Israel.

So in the church. A unit of each, in entering into membership, was necessarily liable to all the forfeitures and penalties as well as the privileges attaching thereto, and he cannot assume the privileges without discharging the liabilities which are the real impediments to the enjoyment of the privileges. Cain is an example of this, assuming by a meat offering the position of a man acceptable to God, before he had answered to the penalties due to him because of sin. So in the church. We must own its ruin before we can assume its privileges and dignities. But the man of strength must not lie under these consequences without an effort to retrieve his position and extricate himself, his kindred, and his people. He repudiates nothing to which he is justly liable, but neither does he increase the embarrassments by contributing personally to the moral debts of his people. Consequently, Samson was a Nazarite from his birth, and for that very reason was the only one suited to undertake the place of liquidator and deliverer. In a word, while personally

separate, he admitted the pernicious and judicial alliance between Israel and the Philistines, by proposing affinity with one of their nation. Incongruous it was, but so much is first allowed in order that Samson, the man of strength, might avow Israel's humiliated position, and no more is necessary or sanctioned in the counsels of God. A righteous ground is soon found for preventing the alliance and emancipating the people from the bondage of their oppressors. By fair conflict he reaches the rock Etam, and there established as deliverer of the people, he judges them twenty years.

This is the first point or epoch in Samson's history. The second is, how he again became mixed up with the Philistines on a lower level, and how he suffered for it. In the first, we have seen how he sought an alliance only for an occasion, and how wondrously he was helped, and raised up to be judge of the people; but now, seeking for association from mere natural desire, although his strength acts when he repents, yet he never afterwards resumes his position at Etam, as judge of Israel; and this has a distinct voice to us. If we own the ruin of the Church, in order to set ourselves to the discharge of the liabilities thereby saddled on us, we shall be helped righteously to exonerate ourselves from them; but if we return to the association of "the great house," for which we have felt irresponsible, and for which we have answered, we are sure to be involved therein, and however we may do individual acts of valour, yet we never again shall be able to resume the position of witness for God or deliverer of His people.

Samson went down to Gaza, (chap. 16.) and saw there a harlot, and went in unto her. Here he renews his unholy association, and yet he is made aware of the Philistines' machinations against him; and is enabled, in a marvellous way, to defeat them, for "he arose at midnight, and took the doors and gate of the city, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them on his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of the hill which is before Hebron" Surely this was a warning to Samson, though with a marked deliverance. How often does the soul recover from the first step backwards in a very remarkable manner, with great evidence of strength, though it be only a midnight; this is, there may not be so much testimony as manifest power and a glorious deliverance. Paul's going to Jerusalem, is an example of such a retrograde step; and at midnight, too, escorted by Roman soldiers, he outwits and escapes his enemies. Blessed indeed when such discipline leads the soul (as it did with Paul) to avoid such association again! But Samson refused to learn; and we next read, "he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, and her name was Delilah." This introduces us to the most pitiable and humiliating incident in the life of any of God's servants. No amount of treachery on the part of Delilah (who is the world in type — a combination of allurements and malice) can awaken Samson to the real character of her to whom he has allied himself. Where must have been his sensibilities when he could keep up the closest intimacy with one who plied his confidence in order to work his ruin?

At first he does not confide in her, and while he retains his reserve and keeps his divine secret, he is safe; however humbling his position as a mighty man, to be in the hands of a false woman. Truly, when we thus see how the strongest may be deceived, and so far that the most palpable proofs will not disabuse their minds of the fearful spell, we may say, "let no man glory in his strength." Great is the mercy of our God, who, even in a downward course, guards us to the furthest possible point. Samson is always victorious until he communicates the secret of his strength — the mark of his Nazariteship and separation to God; but the moment he betrays this he has relinquished the source of his strength, he has lost his mark as God's servant — one that it

was not for uncircumcised ears to know of. If he loses this, this owning of God demonstratively, there is no outward evidence of any distinction between him and other men. As long as this mark remained, God succoured and honoured him. Often do we find that God supports his servant who retains the mark of separation. Even though he, in the spirit of his mind, engrossed by natural attractions, may have very grievously departed from Him; but when the mark is relinquished, He can succour no longer. There is but a small step between the allurements of the world and its deadly wrong. And so was it with Samson. Yielding first to allurements, he next surrenders the mark of separation, and is finally delivered into the hands of the Philistines, and his eyes put out. What a picture of every servant of God who pursues a like course, and thus becomes a "withered branch," and a prey to the ungodly world! What bitter, painful discipline Samson must now undergo! Bound in fetters of brass, he "grinds in the prison house" — the effects of his own self-will, and surrender of his true place of dignity. In the prison his hair begins to grow again; the mark of separation is renewed, but his eyes are gone! Morally, the sight is never restored, when the light once given is lost. A solemn truth for us! The mark is restored and strength is active, but only in death is its power seen.

Even as practically by the death of Christ, all foes of every shade were overcome, so the death-scene alone remains as a place of testimony for a strong servant who has taken the high place of Nazariteship like Samson, but who has sunk with eyes open, as we may say, into the unholy association which he, once in the zenith of his history, so much opposed and renounced. Samson died with the wicked, but in the last fearful struggle — that terrible judgement laid on man because of sin — Samson glorified God, for he "slew more in his death than in his life." A true epitome this of every soul which has learned the power of Christ's death; for the one who conquers therein overcomes every foe, even him who has the power of death, to the praise and glory of God; and teaches us that death alone can deliver the strongest man from the place of temptation and failure.

Such is the end of Samson. A man unequalled in strength and most valiant in using it: an end, humbling indeed to the flesh, but glorifying to God as vindicating His unerring wisdom and discipline with His servants. May we all learn to walk more separate; to preserve our Nazariteship, if we would be witnesses for our Lord, and preserved from the oppression of the world! And may we learn from Samson's history, on the one hand, how easily we are led to surrender it when we once fall into moral declension and association with the world; and, on the other, how, though our testimony may be marred, we may yet glorify God in the calmness and assurance by which we rise above every tie here, and plainly avow, "to depart and be with Christ is far better!" Amen.

Vol 02 - The Home at Bethany.

Vol 02 - The Home at Bethany.

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd Edition, January 1859.

(1st. Edition, November [02 1858 161])

Matthew 26:1-16.

{It is the same scene in John 12:1-50, though in one the head is said to be anointed, and in the other the feet. Both, no doubt, were anointed. The idea is the person of Christ.}

[02 1859 205] It was a wonderful six days that the Lord spent at Bethany. The beginning was His entry into Jerusalem, as King and Jehovah, according to the testimony of Zechariah, on an ass — the meek and lowly though true Messiah of Israel. Then, how marvellously all passed in review before Him, the Judge of quick and dead, even when they thought only of judging, condemning, and perplexing Him. But, in fact, He, though never for a moment abandoning His own place of humiliation, though always and only the faithful Witness, pronounces divine judgement on every class that crossed His path. Chief priests, elders, scribes, lawyers, Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, all were confounded, one after another. Next, in Matthew 23:1-39 the nation was judged, but its restoration was predicted, when it should be prepared in heart to welcome the rejected Messiah. Closely connected therewith is the prophetic strain in Matthew 24:1-51; Matthew 25:1-46, in which the Lord instructs the disciples, or faithful remnant, touching the intervening circumstances, and, above all, touching the effect of His coming on the Jews, on the Christians, and on the Gentiles at large.

Now, when this is finished, and the time of His entire and final rejection is at hand, He finds a home for a little season at Bethany. It is most sweet to follow Jesus into that momentary retreat of love, where His heart, straitened though it ever was till the cross in a world which understood it not and refused it, enjoys the answer which itself had produced.

The opening of the chapter shows us how calmly the Lord awaited the judgement which was about to fall on Him, and how simply He announced it to the disciples; "Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified." If He had judged all according to God, and finished all His sayings in these respects, He is ready to be judged and to suffer to the uttermost, fulfilling His own love according to the counsels of God. "Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people." How little they knew that all was known to Jesus, and that what they muttered in the darkness was spoken by Him in the light, with the openness of One who came for this very end! He communicates with His friends about His crucifixion: they, His enemies, plot about it with each other. It was all ordered beforehand of God, who has a long look out, and accomplishes a great deal with a little. We,

looking at the beginning of things, may think they are all going wrong when they seem to be adverse. The happy way is to trust in the Lord, and to believe He is guiding. But we must abdicate our own wisdom for this. Faith alone gives the perspective of what God does: to human understanding all looks crooked.

How laborious wickedness is, and what pains men must take about it! (Matthew 26:3-5.) With what ease Jesus had spoken and acted, let the circumstances be ever so heart-breaking to Himself!

There is often great difficulty felt by His people in turning from one thing to another of a different character. The truth is, we want to be nothing, which is the secret of this power. Jesus was always ready for everything. He was of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. Divinely perfect, He was also thoroughly human. In us, that which is immediately from God must be given, if we would be kept from the inroads of our own character in each case. The Lord could one moment expose the Pharisees and their temptations, the next moment take up young children in His arms and bless them. And again, we repeat, it is very striking to see how, when events are closing in around Him, He finds, as it were a home. If the world is completely against Him, He can take rest for His spirit with this family of Bethany. He lets His heart out in accepting what is done unto Him. How perfectly human is the Lord here! He delights in accepting all their kind thoughtfulness and love.

Throughout His course, there had always been tension of service. Save in communion with His Father, when was He, for an instant, unbent? He found not so much as time, to eat. When He wanted sleep at another time, it must be in a boat. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Here, however, it is not the same thing. For a brief season He has a kind of home. He takes the kindness which the heart can give, and likes it.

And let us mark how the heart that is entirely devoted to Jesus gets into the right place, and does the right thing. (Matthew 26:6-7.) There may not have been intelligence in this woman, of what she was going to do, but her feeling seems to have been that she was about to lose Jesus, and that she must spend all she had most precious upon Him there. There is an instinct of affection, that finds its expression when wanted. "Ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial." Jesus interprets it. She broke the alabaster box. It was really of no use, but sanctified affection is of use. Disciples might say, to what purpose is this waste? and talk about giving the money to the poor; but whatever is spent on Jesus, God delights in. And Jesus accepts the affection, and is conscious that He should be the object. "Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me," etc. There is nothing so acceptable to God in the saint as knowing the person of Jesus, and appreciating Him in love. If in service we anticipated the mind of the Lord, how we might help one another! and how graciously He reckons! For ignorant as the woman was, the Lord speaks as if she had known about His death and burial, as He did Himself. And He rewards accordingly.

It was just so that He said to the disciples, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." He owned their devotedness as a heavenly value, though, in fact, it was He who had deigned to continue with them. Romans 8:26-27, is in character with this love, and most encouraging for us.

"Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." She did everything, as it were, in that one act. So, in one sense, Paul did more during the two years of his imprisonment, than in all the rest of his ministry. The great thing is to cultivate that kind of devotedness to Christ, which makes Him the one object. It was thus the woman acted, and got Christ's approval. It is not an easy thing to be satisfied with His approval, and nothing else; but this it is which strengthens the soul, and puts it on seeking His direction.

But in the next verses, Matthew 26:14-16, what a contrast of darkness with light? The little picture we were looking at is soon gone. How thoroughly a passing scene, and now how changed! Judas thought he could deliver up Christ to whom he liked, but he could not, nor could the band, with their officers and weapons, take Him. "They went backward and fell to the ground." He gave Himself up, or they could never have taken Him. And what was Judas' estimate of Jesus? "What will ye give me," etc. "And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him." Alas! Judas was the instrument of the enemy's malice as the woman was of the love of the Spirit, now that that most solemn hour approached, when the full truth of man, of Satan, of God Himself was disclosed in the cross of Jesus.

Vol 02 - "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

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Luke 18:9 to Luke 19:10.

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd Edition, September 1859.

(1st Edition August [2 1859 316], September 1859 [02 1859 331])

[02 1859 321] May not these words, these last words, the only hope of any poor soul to whom God discovers its true condition, and assuredly the joy, and song, and rejoicing of all who for ever so great a length of time have known this blessed One, — may not these last words be regarded as a kind of key-note of the whole group of narratives that has now been read? Assuredly the Spirit of God in inditing Scripture had an object, not only in what was inserted, but in the order in which the matter is presented? and this gospel is remarkable, as is familiar to all here, for the grouping together, because of their moral connection, things which may even have occurred at different times. But whatever other secret there may be as to the why and wherefore of the order in which these narratives are arranged, may not this be one reason — the illustration which each and all afford of this grand, central, all-important foundation fact. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost?" In the parable of the Pharisee and publican you have a lost one sought, and found, and saved. In the case of the little children you have lost ones received and blessed.

He had come to save even them. And in the case of the young man, the ruler, you have one who refuses submission to God's estimate of what he was; one who refuses to take the place of being lost: and he is the one who goes empty and sorrowful away. The case of the blind man is a plain one. He was lost, and Jesus was passing by. He is brought to Him, and mercy triumphs in his case too. And as for Zaccheus, it is his case which affords the immediate occasion for the words — words uttered by the lips of incarnate love, vindicating its own right to be what it is, and do what it does. It is the Son of man come to seek and to save that which was lost. This is the explanation the Lord gives to those who were not only rejecting Him, but quarrelling with the grace that received the lost. "This day is salvation come to this house," etc. "For the Son of man," etc. Now it is often of all-importance to get back to the very foundation-truths of all. There is no real progress if these be forgotten. And if there be one snare of the enemy, with which he is permitted to beguile the Lord's own beloved ones, more than another, it is in putting out of sight and memory God's estimate of what they are. We use even the Lord's own grace, and what it gives and does, to put honour upon ourselves, and to think highly about ourselves on account of it; and then we have to find, in one way or another, that whatever grace has given and done, it is grace, and that grace has for its object such as were lost. "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

But there is one part of Luke 18:1-43 of which we have taken no notice in this rapid recapitulation; but it has been omitted, not because of its having no bearing upon the point before us, but because we would reserve it, as the grand central point of all, for distinct and full consideration. It is related in the most simple language, such as the mere child can understand; yet the disciples themselves, who had been for three years and upwards the companions of the Lord Jesus Christ, did not apprehend what He thus spake. The words are in Luke 18:31 and the following verses "Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on. And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again, And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken." It is at this cost, and oh! how the heart feels that no heart can estimate it — no heart but His who went through it all, and His to whom it was all presented, and whose blessed provision it was for the salvation of such as are lost.

If there be the demonstration that we are lost, it is in the fact that we could be saved at no less a cost than the endurance of all possible shame and suffering by Him who was God manifest in the flesh — the only begotten of the Father — by whom the worlds were made, and without whom was not anything made that was made — the man that was Jehovah's fellow. He it was that was to be "delivered to the Gentiles, mocked, spitefully entreated and spitted on, scourged and put to death." And if the indignities from man's hand be what, to a considerable extent, are here dwelt upon, these are not the whole. No doubt it is in harmony with the whole drift of this part of God's word, that Christ's sufferings at the hands of men should be thus presented. But they are not the whole of what the passage sets forth, nor are they even the first subject that it presents. He had all this to suffer at the hands of man, and man expressed it in what he is. He showed there that hatred to God which constitutes the most serious part of his being lost. But the Lord Jesus was to be delivered to the Gentiles. And if by man's wicked hands He was crucified and slain, who is there here that does not know that He was "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" to be thus crucified, thus slain?

Now on the soul's perception and reception of what God intended in that transaction depends the solemn question, and that as to each one here, whether the object for which the Son of man came, "to seek and to save that which was lost," has yet been accomplished. If, through the divine teaching, in simple faith we understand the why and wherefore of the transaction that the Lord Jesus here predicted; if, in the secret of our hearts, we know, not as a question of head-knowledge gathered up from books, but as a matter between God and our souls, why and wherefore Christ was delivered up to the Gentiles to be mocked, and scourged, and spitted on, then we know it to be a transaction of which our sin was the sad, solemn occasion. It was for this that the blessed One, who knew no sin, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, was delivered up to die a cursed death, to be hanged upon a tree! Do our hearts know the secret of this? Can you tell why it was that the Christ of God had thus to suffer? You cannot, unless you are brought to the conviction that you are lost, unless you have been taught of God what you are — utterly, completely lost.

Unless this has been really known in the light of God's presence, it is impossible to tell why the Christ of God should thus suffer and die. But where the conscience has been really enlightened,

and the heart made to bow to the conviction that we are lost, then to see by faith the Son of man nailed to the accursed tree, delivered to the Gentiles, mocked, etc., put to death — the soul can adoringly account for it all, and see its own rescue, its own salvation wrapped up in that by which God has been so glorified. Each can thus say, "It was for my sin, to retrieve me from the ruin in which sin and Satan had involved me that His blood was shed." Can your heart say this in simple, happy confidence? Oh! happy they who have thus been taught of God! All will return to this, when we are at home in the presence of God and the Lamb. Our song even then will be, "Thou art worthy for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Oh yes! Redeeming mercy, atoning blood will be heaven's song throughout eternity.

But let us look a little more closely at some of these narratives before us. The first is one that may well come home to each of us. It is one with which every one in the present day, in a country like this, is familiar. Numbers speak about the Pharisee and the publican, who know nothing of the truth that is here revealed. But how is it with ourselves as to this? Have we been brought to take the publican's place before God? and is that the ground on which we now stand before Him? I do not ask whether we are still saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. The publican would not say that, when he had gone down to his house justified. But he would still be upon the same ground as that he took, when, not daring to lift up his eyes to heaven, he stood and smote upon his breast and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

The Pharisee took the ground of what he was. He does not take to himself openly the credit of what he was and did. He does not say, I thank myself that I am this and that and the other. He was quite as orthodox in that respect as numbers in the present day, who are looking within for their grounds of peace, and who say, "We give God the glory of all that we hope He has wrought in us, and own Him as the one who has produced it all." But if He has produced anything in our souls, it is not for us to rest upon, or to glory in, or find peace in. We are upon the Pharisee's ground if we found our peace upon anything that we may suppose grace to have wrought in us. He thanked God, but it was for what he was, what he did, and what he did not. These formed the ground on which his soul sought to stand before God. And he thought he did stand; he was self-deceived; he was on perfectly good terms with himself. "God, I thank thee I am not as other men are," etc. And there are numbers in the present day, bearing the name of Christ, professing, in words, to have no confidence but Christ; numbers who would be shocked at the idea of attributing salvation to any but Christ, who are yet practically and really taking the Pharisee's ground before God.

Where such persons have any real work of God in their souls, they are destitute of peace. Where there is thorough self-deception, men may thank God that they are not as other men. But supposing there is any idea of what man is before God, and yet the attempt to take this ground, misery must be the result. It may be the ground on which some here are seeking to stand, who, if asked, Do you take the ground of the Pharisee? would say, "Oh, no!" Then what ground do you take? What are you wishing to stand upon before God? Is not this the reason you allege for not having peace, that you do not find in yourselves such fruit as would be certain marks of your being God's children? Or if sometimes you hope that you see some such marks, you cannot always find them, and therefore you are so cast down and desponding. Is not this the way in which you explain your own state? Or perhaps with some examples of rare devotedness before your eyes you say, If I were but such an one! And what if you were! Would it do then to say, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are?" What are you wishing and seeking? You are seeking and wishing to be

something better than you are, in order to stand before God. And if you could have your wish and be that, would you stand upon it ? Then you would be the Pharisee outright.

But what was the publican's ground? There was the deepest sense of what he was — a sinner; and he was not even asking to be something better. No doubt he did desire deliverance. He would not have been so troubled about his state if he had been content to be a sinner. He had the deepest sense of what he was; but what was his hope? his resource? the only open door before him? It was what God is, and what God is to what he knew himself to be. It was, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." When the soul is once brought there, there is no doubt as to the issue. The word of God contains an answer now to such a state of soul as was not found even while our Lord was living upon the earth. God's perfect, blessed answer is in the fulfilment of the Saviour's own prediction of His sufferings and blood-shedding on the cross. There was the answer on Christ's part to God, for all the sin, let it be what it may, upon your conscience. There is also God's answer on His own part in the love that gave Christ to take the sinner's place, and stand in the sinner's stead, and die the sinner's death: the answer on God's part to the cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Oh! that some here may, through God's own teaching, be led to see how mercy has interposed — how mercy has triumphed. May you see something of the height and length and depth and breadth of mercy, God's mercy, the sinner's only refuge, his only resource. It is not mercy without atonement, without sacrifices, without the full vindication of God's holiness and righteousness. It is not mercy at the expense of these. But as sin has reigned unto death, even so grace now reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

But, passing on, the next scene is one of deepest interest. It is that in which infants are brought by their mothers to Jesus. They are not children that are brought to Him to be taught, but infants, whom their mothers bring, that He might touch them. What faith! What an acknowledgement, both as to what the infants were, and as to there being that in Jesus which met their need! The new-born babe needs Jesus. And while the testimony of God is most blessed, that all dying in infancy are saved, it is not without blood, not without the Saviour, that they are saved. These mothers owned this. Partaking of their parent's sinful nature, these infants needed salvation, and their mothers knew that none but Jesus would do for them. So they brought them to Him that He might touch them, owning thus that there was in Him a virtue, a power, which by His touch would be communicated to the object of their affection.

Oh! that there were more of such faith amongst us — faith that would bring even our infants to Jesus, the moment they are given us, and never cease presenting them to Him that He would touch them.

But there were those who thought that He had a more important mission into the world than to bless infants; so they rebuked those that brought them. But Jesus called them unto Him. He shows where His heart was — that there was no part of the work that He had undertaken for which He was not constantly prepared. He says, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." And He not only vindicates thus these mothers, but takes occasion from their act to read us all a lesson of the deepest importance. "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein." It was not only that there was a hearty welcome for little children with Jesus, but that we must all in spirit become little children. The wisest man on earth — the man of keenest intellectual

perceptions — the man of highest attainments — must become a little child to have to do with Jesus. We must become fools in order to be wise. It may be that some one here, looking at such a passage as this, may be perplexed, and say, How is this? Are we not often told that salvation is by faith? that whoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ has salvation and eternal life?

How, then, is it that these blessings are here made to depend upon my becoming a little child? They are but two different ways, my friends, of presenting the same thing. Faith is this child-like spirit that each must have if he is to enter the kingdom of God. It is not that little children are good, and that we have to become good like them in order to get blessing from God. It is not that at all. Children are sinners and need the Saviour, and He came to save children as well as up-grown people. What, then, is the meaning of the passage? Let me ask, in reply, Is there one characteristic of childhood so prominent as this, the unhesitating simplicity with which the child trusts those with whom he has to do? Try a child; offer him something that he can value and desire, something suited to him — an apple — a toy. What does he say? Does he begin to make excuses, and say he does not deserve it, that he is not good enough, that he must behave better, feel differently, or the like, before he can expect such a boon? Is this the way he treats your offer? No. His hand is out at once — he gives you credit for being as good as you seem to be, and profess to be, in holding out to him the gift.

And what is the whole matter of receiving Christ — eternal life — salvation? It is the simple faith that accredits God to be as good as He says He is, as good as He has shown Himself to be. Has He not said that He "so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life?" And yet, with such statements throughout God's word, the soul, instead of believing God when He declares how good He is, instead of receiving Christ, stands reasoning, and seeking to evade the love which still pursues us with the needed, indispensable good. Ah! the heart must be bowed to this, to receive God's word in true, child-like simplicity, just as a child accepts unhesitatingly what it is very glad to get. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein."

(1st edition September [02 1859 331])

[02 1859 324] The next narrative in the group before us presents a thorough contrast to this child-like spirit; not in what you would call a wicked man, but in one of the fairest specimens of human nature that could well be conceived. And, indeed, if anything is to be fairly tested, it must be that thing in its best state. Suppose you were testing merchandise, it is the best sample that the merchant would wish to be tried. Well, the man who is here brought to the test is one of the fairest specimens of humanity that could be produced. "A certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He is not one of the careless throng who, without a thought of God and eternity, are saying, "What shall I eat? what shall I drink? or wherewithal shall I be clothed?" Eternal life is the object before him; and the question of questions with him is how it is to be obtained. This is what he is pursuing. He has a certain position in the world; and, holding this place, he pursues eternal life as an ulterior object. He seeks a happy eternity as a sequel to a well-spent life; and the question is what he must do to inherit eternal life.

How remarkable, too, the perception he had of Jesus, in the perfection of His ways as a man. His eyes have evidently been upon Jesus; and he thinks that he has now met with one so perfect as to be able to teach him the way of perfection; teach him how to be good enough to inherit eternal life.

Hence, he says, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Oh! are there any here (under other terms perhaps, or with other associated ideas that have been gleaned from the gospel) in this young man's state of soul? Perhaps your dream of satisfaction and contentment in the world has been broken in upon, and you see plainly that there is an eternity to face, and a God before whom you must shortly stand. And the question has been raised how you are to stand before Him, and you have an idea that in order to be right there you must be right here; and you have been seeking to be so, and you would fain have further instruction as to how far you must go, and what you must do, to have this question of eternity settled in your souls.

But let us look a little further. Our Lord cuts short this ruler. It was not that He did not feel for him. We are told in Mark's gospel that "Jesus, beholding him, loved him." It could not be with the love of complacency with which He regards His people; nor was it with the mere compassion that cares for sinners. No; there was a perception by our blessed Lord of that which for time, and for this world, is in itself fair and lovely, and He could give its full place to that. His affections go out. His heart is attracted to the young man. Beholding him, he loved him; but only the more unsparingly would he demonstrate, that, however He might appreciate the attractions of this young man's amiable character for time, as to any link with God for eternity, there was none! He was as completely lost as the vilest wretch that ever tremblingly clung to the garments of Jesus. Accordingly, He at once lays the axe to the root of all that the young man had wished to depend upon. "Good Master," he had said, "what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He looked upon Jesus as the best man he had ever met with; a man so good and perfect, that even with the estimate he had of himself he would like to be His scholar. And what is the Lord's answer? "Why callest thou me good? * None is good, save one, that is God." It is, in other words, "You are on the wrong track altogether. You are seeking and wishing to be good enough for God, and to use me to help you to be good enough for God. But the fact is, God is good enough for you, however bad you may be." And it was to take him clean off the one ground, and put him on the other, that He thus met his question in this unsparing way.

{* It can scarcely be necessary to remark that our Lord answers the young man on his own ground. He had addressed him as a man — the best of men, in his estimate, no doubt, but still a mere man; and it is as man that our Lord replies, "Why callest thou me good?" Had it been with any thought of His being more than man — of His Godhead — that the ruler called Him "good," there would have been no fitness or meaning in the reply. He was, blessed be His name, the perfect expression of God's goodness to the vilest and worst. He was "the image of the invisible God." He was "God manifest in the flesh." In lowly grace He spake of Himself as "the Son of man:" but even thus He had come "to seek and to save that which was lost." On what other errand could He have come? "God over all, blessed for ever," yet shrined in flesh, "found in fashion as a man" — yea, the lowliest of men — what could solve this mystery of godliness, except the grace in which He had come to seek and save the lost? It was to the need of this grace that the young ruler's conscience required to be awakened. How perfect, how blessed, the answer to this need, in the humiliation of Jesus, and His atoning death upon the cross! And how sweetly suited to this need are both these wonders felt to be where the sense of the need exists! The Lord produce it in many a heart!}

But let us proceed with the details. "Thou knowest the commandments. Do not commit adultery, do not steal," etc. God had instituted the law, which showed what His claims upon men were. The

ruler was under it, and the Lord refers him to it. "Thou knowest the commandments," etc. The young man was impervious to all this. "He said, All these have I kept from my youth up." Still, be it observed, he was not satisfied — still he was asking, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" It is so, where the conscience is at all awakened — where any measure of sensitiveness as to God's claims exists — the soul never can get rest upon this ground. The ruler was not satisfied; and this is the only hopeful thing about him. But whatever God might afterwards work in his soul, as yet he was not ready to take the ground of being lost, and to welcome to his heart the One who had come to die upon the cross, that the lost might be saved and have everlasting life. As yet, he had no heart for the Saviour, and this was to be proved. The law was not sufficient as a test for him. He could say, "All these things have I kept," as St. Paul afterwards could say, "touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." There had been a time, when nobody, by the law, could have convinced Saul of Tarsus of sin. That was the case with the young man here. What, then, was to be done? The only test that unfailingly shows out what man is, was now to be applied to him, and he had subjected himself to the unsparing application of this test, by the very way in which he had come to Jesus. He had said, "Good Master" — owning Him as a teacher competent to teach him how to inherit eternal life, so that subjection to His teaching he had already owned as his place.

And what does our Lord say? "Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me." He puts the world in one scale, Himself and heaven in the other. He offers him the assurance of that after which he had enquired. "Thou shalt have treasure in heaven;" but he offers it on condition of his leaving all to follow Christ on earth — Christ on earth and treasure in heaven. These are in one scale — and, in the other, the world. Not the world in its wretchedness, but in its fair and attractive forms. And, now, what is the issue? The young man, this ruler, this amiable, excellent man, is shown to have a heart as alien from heaven and God as that of the vilest and most abandoned sinner on earth.

What is the mind of heaven? How has God expressed His mind? What is God's estimate of the One with whom this ruler was conversing? "He has set him at his own right hand, he has given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth." No place too high to enthrone, no glory too bright in which to enshrine the One who, on earth, glorified God and died for lost sinners. This is God's estimate of Jesus. But what was the ruler's? Alas! his riches are more to him than all the peerless excellence of Jesus. He could have them but for a little while; but when put in the balance with Jesus, he grasps them more eagerly than ever, and turns his back on Jesus and eternal life. "When he heard this he was very sorrowful, for he was very rich."

A word or two on what the disciples say. Jesus takes occasion, from what had occurred to exclaim, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." Jesus had not been showing to the ruler, the way of salvation. To put it as the way of salvation, that he was to sell all and follow Jesus, would have been to propose harder terms than even those that had been propounded by the law itself. The disciples, thinking only of being saved, say, "Who then can be saved?" What is our Lord's answer? He does not in the least relieve the conscience from the pressure that is upon it, but He draws us away to God. "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." And, as a matter of fact, but a few short months after this, when the Holy Ghost had come down from heaven, consequent upon the exaltation of Jesus there, revealing to

souls the Saviour — the crucified, risen, exalted, Saviour; and when, by faith looking up, they behold there the One who had accomplished their salvation, the full tide of blessing so filled their hearts, that hosts of people did, without an exhortation, what the young man declined to do, even at the cost of rejecting Christ Himself, and heaven, when it was put before him as a test. God had come in and had saved these 3000 people, and the result was produced at once.

One word as to the closing narrative. It affords such an instance of another lost one saved, and is such a contrast to the case we have been considering. "As He was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the wayside begging." It is not a rich ruler now, but a poor mendicant, and that with the added misfortune of being destitute of sight. He is sitting by the wayside begging, and they tell him that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. He had heard of Jesus before and in secret had evidently owned that the one who was to sit upon David's throne, is the Jesus of whom he had heard. Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? "Yes," says this poor man, "The Christ of God can come out of Nazareth." His faith owns Him as David's Royal Son; and it is now his one opportunity of having the affliction of his lifetime removed by the royal bounty of the One who had not where to lay His head. It would not seem that his faith reached further than this at first. "Jesus," he cries, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me." It is not his soul that occupies him, as in the publican's case; but still it is conscious need, and this is a plea for mercy. "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

And as before with the little children, so now there were those who rebuked him, and told him to hold his peace. But he was not to be put to silence thus. Faith cannot be so easily turned aside. I believe that where persons have been seeking for many years after peace and have not found it, it becomes a very serious question, whether there is any true seeking at all;— where there is, the answer of God is usually sooner given. But faith does earnestly seek, and will not be turned aside from seeking the object of its pursuit. He cried so much the more, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me." There was confidence in Jesus, not only in His power, but that if only he could reach His ear, He was One who would feel differently towards him from those who were rebuking him. And so he did. "Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him; and when he was come near, He asked him, saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, receive thy sight; thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God."

It might seem as though this were written in illustration of the receiving the kingdom of God as a little child. At the bidding of Jesus, the man is brought unto Him. "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" He asks. Then there is the simple, confiding utterance of his request. "Lord, that I may receive my sight." No sooner said than done. "Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee," etc. The whole thing took less time in the accomplishment, than the perusal of the narrative requires.

And this Blessed One is still waiting, still passing by, if I may so say. He is not beyond the reach of sinners. The Holy Ghost has come down from heaven with the testimony of the risen and ascended Lord. And wherever there is a poor soul to cry, Have mercy on me — a soul, sensible of being lost and ruined, and turning the eye to Jesus — there is the answer at once. Once brought here, it is heard in an instant — there is an immediate answer. Faith never gets a refusal from faith's blessed Object, the Lord. Oh, no! It gets its answer at once.

"And immediately he received his sight and followed him." The word to the young man was, "Come, follow me." And he turned his back and went away. He had too much to leave, to follow Jesus. Here was one who had nothing to leave, nothing to bring — empty and ruined, his need draws forth the grace of Jesus. He receives his sight, and evidently received sight in a deeper sense than the opening of his eyes to the light of day. For he beholds Jesus. The first object that greets his inwardly and outwardly opened eyes, is the One that links his heart to Himself, with an affection that cannot be repressed, and he follows Him of his own accord. The Lord grant that thus it may be with many for His name's sake.

Bristol.

Vol 02 - Death and Resurrection.

Vol 02 - Death and Resurrection.

Exodus 15:1-27.

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd Edition, October 1859.

(1st. Edition, November [02 1859 353])

[02 1859 348]

There are two things which it is very important for every person to get clear hold of. First, that which the death and resurrection of Christ bring into in principle; and second, what they teach as a matter of practice. Both these things are brought out in the chapter before us. First we have this loud and joyful song on the shores of the Red Sea — a song never heard before. God had been displaying Himself unmistakably on the side of His people. Israel, trembling and fearful, had thought they were brought out of Egypt to perish, they distrusted the Lord, and they stood in doubt of Moses. (Exodus 14:10-12.) But then comes this mighty and triumphant work, showing how thoroughly God was in favour of His people. This sets forth the death and resurrection of Christ as a matter of principle. At the Passover, where the blood of Christ is the sole screen from destruction, there is no song. The thought of judgement is connected with it, and one wailing is heard throughout the land. "And there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead." But, while the Israelites had the sense of security, there was nothing that could draw out the full praises of their hearts. For it was a solemn time, that midnight: and even Israel must eat the lamb with bitter herbs. The judgement of God, even though we know the Holy One substituted for us, is necessarily and rightly connected with the thought of what suffering for our sins has cost Christ — God pouring out His judgement on One holy and unblemished, that He might pass over sin in us, and put it away. A song here would show that what Christ passed through was not appreciated, and that our consciences did not feel what our sin was in God's sight.

But now the people were no longer in their houses, eating the passover; they were simply called to "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." Thus, having witnessed His full deliverance, they could sing, "The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation." The judgement and passing by of sin does not comprise all the salvation of God; it is only the groundwork. When sin is forgiven, then comes a free space for God to accomplish His full salvation. He is not satisfied with simply meeting the demand of His own holiness; but now He wants to show me how completely He is for me. In the Passover, God manifested Himself as against sin; but there the blood of the lamb stayed the hand of the destroyer, while on the enemies of His people judgement was dealt, but dealt individually, on each first-born alone — the destroying angel entered the houses of the Egyptians to smite. But here it is a different thing: the enemies are now mustered in full force; and this is just the opportunity for God to show that He is for His people.

In Romans 5:1-21 we have the fuller opening out of this truth in the death and resurrection of the Lord. We are apt to content ourselves with the very smallest measure of the blessing in which God has set us; but it is only and just according to our apprehension of this that we can be on God's side. I cannot be thoroughly for God, unless I see that God is thoroughly for me. So St. Paul reasons, "Much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." (Romans 5:10). This salvation then, is not in connection with the blood of Christ alone; it takes in all the triumph of resurrection that follows. True, the shedding of His blood was absolutely necessary, for "without shedding of blood is no remission." Christ's blood vindicated God amply and in every way, and was the fullest possible confession that we were guilty sinners, and that He is inflexibly righteous. But that is not all. When I look at Christ suffering, do I see the love of God towards His Son? The death of Christ for ever vindicates God; but in the resurrection God is vindicating His Son, and vindicating me through Him. He puts me in and with Christ, into the place where there can be no further question of sin.

No wonder Moses and the children of Israel sang on the shores of the Red Sea. Those waters of death had seemed, and really were, tremendous; but now the people were on the other side, and saw their enemies dead upon the sea-shore, to vex them no more for ever. Thus, too, for us, where sin abounded grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." God is not content with showing us that we are justified by the blood of Christ. And now that He is risen, will God ever raise the question of sin with Him again? Thus we see how God hath blessed us, who hath nothing but sin. All that was due to sin broke out upon Christ, and now we are brought into the community of the blessing in which Christ is. There God is opening to us His heart. Such is the place the resurrection of Christ brings us into. How can there be condemnation there? "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." He suffered that He might bring us to God, but it is in the power of His resurrection, that we know and enjoy it by the Holy Ghost. There was no such condition as being "in Christ," before He rose again. Alone He walked in unapproachable holiness; alone He suffered for sin on the cross. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat," etc.

This changes everything for my soul; and now if I am put in Christ, when all judgement of sin is over for those who believe, I share His glory and exaltation. There is the difference in my state in the flesh and in the Spirit, which can only be measured by the distance between the cross and the right hand of God. I am free now, and stand in the favour of God, in the infiniteness of His love to His Son. The only law that I know now as the principle of my relationship to God is "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." This is not the responsibility of a man under the law, which was all closed before Jesus rose from the dead. The law was always addressed to individuals, "Thou shalt," "Thou shalt not," etc. That blessed One came, and not only put Himself under its responsibility, but exhausted its strength and curse in His death. He becomes the head of a family only as risen. And now (it is not said that by and by only we shall enjoy such blessedness, but) "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free," etc.

We are not related to Christ on this side of the grave. How, then, is He associated with me? or rather how am I with Him? It is with Him risen on the other side of death; and this portion is our's, not only at some future day, but now. Therefore, as far as regards our old bondage to Satan, we have nothing to do but to sing this song. Here, then, we see what the death and resurrection of

Christ bring us into as a matter of principle. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:1-4). The power of righteousness, day by day, depends upon this. The whole condemnation fell on Christ, that we might be free to "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," glorifying God as those alive unto Him through Jesus Christ our Lord.

But when we come to the death and resurrection of Christ as a matter of practice, it is a different thing — there is no song then. It is death realised, as well as resurrection. Blessed it is that God should first give me "no condemnation" before Himself — that when everything was hopeless, He should bring in deliverance: this is just what we have seen. But where did the people go out afterwards? Was it into the garden of Eden? — into Canaan? No, but into the wilderness; and they went three days there and found no water. You would think there was no room for anything but joy after such a deliverance; but now they murmured. They thought it wonderful that God should deal thus with them. Yet God was just as good to His people those three days as He was before. He had proved Himself for them, and now they must prove themselves for Him; if not they must be proved by Him. But because they could not drink of the bitter waters of Marah, they murmured. This just serves to show that as far as the people were concerned, their hearts were not practically right towards the Lord. God does not deal with us merely according to what we hear of Christ — it must be learned. The apostle says, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." It is exactly so when the death and resurrection of Christ are applied to practical circumstances. Supposing they had really apprehended the lesson at the Red Sea, what would they have done now? If they had not soon forgotten His works, they would have sung another song. The Lord looks that we should give thanks always for all things, even in trials and difficulties, to Him who is God and Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Are we not then to feel such things! Yes, but it is not the trial only that is to be felt; but God is there for us, in and above the trial. Am I to give up the blessed sense of victory vouchsafed to me two or three days before, just because the trial comes now?

The people were now proving the utter worthlessness of all the resources of the desert. It is an immense truth to realise, practically, that there is nothing here to give comfort. If at first sight it appears to do so, it proves bitter. When this is learned, then they come to Elim. Thus, the first thing to learn is, that there are no real resources here; and then we see that what seems so bitter and what we should throw away as such, God makes sweet. This is the application of the death and resurrection of Christ to the bitter circumstances of the wilderness. And such is the blessed way of God. Supposing trial comes, it tests how far there is love, patience, gentleness, waiting on God, above all, confidence in His love. Does it all lead us to look to the Lord? Moses entered into His ways, while Israel only saw His acts. And His way is to bring out better blessing through the trial. Even the waters of Elim were not so sweet to Israel as those of Marah when God had changed their bitterness into blessing. It was so assuring to find that God listened to them. This must have made the waters of Marah sweeter than those of any other well, however refreshing it might be in itself.

And how would God have us count on Him now, when weakness, fears, murmurs, heresies, etc., abound in the Church? Are we to think that He has forgotten us? The very difficulties of the way become a means of learning the Lord now, that will strengthen the soul in dependence and obedience. So with Israel: they had cried to the Lord and He had answered them, saying, "I am the Lord that healeth thee." Thenceforward they need fear for nothing whatever. Why should His people doubt the Lord for the way, any more than for the end? Let us be always confident. It is not the habit of faith to be looking down at what is painful in the wilderness; but to reckon on the mercy of God according to His own mercy. He would have us to know the blessed secret of grace which brings in His power to heal. Let us then be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Vol 02 - Extract from a Letter.

Vol 02 - Extract from a Letter.

Correspondence.

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd. Edition, February 1858.

(1st. Edition, February [02 1858 031])

Days and years are passing and making the moment still less — may a disengaged heart have a welcome for the last sand.

What a different character is given to the resurrection in the sermon in Acts 2:1-47 and in that in Acts 3:1-26. In Acts 2 Peter lifts up the risen Christ as Moses brought in the budding rod in Numbers 17:1-13 for the confusion of the people. It is there a startling object full of judgement on a rebellions people. And Israel cry out under the sense of this, "men and brethren, what shall we do?" as Israel had cried out in Numbers 17:1-13. Peter declares that the same risen, ascended Christ would return to make His foes His footstool. In Acts 3:1-26 he publishes the name of the same risen Jesus for the healing of these people. That name is set for salvation, not for judgement. And instead of the risen, ascended Christ returning to make His foes His footstool, He is declared to be waiting in the heavens till he brings refreshing and restoration with Him. And under this preaching the people do not cry out, but "many of them which heard the word believed, and the number of the men was about five thousand:" for Peter had declared that Jesus was preached for blessing (see Acts 3:26; Acts 4:4).

In the second chapter, the resurrection is rather that of the One who had suffered like a martyr at man's hand, and then it was judgement on man, In the third it is rather the resurrection of Him who had been offered up as the Lamb of God, and thus it was healing or salvation.

But what a truth it is to carry abroad, to bear onward into the midst of the human family, to use it like the pillar that was all darkness and judgement to Egypt, and light and deliverance to Israel. For indeed, no more surely was that pillar like darkness and light, than this resurrection is judgement (Acts 10:42; Acts 17:31) and salvation (Acts 10:43; Acts 13:37-39); and thus it is the great thing for the evangelist to use.

Vol 02 - The Last Vials.

Vol 02 - The Last Vials.

Correspondence.

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd Edition, January 1858.

(1st. Edition, January [02 1858 014])

To the Editor of the Bible Treasury.

Dear Sir,

I have had my attention drawn of late to a prophetic publication named the "Last Vials," proceeding from the pen of Mr. Purdon, of Torquay. I have thought that I would, as far as the Lord enables me, communicate to you the impressions formed in my mind with regard to it. I do not pretend to a careful examination of even the few numbers of the work (about two dozen) that have come under my notice; but these specimens give one, in some respects, a general notion of the character of the whole.

The general outline of Mr. Purdon's prophetic scheme appears correct, as far as I am a judge. It embraces the constant expectation of the Lord, with no intervening events, as the true hope of the Church; a double fulfilment of prophecy as to antichrist, partial in the past, (as applied to Popery) complete in the future; the restoration and blessing of Israel; the millennial reign of Christ; the new heavens and new earth. He urges the truth of the expectation of Christ's return in the most decided manner, and lashes with severity the worldly and Laodicean ways of professing Christendom and of true Christians, who, alas! so largely share them; and accounted thus, doubtless with much truth, for the unfavourable reception which the doctrine of the Lord's coming meets with from them.

It seems to me, however, that Mr. P. carries matters in this respect to a decided excess, and gives to the rapture of the saints an undue and exaggerated prominence. He considers that "Of all the subjects of revelation, that of the rapture of the Church is the most sublime The scriptures, like the tree of life, bear twelve manner of fruits, some for the ordinary uses of salvation, others for the Church in its most advanced state; and of these the rapture of the saints is the most perfect and mature. Like the cluster of grapes at the brook of Eshcol, the most perfect specimen of the promised land." And again, "It is the constant praise of the Thessalonians that they were WAITING for Christ. But the Thessalonians were the most perfect and advanced of all the churches. Therefore it follows that to 'wait for Jesus' is the highest act of faith in any Christian Church." Now I would not, for a moment, undervalue the preciousness of the expectation of our Lord. I believe that the rapture of the living saints is the greatest triumph of redemption and the power of the life that is in Christ for His people.

But I do not think it is by any means the most sublime of all the subjects of that revelation which, by the Holy Ghost, unfolds to us all that God is, as displayed in His ways, and above all, in His

Son. That the Thessalonians were in a most blessed state as a church, I do not doubt; but that they were the most "perfect and advanced" of the churches, I see no reason to suppose, with Philippians and Ephesians before me. In fact, it is evident that the "waiting for His Son from Heaven," in their case, was immediately consequent on turning to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 1:e., that it was a truth interwoven with their faith immediately on conversion. It is, or should be, one of the elementary truths of Christianity. I may observe that St. John, in addressing the "fathers" — those most advanced in spiritual life — speaks of them as those, not who had apprehended "the rapture," but who had "known him that is from the beginning." The appearing of Christ (see 1 John 2:28) was a truth familiar to the whole family, young or advanced. In a word, the knowledge of Christ Himself, His person and His love is infinitely more precious than that rapture (precious truth as it is) which derives all its power and sweetness for our souls from the apprehension of the glory and the love of Him to whose presence it will introduce us — of the riches of blessing, too, to which His love has acquired a title for us, and into the full enjoyment of which we shall then enter.

Mr. P. considers it possible, and even probable, that the worldly-minded portion of even the true Church will be left behind at the rapture. Now, while lamenting equally with him the state of many Christians, denying practically, even if they hold as a doctrine, the hope of the Lord's appearing, it would be, to my mind, a denial of the perfectness of grace to suppose that they will be left out of the Church at her rapture. (I do not believe, as Mr. P. does, that they might, after passing through the tribulation, form part of "the bride" at the end.) But, in fact, Mr. P., while acknowledging that it is only matter of conjecture, dilates on it strenuously, as though it were a certainty. This he carries to a climax in a tract entitled "Remember Lot's Wife," where, on the supposition that Lot's wife may be a type of carnally-minded Christians, he thus writes: "Such thoughts (worldly schemes, etc.) may pass through the minds of saints at the moment of the rapture And so the earthly-minded saint — reluctant to mount into the air — reluctant to meet the Lord — may be struck down to the earth again, as a monument of divine indignation."

(!) In another tract he seeks to prove that the "high calling of God" meant the rapture, and that Paul felt doubtful of attaining to it, 1:e., of being found worthy of it! Now I feel confident that "calling" never signifies anything of the kind. It is used to express God's call of His chosen ones, and the blessings connected therewith. In 2 Thessalonians 1:11, it is applied, not to the rapture, but to the place given us in the kingdom, and the tribulation on earth which is our portion in connection with it. So that the contrast between "high" and "low" calling, (if such a thing were mentioned,) would not be, as Mr. P. supposes, the rapture on the one hand, and remaining till the Lord comes to earth on the other; (and how would this be so, if the saints left behind were taken up to the Lord, as Mr. P. thinks, before the marriage of the Lamb, when He has not as yet come to earth, in Revelation 19:1-21?); but rather would it not be the being called to know and have part in Christ in heavenly glory, as contrasted with the calling of Israel to earthly blessing?

Mr. P.'s interpretation of symbols I should judge to be by no means always to be trusted. For instance, he treats the man-child of Revelation 12:1-17 as the living saints caught up at the rapture, the woman being the Church reigning in heaven. But how can this be so, when, after the catching up of the child to the throne of God, she is persecuted by the dragon who is cast out into the earth, and flies into the wilderness? It seems evident to me that the man-child is Christ, according to Psalms 2:1-12 caught up to heaven consequent on His rejection, — born, according

to the flesh, of Israel, set forth by the woman. Doubtless the rapture of the man-child includes that of the heavenly saints.

While there is much that is true in Mr. Purdon's thoughts, as long as he adheres to the teaching of scripture, there is a good deal, on the other hand, of rash and unwarrantable conclusions, based on deductions from scripture, analogies, probabilities, and the like, which renders him an unsafe guide in prophetic enquiry. For instance, from the undoubted fact that the Messiah will, after His second advent, destroy many of His own and Israel's enemies, and will, in the carrying out of this vengeance, make use of Israel as His weapons of war — from this Mr. P. deduces the idea that there will be what he terms the wars of the Messiah, carried on for a prolonged period, perhaps half, or nearly so, of the millennial reign. He grounds this supposition — 1st. on a straining of the types of David and Solomon, (as representing Christ in His characters as Conqueror and Prince of Peace,) to prove that His Davidic reign will be equal in length to His Solomonic, or at least a considerable period. With equal reason might the period of antichrist's rule be supposed a prolonged one; for Saul, who doubtless in measure typified him, reigned for the like term of forty years as David and Solomon. Next, from Psalms 110:1-7 which proves the fact, but nothing as to the prolongation: but gives rather the idea of Divine wrath executing summary vengeance. 3rd, from Daniel 7:12, where the three first beasts are said to have their lives prolonged for a time — hence, Mr. P. argues they will be destroyed at the end of that time; and therefore, "That the three former Gentile empires will take up arms after the Lord's coming, has been shown to be almost certain, from the expression used by Daniel!" Psalms 18:1-50, another of Mr. P.'s convincing evidences of protracted wars carried on by Christ through the instrumentality of Israel, shows rather, I think, the effect of his first victories in reducing nations throughout the world to the obedience of fear. (See Psalms 18:43-44; Isaiah 66:15-24; Zechariah 14:2-3; Zechariah 14:12; Zechariah 14:16-17.)

But what is the most objectionable is, that he looks upon such wars, not, according to the whole spirit of scripture, as needful and terrible acts of judgement from God, for the subjugation and overawing of the nations; but moreover, as forming in themselves a part of the privilege of Israel. "God chose a people a warlike people, endowed with the highest attributes of manhood — brave, firm robust in frame He placed them in a country filled with strong military positions." So again "They will continue to be a fighting nation as their forefathers were once the greatest warriors of the world. This is an high honour conferred especially upon Israel. To be for ever a warlike race, is the height of perfection in human affairs." I need scarcely say how utterly false is this attributing of the triumphs which display God's power on behalf of Israel to their physical qualifications for conquest. (See Deuteronomy 7:1; Deuteronomy 7:7; Deuteronomy 11:22-25; Deuteronomy 20:1-4; Deuteronomy 32:30; Deuteronomy 32:36-42; Joshua 24:12; Psalms 108:11-13.) Mr. P. considers the enlistment of Jews by the Russian emperor as a sign that they are about to be trained for their future warlike achievements ! Worse than this, he regards the conquests of the Messiah, besides the needful inflictions of Divine vengeance on the wickedness and pride of man, to be part of his perfection as a man! That such a thought is carnal and not spiritual I need not stop to prove. Exodus 15:1-27, where the LORD is proclaimed "as a man of war," is as far as possible from countenancing Mr. Purdon's imagination.

Another instance of Mr. P.'s speculativeness is found in treating of the restoration of the Gentile nations. Instead of following the alone safe guidance of the word, he uses the following

argument:— Ezekiel 16:53-55, shows Sodom restored. Now the wickedness of Sodom was especially great, and her destruction the most complete. "We think," hence argues Mr. P, "that an immense and most important conclusion may be drawn from this prophecy — THE REVIVAL OF THE ANCIENT GENTILES If Sodom itself be restored, how much more any other of the Gentile cities?" Why not Tyre, Bozrah, Ar of Moab, Zidon, Ashkelon, or even Babylon itself?" Such inferences are surely as rash as they are needless. Scripture tells us explicitly what nations shall, and what shall not, be restored. And does not Jeremiah 49:13 state the contrary with regard to Bozrah? The last verses of Ezekiel 26:1-21; Ezekiel 27:1-36 as to Tyre? Isaiah 13:19-22, as to Babylon? And a similar imagination with reference to Edom seems plainly contradicted by Jeremiah 49:17-18; Ezekiel 35:4; Ezekiel 35:9.

While the author of the "Vials " rightly insists that no events are necessary to occur before the coming of Christ for the Church, he nevertheless occupies the minds of his readers with the events and politics of the day, as being the tokens, in his opinion, of the near approach of the accomplishment of prophecy, to an extent, I cannot but think, very unprofitable for the soul. Thus many of his tracts are filled with supposed discoveries in the present French Emperor of traits which point him out, in his opinion, as the eighth head of the beast. As an instance of these speculations, in a tract on "The First and Second Seals," he conjectures the conqueror of Revelation 6:2, to be the eighth head, in the commencement of his military career, while it is certain that the eighth head will be the chief of the revived Roman empire. But this setting out in a course of conquests must be, he considers, preceded by a period in which this monarch will display a pacific character. Hence the comparison is drawn with Napoleon III., whose "empire is (professedly) peace," while he is, according to Mr. P., master of Rome and Constantinople, (this was written before the evacuation of Turkey by the allied forces), and aiming at the possession of Jerusalem — thus evidently laying the foundations for the re-organisation of the Roman empire.

Now, the events of the times have, doubtless, their significance and interest for the Christian, especially in the moral principles that are seen everywhere at work, But that the attention should be engrossed with them, or occupied with persons whose playing a part in the scenes of the last days must be entirely conjectural, is, I cannot doubt, a wretched substitute for, and indeed, a means of drawing away the soul from, the contemplation of those heavenly blessings in Christ, which are so entirely outside the scene of the events and politics of this world. Mr. Purdon appears to be absorbed in the contemplation of Louis Napoleon — an unprofitable subject truly! Thus, of the few tracts I have before me, "The woman and the beast," is devoted to showing the strong analogy to Revelation 17:1-18, of the relations of the emperor of the French and the Church of Rome. Of two tracts on "the Formation of the Ten Kingdoms," the first proclaims that the convention signed by the ministers of France and England, in the spring of 1854, has made England one of the ten kingdoms of the beast, and treats at length of the plots and designs, against Britain, of Louis Napoleon, showing how completely he had got us under his power in Turkey, while threatening us on the side of Boulogne.

The second is a continuation of Mr. P.'s speculations on the Emperor's plans, whom he brands as the "universal conspirator;" and moreover asserts that "since the very last number was published within one week, Napoleon has gained another kingdom, towards the making up of the ten. His forces have landed at the Piraeus, and he is master of Athens. The kingdom of Greece is in his hands," etc. Spain, Italy, Naples, Rome, Belgium, etc., are pointed out as falling into their places,

as the ten kingdoms, under the sway of the same individual. Another tract is entitled, "The True Character of Napoleon III.," and shows its similarity to, and adaptation for, the character of Antichrist. While the last two of "the Vials" treat of the significance to be attached to the late "Meeting of the Emperors" of France and Russia; subjoining a tremendous censure on the sins of the English, connected with their treatment of India.

There may be, doubtless, much moral truth in Mr. Purdon's observations; and possibly some of his speculations may prove correct, though some have come to nought. But such matters are, save for the most passing comment, entirely outside the sphere of the life and hopes of those who are "not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world." It is refreshing to turn from this strain of writings to such passages as Ephesians 1:16-23, Ephesians 3:16-21; Php_4:8; Colossians 1:9-10; Colossians 1:27-28, Colossians 3:16; 1 Timothy 3:15-16; 2 Peter 1:2 — 2 Peter 3:18, as setting forth the true character and mode of knowledge in which Christians should be versed. (John 14:26; John 16:12-15; 1 John 1:1-3.)

But I must notice here another feature of Mr. Purdon's character of thought. To judge from the "Vials," his ideas with regard to the blessings which give colour to the hope of a Christian, are of the most low and material order. I may observe that while he considers the Revelation not literal but figurative, he nevertheless attempts to show how some of the judgements may be literally and exactly fulfilled, by means of comets, and the like. And the "heavenly Jerusalem" he regards as a real, actual, golden, foursquare city, of certain dimensions. But the lowness of his spiritual thoughts comes out most strikingly in a number called, "The Faith that overcometh the World." He considers that this is something more than ordinary faith, which he designates faith in the atonement, although it is declared that "whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world;" and the faith spoken of, "believing in the Son of God," is the first and grand element of salvation. He says that believing in Jesus as the Son of God, is looking at Him as the heir and proprietor of all things, and thus also the dispenser of them to us hereafter!

But among these, Mr. P. puts in the foremost place, power, rank, title, and fame; the perusal of the history of eternity; the magnificence of the heavenly city, ("the new Jerusalem, 6000 miles in circumference and 1600 miles in height, glittering with its golden street, and the light of God's countenance," is to me a most offensive idea); radiant robes; equipages (chariots and horses of fire); eating and drinking in the kingdom; the personal beauty of resemblance to Christ (eclipsing, according to Mr. P., the highest dreams of sculpture!); scientific knowledge; music, etc. It is these enjoyments which constitute, in Mr. P.'s idea, the "unsearchable riches of Christ!" "In every circumstance the Son of God meets point to point with the world — out-rivals and defeats it. . . He has promised to the saints all that the world can promise to the worldly, and not spiritually but literally. "The world attracts and destroys the soul by its fascinations; the Son of God takes up the world on its own terms; demands what it can give in exchange for the soul, and he then offers the same price; the same in kind, but multiplied an hundred fold It is thus that faith in the Son of God overcometh the world; for it gives us all that the world can give," etc.

May I ask, Mr. Editor, in concluding this summary of what seems to me the general character of "the Last Vials," that you will favour myself and your readers with your thoughts on the true nature of "faith in the Son of God" as that which "overcomes the world," as compared or contrasted with those I have just quoted; and also whether you see any reason for believing that literal eating and

drinking will form a part of the "spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." which God has given to His Church. What is proved by Luke 22:18; Luke 22:29-30? A few remarks, likewise on the symbolic force of the description of the heavenly Jerusalem in Revelation 21:1-27; Revelation 22:1-21 would be most acceptable. I may add, that Mr. P. feeds, in some places, the imagination rather than the souls of his readers by highly coloured pictures of the earthly blessings of Israel (physical, climate, and the like) in the millennium. Most strange and wrong is his notion that the saints on their rapture will need time in order to "accustom" them to the new state of things! and that the "morning star" signifies Christ appearing in a less dazzling glory for this end. His idea that the dead saints may rise forty days before the rapture, and warn the living ones of its approach, is contradicted by 1 Corinthians 15:52. His observations on "the Progress of Atheism" are striking, and he exhibits a wholesome horror of the advancing evil of the day in Christendom. But I doubt that "the Last Vials" are calculated for the true edification of believers; while in some respects they are positively objectionable.

I am, dear sir, Yours in Christ, W. G.

Vol 02 - To Correspondents.

Vol 02 - To Correspondents.

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd. Edition, June.

[02 1859 288] The Editor quite agrees with H. B. that, without looking for signs of the approaching rapture of the saints to meet the Lord in the air, the earthly ground is being rapidly taken for the closing conflicts. Even the newspapers ring with men's projects, which, we know, will end in a revived empire of the West and a vast Eastern power, (the Beast and Gog,) both of which are destined to meet their judgement successively from the hand of the Lord, and that in the Holy Land. May our loins be girded about and our lights burning!

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd Edition, October 1859.

(1st. edition, October [02 1859 351])

[02 1859 350]

To the Editor of the Bible Treasury.

Sir,

If we walk in the light, as God is in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. Walking in the light, as God, etc., is not walking as perfectly as God is perfect, as must be manifest; but if the darkness is past, Judaism, and all its power to evil, is past, and the true light now shineth. God is light, and if a man walks in his standing in Christ, by faith, he is in the light, as God is in the light, and the blood of Jesus Christ takes its full cleansing power. I would compare this with the view in "Fragments gathered up," in your May * Number. It does not apply to failures, but to standing, to fellowship, and advance in the divine life. I could now add much of the latter part of the second paragraph, "The verse does not say, has cleansed," etc. The use of the present tense is in perfect keeping with the mind of the Spirit, as manifested in this Apostle. Then follows the rejection of the claims of being free from sin practically or actually.

(*Refers to the 1st edition. The corresponding entry in the 2nd edition, is June [02:288])

Vol 02 - Scripture Queries and Answers.

Vol 02 - Scripture Queries and Answers.

Bible Treasury, 2nd. Edition, February 1858.

(1st. Edition, February [02 1858 031])

2. Q. 1 John 1:1. — G—y asks whether *peri tou logou tes zoes* should not be translated, "of the word, the life," rather than "of the word of life." He refers to *Php_2:16*, where *logou zoes* occurs without the article, and in the sense of the quickening testimony of God. Here it is the person of the Son, who is so often called the Word, and the Life, but not (save here) the Word of life.

A. It is obvious, however, that this proposal would give a phrase still more remote from the language used elsewhere in Scripture; so that the usual version seems preferable.

3. Q. Revelation 11:1-19. Are there two half-weeks in the Apocalypse? (See Vol. 1, October 1857)

A. Assuming that Revelation 11:2-3, speaks of the last half-week, and that it coincides with the continuance of the beast for forty-two months, (Revelation 13:1-18,) how comes it that after this full time is expired, the beast, far from ceasing to work, overcomes the two witnesses and kills them; that we have at least three and a half days subsequently before God interposes in any measure to vindicate His servants; that it is again after this that the seventh trumpet announces the worldly kingdom of our Lord and His Christ as come, which trumpet, it is generally considered, resolves itself into the fresh and subsequent series of vials, in their successive inflictions of wrath, and necessarily supposes a certain lapse of time? Is there not then a prolongation of the beast's power beyond the 1260 days of the witnesses? And does not this, the third woe, await its fulfilment? Certain it is that when the seventh angel sounds in Revelation 11:15, no details are given, but we have loud voices in heaven celebrating the advent of the worldly kingdom of our Lord, and the thanksgiving of the elders who anticipate the results to the very end. Now are not some of these details given under the seven vials, which, after Revelation 12:1-17; Revelation 13:1-18; Revelation 14:1-20, resume the historical course of events on earth? And, though Revelation 11:15 differs in character from Revelation 12:10, does not the latter show that heavenly celebration may long precede an earthly accomplishment? Is not Revelation 13:5 limited to the beast's action after he takes Satan's throne? Is it not more natural to suppose that the ascent of the beast out of the bottomless pit opens his half-week, as it closes the career of the witnesses and their half-week? With this ascent, the casting down of Satan (Revelation 12:1-17.) and his gift of authority (Revelation 13:1-18.) would coincide in time. These queries are put to the author of the above communication, not so much as objections, but as difficulties, and in the hope of eliciting further light. — J. M., etc.

Vol 02 - Our Study.

Vol 02 - Our Study.

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd Edition, February 1858.

[02:031]

2. Five Letters on Worship and Ministry in the Spirit. (London: George Morrish, 24 Warwick Lane, Paternoster Row. W. H. Broom, 112 Pentonville Road.)

It is with great pleasure that we recommend to our readers this plain, sound, and seasonable tract. The letters were bona fide communications from the author to Christians, in whose midst he had been labouring, and whose help, and profit, and continued blessing, he was seeking thus to promote. It seems from the preface that some alterations have been made here and there, but the letters still carry with them their original tone of affectionate interest, such as could hardly be in papers written with a view to publication. This will not detract from their worth in the eyes of most Christians. The general heads are, 1. God present in the assembly; 2. The Church edified by gifts; 3. How to distinguish the guidance of the Spirit, negative marks; 4. Do., positive marks; and 5. Miscellaneous observations on the mutual dependence of saints in meetings for mutual edification, and on other subjects. It will be seen that the aim is eminently practical.

Vol 02 - Fragments Gathered up.

Vol 02 - Fragments Gathered up.

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd Edition, March 1858.

(1st. Edition, March [02 1858 048])

When God visits Israel in Egypt, He says nothing about wandering in the wilderness: only that He will bring them out of Egypt and into Canaan. The circumstances of the wilderness are used by grace to make us know Christ better, but they are not necessary to Gods plan — 1:e., salvation and glory. Priesthood comes in to supply the need of a wilderness; it maintains the link between us and the heavenly places, redemption having set us so high, and we being actually so low. We have no need of priesthood to sit in heavenly places. Christ is there, and therefore we are there in Him. Being what we are, priesthood is requisite to sustain us in accordance with our heavenly position. Christ must fill all the distance between the throne and me as a poor failing saint.

Fighting is not the characteristic of the wilderness, but patience. It is in Canaan (i.e., the heavenly places now) that we get conflict.

Fragment.

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd. Edition, July 1858.

[02:098]

Mediation consists, first, of God in the suffering Christ bringing us to God by faith; and, secondly, of sustaining the reconciled one in communion.

Fragments Gathered up.

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd. Edition, October 1858.

(1st. Edition, December [02 1858 192])

[02:152]

Power, the power of Christ practically, depends not upon revelations, knowledge of the glory, etc., but upon our feeling our own nothingness. (2 Corinthians 12:1-21) Affection in unjudged flesh will not do — and we must look to that. Sentiment is worth nothing: you may have plenty of it with sincerity, but it will not carry a man through. That can only be in the power of the Holy Ghost.

There may be great confidence in devotedness, as with Peter, and yet a want of acquaintance with God's mind. Where affection is real, it is instinctively just. We have to see that our zeal for the Lord is not in the flesh.

Fragments Gathered up.

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd. Edition, January 1859.

(1st. Edition, January [02 1859 208])

The death of Christ has annulled my existence before God in the flesh, by faith. Supposing there is a man who is a thief, and he is put into prison to be punished, and he dies in prison, what is to be done with him? The life that sinned is no longer there to be punished — the man must be buried and put out of sight. So, speaking of Christ as taking, in grace, the sinner's place, it is said, "In that he died, he died unto sin once." There is an end of the whole thing. And now, the very principle I get the thought of being dead and alive again is this perfect law of liberty, in which the flesh has no kind of title in any shape or way. You are not alive in the world; you are dead with Christ. How then can you go on as if you were still alive in the world.

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd. Edition, June 1859.

(1st edition, May [02 1859 272])

[2 1859 288] All saints are clean; only they may defile their feet. The Spirit, through the intercession of Christ, applies the word and rebukes evil, shows the starting-point of it, and after a while restores the soul of communion. But God never deals with the conscience to falsify the relationship of the saint. The distress may be the greater, because everything is judged by the light we are brought into, but confidence in God will be untouched. If I apply 1 John 1:7 to failures, I ought to read, "If we do not walk in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us," etc. In truth, that verse gives the whole Christian standing. It is, abstractedly, the portion of the Christian, which can never be lost.

The Christian is looked at, if we may so say, in one point in 1 John 1:7, and neither before nor after. He is in the light, has fellowship with God and His people, and is cleansed. The verse does not say that the blood of Jesus has cleansed or will cleanse, but it cleanseth. God sees me as a believer sprinkled with that blood, which can never lose its value or have to be sprinkled again. Many that have been brought to God have not learnt what it is to be purged worshippers, having no more conscience of sins : a mistake the Lord may bear with, because of the value that Christ's death has in their souls. God alone can give the consciousness of being in the place in which Christ is before God.

Fragment

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd Edition, October 1859.

(1st. Edition, October, [01 1857 271])

[02 1859 348]

Faith in Christ as He was in His humiliation and resurrection, makes a man a Christian. Faith in Christ as He is, guides Christians in fellowship. And faith in Christ as He shall be, gives a hope that maketh not ashamed.

Fragment

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd Edition, October 1859.

[repeat of volume 1, 2nd edition November 1857 [01:289])

(1st. edition, October 1857 [01:278])

[02:350]

People often confound the effect produced on man, the effect which makes him own the truth and the authority of the Word, with a judgement passed by man upon this Word, as upon a matter submitted to him. Never could the Word be thus presented as subject to human judgement; it would be to deny its own nature; it would be to say that it is not God who speaks. Could God say that He is not God? If this cannot be, no more could He speak and admit that His Word has not its own authority.

Fragment

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd Edition, October 1859.

(1st edition, March [01 1857 162])

[02 1859 352]

It is the Christian, or the Church, which gives Christ His character before the world. They are His epistle to the world. We may know how to distinguish and understand the representation; but the world, the infidel, judges of what Christianity is, by what Christians are.

Vol 02 - The Mind of Christ.

Vol 02 - The Mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:1-16.

Bible Treasury, Volume 2, 2nd Edition, October 1859.

(repeat of volume 1, 2nd edition April [01 1857 177])

(1st. edition, April [01 1857 181]

[02 1859 352] The mind of Christ is what belongs to the saint as a new man. The Spirit of God first quickened, and now he has the mind of Christ, to mind the things above, as quickened out of the system of this world. He has the intelligence of Christ, through the Holy Ghost and the word. It is the communicated mind of God as it has formed itself in His purposes of Christ.

When taught of God, we shall find proportion in truth: it will find its place. Where this is not the case, persons will overstate or wrongly apply truth, and find it will not tell. Then, in place of judging themselves, they will judge the truth, and make no progress.

Error in judgement is connected with wrongness of affection. When the man in the parable said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused," it was as much as to say, I prefer oxen to the supper. If a person says, I cannot see, then his eye is not single: he cannot justify himself before God. "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." Whenever we walk in conscience before God, we shall find our path simple: having the mind of Christ, things are as clear as day.

We have in Acts 12:1-25 an instance of the ability of applying scripture, with the mind of Christ, to the circumstances in which they were. "Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and said, it was necessary," etc. In this scripture we do not find positive particular command to Paul or Barnabas; but as having the mind of Christ, they could find command there and say, "for so hath the Lord commanded us" The apostle found his place with Jesus (See Isaiah 49:6).

Vol 03 - The Ways of Grace:

The Ways of Grace

Ephesians 5:1-33.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, January 1860.

(1st. Edition: January [03 1860 008])

It is a serious thing, while full of comfort and warning to our souls as well, that there is nothing that so condemns sin as grace. The law condemns it, no doubt, but the law, in itself, never judges the nature. It condemns acts. If applied by the Spirit of God, it leads one to gather what the tree must be from the fruit. It infers what the nature is, but it does not directly, and immediately, and entirely deal with it. Grace does: "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son (that is grace) in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin (as a sacrifice for it), condemned sin in the flesh." God condemned the nature, root and branch; executed His sentence upon all that man is in his best estate. No disguises could stand now; no excuses: all was brought into the full light of God Himself, and all condemned. It is the same thing from first to last. Grace is that which strips off all the thin veils which the flesh would cover itself with, in order that we should not learn what we are. Grace, while it puts away what we are, yet gives us the privilege of learning it — puts us on God's side, to execute his judgement upon it: enables us to deal with it, with an unsparing hand, just because we have a new nature given from God. We can afford to mortify the old nature; because we have a new and divine life that death and Satan cannot touch. And therefore it is you will find that in those parts of scripture, where grace is most fully brought out, there we have the closest exhortations to holiness. Consequently, wherever souls are afraid of grace, they avoid the only thing which can produce real holiness, they avoid the only thing which can detect and destroy the vain show in which they are walking themselves.

But there is another and a very serious thing for those who have received the grace of God, and who profess to stand in it. It is this: "God is not mocked." He will not allow that the name of His Son should ever be allied with evil. He will never allow that His grace should be pleaded as an excuse for sin. Grace has stretched out his hand, and has plucked us from hell, to carry us straight from the jaws of death into heaven itself: no less than this is done in principle, when we receive the Lord Jesus. We are taken out of the net of the spoiler and set in the hand of the Father and of the Son, whence none shall pluck us. But if this be so, what is the practical purpose of God in it? What does He intend that we should do under the shelter of this almighty grace, which has wrought such marvels for us? Assuredly that we should never allow the natural evil of our hearts; that we should watch for God and be jealous for Him against ourselves. We are taken out of ourselves, transplanted into Christ. We become, therefore, (if we have faith in Him, if it be a real work of the Holy Ghost), identified in feeling with the Lord: we are put in the interests of God, if I may so say, against our own corrupt nature; against evil everywhere, but above all wherever the name of Christ is named. We have nothing directly to do with the corrupt world outside, but we have every thing to

do with our own corrupt nature; much to do with watching against it, judging it, dealing with it for God, wherever it dares to show itself. In love to one another and jealously for the Lord, we may have to deal with it even in another: but then it must always be in holy love. For even where we have to watch over one another for the Lord, it is never in the spirit of law — never merely to condemn the evil, and then leave a person under the effects of his folly and sin.

But let us listen to a few of the words spoken to the Ephesian saints: and first, in a verse or two of Ephesians 4:1-32. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another." Evidently there you have what is to guide and form the spirit of my walk with my brethren. Is that all? No. It only takes up our spirit towards one another. But we are reminded what God's way is towards us: "forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." Then it goes on to another thing. The Lord Jesus did not merely die to put away my sin, but to give me the immense privilege of being put before God in all his acceptance and loveliness. I could not be in heaven if it were not so — if it were only that sin were put away. God cannot have anything in heaven merely negative. Mere absence of evil is not enough there. If we are to be in heaven at all, God must have us there, lovely in all the loveliness of Christ; and that, as far as the new man is concerned, He communicates to us here. Accordingly it is said to us, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us," etc. That is going further. A person might forgive another, but there might still be reserve remaining — a shutting oneself up in one's own little circle. Here, on the contrary, we find there is to be the energy that goes out; the love which delights in another's good. It is the activity of love going out towards the saints. "Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us," etc.

But then another thing comes to light. There is danger even among the saints of God. The devil can come in and turn brotherly love to a snare; and this not only in the way of positive evil being allowed to break out, but in the unjudged tendency to it. "But fornication and all uncleanness, or covetousness let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints: neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks." The Lord in no way forbids the happy cheerfulness, which he loves in His saints. He does not call us to be monks, which is man's way of keeping the flesh under restraint, and only another form of self. We may have self under a legal form, and self under a lax form; but under any form it is not Christ, and the only thing which God values now is Christ.

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater; hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." This raises a serious question for all of us. These are things for use. They are exhortations, not merely to apply to other people, to measure them by, but to take home to ourselves. They are for saints, not for the world. No doubt we find the evil warned against, in the world, and our hearts ought to feel for those who shall have no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. But, remember that the primary object of the Holy Ghost was to warn and guard the saints themselves; who, desiring to watch against the evil distance of the flesh, will, directly they come together, find the danger of another thing, and that is evil nearness. Who then can take care of us, if such be the dangers that surround us? Only God — but God still acting in the way of grace. There is no reason why a soul should not have perfect confidence in God against itself. But wherever there is the desire to have our own will and our own evil thoughts gratified — wherever there is the wish to have our way according to the flesh, depend

upon it, the judgement of God will be there, unless the grace of God interfere to deliver the soul. This is a solemn thing, and one that we need to lay to heart. For the Lord is jealous on our behalf, and He is jealous for His own glory. Therefore may we be watchful. May we remember what He has written; that if "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: "The Lord knoweth them that are His," be on the one side, "let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity," is on the other. "Depart from iniquity!" Is it possible that such a word could be said to the saints of God? Yes. It is the word of the Holy Ghost Himself, wherever the name of Christ is named. Let our souls then hold fast grace; but let us remember that the object of all the grace which has been manifested to us is, that we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. It is always so. And there is another thought along with it which seems to me of value — that sin, when looked at in the presence of God, always acquires its true name and character. I am not allowed to gloss over it, and call it by a name that men might give it. For instance, there are a thousand things that men would only call polite. What does God call them? A lie. Again, there are many things that men would say were allowable in the way of business. What does God call them? Dishonesty and covetousness. Such is God's sentence. And would we escape from it? No. We should be left to manifest what we are; that we had named the name of Christ falsely, in our own strength merely — like the Egyptians assaying to pass through the Red Sea after Israel. The result was, that they were all drowned. May we be jealous not to allow ourselves in the smallest thing that is contrary to God! What a list of things the Spirit of God here warns me against! I can look within, and know how the heart there answers to the word of God, without that has already put me on my guard. If I despise the warning, what then? I shall prove what I am, to the disgrace of the name of the Lord Jesus, and my own shame and sorrow. What an effect of a moment's gratification! If then a little word is as the letting out of water, what is a little act of sin, where it is allowed? The Lord keep us from little sins — keep us watchful, jealous, careful; but at the same time never letting slip grace — rather reminding and strengthening one another in that perfect grace in which we stand.

Let us remember that He who has called us to watch against these things, has also called us to thank Him, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ always, and for all things. Even if we have got to humble ourselves before God for what we are, we are never to forget what Christ is for us and to us.

May we be kept faithful and circumspect in our ways for the Lord Jesus' sake.

Vol 03 - Psa_77:13; Psa_77:19.

Psalms 77:13; Psalms 77:19.

A Few Words on the Two-Fold "Way" of God Brought Before Us in this Psalm.

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His way is "in the sanctuary," and His way is "in the sea." Now there is a great difference between these two things. First of all, God's way is in the sanctuary, where all is light, all is clear. There is no mistake there. There is nothing, in the least degree, that is a harass to the spirit. On the contrary, it is when the poor troubled one enters into the sanctuary, and views things there in the light of God, that he sees the end of all else — everything that is entangled, the end of which he cannot find on the earth.

We have the same thing in Psalms 73:11 "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end." That is, in the sanctuary of God, everything is understood; no matter how difficult, and trying, and painful, as regards ourselves or others. When we once enter there, we are in the place of God's light, and God's love; and then, whatever the difficulty may be, we understand all about it.

But not only is God's way in the sanctuary (and when we are there, all is bright and happy); but God's way is in the sea. He walks where we cannot always trace His footsteps. God moves mysteriously by times, as we all know. There are ways of God which are purposely to try us. I need not say that it is not at all as if God had pleasure in our perplexities. Nor is it as if we had no sanctuary to draw near to, where we can rise above it. But, still, there is a great deal in the ways of God that must be left entirely in His own hands. The way of God is thus, not only in the sanctuary, but also in the sea. And yet, what we find even in connection with His footsteps being in the sea is, "Thou leddest thy people like a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron." That was through the sea: afterward, it was through the wilderness. But it had been through the sea. The beginnings of the ways of God with His people were there; because, from first to last, God must be the confidence of the saint. It may be an early lesson of his soul, but it never ceases to be the thing to learn. How happy to know that, while the sanctuary is open to us, yet God Himself is nearer still — and to Him we are brought now. As it is said, (1 Peter 3:1-22,) "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God," This is a most precious thing; because there we are in the sanctuary at once, and brought to God Himself. And I am bold to say, that heaven itself would be but a small matter, if it were not to God that we are brought. It is better than any freedom from trial — better than any blessing, to be in the presence of the One we belong to; who is Himself the source of all blessing and joy. That we are brought to Him now is infinitely precious. There we are in the sanctuary brought to God. But still, there are other ways of God outside the sanctuary — in the sea. And there we often find ourselves at a loss. If we are occupied with the sea itself, and with trying to scan God's footsteps there, then they are not known. But confidence in God Himself is

always the strength of faith. May the Lord grant us increasing simplicity and quietness in the midst of all that we pass through, for His name's sake.

Vol 03 - Discipline - Ruth

Discipline - Ruth

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To trace the history by which a woman is fitted to fill a place of testimony for God on earth must be a study both interesting and important to us, and one specially needed in these days, whether as applied to the individual or the church.

Woman was first formed to be a "help suited to man." (Boethon LXX.) At the fall she seems to have forfeited this high position, and after it, to be regarded more in the place of subjection and inferiority than of equality and help. Grace is the great manifestation of God's love, and the principle of grace is, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." When failure and weakness have most appeared, there the grace of God acting and declares the more exalted restoration. But this exalted restoration is never without a sense of the failure and weakness which it triumphs over; and our blessed Lord God, in leading a soul into the blessings of His grace, must necessarily educate it in the righteousness of His actings, as well as in the goodness of them. According as we learn the Lord Jesus Christ do we in perfection and conscience comprehend both, and the means and stage of this acquirement detail to us the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He leads us to see, step by step, how we need His grace, and He prepares us for it by that peculiar self-renunciation which will make room for His gift. Flesh and spirit cannot dwell together. God in His discipline teaches us the flesh which hinders — teaches us what it is, and treats it so that it may be suppressed; and on its suppression we find that which thus presses it, in order to supplant it, is no less than the energy of the life of Christ.

How gracious of the Lord, then, to instruct us as He does, by presenting to us in His word examples of the principles of the discipline which adapts us, according to His own purpose, for service and glory!

This is what we find in Ruth, and herein consists the interest of her history, in which we learn how God led and enabled a woman, who was a member of the most despised family — a Moabite, to fill the most honoured position in the legal tribe of Israel; nay, to concentrate in herself the blessings of Rachel and of Leah. We cannot too carefully note the manner and spirit by which this fine result was attained.

Elimelech, Naomi, and their two sons had emigrated from Bethlehem-Judah into the land of Moab, because of the famine in their own land. It was an evidence of decline and judicial suffering when a man of Israel had to desert his own country, because it lacked those natural blessings which were granted to the land of a Gentile; and the necessary consequence of this decline and association is, that Elimelech's two sons took them wives of the women of Moab. A son of the promised seed, by marrying a woman of Moab, raised her from her low moral position, though, in

doing so, he concluded his own, that is, he comprised it by his sojourn in the land of Moab. So that Ruth, who was one of these wives, was raised by her marriage from her low national position into one of the tribes of Israel; and on the death of her husband, she, a widow with only a widowed mother-in-law, must either, like Orpah, fall back into her former low estate, or she must seek to maintain that position to which she had been raised. This could only be done by holding fast her link with Israel, and that even at personal cost; in other words, by cleaving to Naomi, though all natural expectation in connection with her is gone. This latter is Ruth's course, not intelligently, indeed, as to the positional gain such adherence would bring to her, but animated with the still finer motive of personal devotion to the one through whom she had been already raised so far from her low estate. How she acted and succeeded in this course is detailed to us in this interesting book, and is recorded with great minuteness, as a subject of deep importance to ourselves; for, whether we regard Ruth as a type of the church, or of any Gentile believer, or of a believing woman in particular, her history supplies a link in God's dealings which is very instructive to us.

The first characteristic of either must be simple devotion to know truth; and this characteristic is finely developed in Ruth. She sacrifices all hope of natural alteration of her widowhood, for the sake of adhering to Naomi, come what will, for she says, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest I will go, and whither thou lodgest, I will lodge. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." What an utterance is this! That of one steadfastly devoted to one object. What an expression of a soul firmly resolved to abide by all the truth of God, the link with all His purposes and blessings! Even as the first great part of the armour of God (Ephesians 6:1-24) is to be "girt about with truth;" so the first great requisite of a servant of Christ, above all when in the unobtrusive sphere of a woman, be it intelligently or unintelligently, is to be simply and unequivocally devoted to the truth of God.

Naomi, as we have seen, was the link to Israel. Ruth may not have known much about it, but that only makes her devotion the more admirable, for had she known more, she must have had more reason and incentive for it, instead of the pure affection and appreciation with which she was thus animated.

When the soul lays hold of truth, even though it knows not why, with that inflexible tenacity which will buy it and sell it not, we may rest assured the communication will be enlarged, and "to him that hath shall more be given." Devotion to a true object ennobles the woman and suits her. If she has it not, she is destitute of the first quality of her condition; when she fails in it, and thinks of herself as Eve did towards Adam, or the church towards Christ, then every disorder will ensue; and strength in a wrong line is more damaging than weakness. Devotion to truth, to what is known by us as the really true and good, is the first great characteristic of a soul prepared and qualified for service and testimony. If we have not this quality, how imperfect must be all our movements and expression, for we can have no definite centre! To be God's witness among men who have believed a lie of Him and have walked in it, glorifying themselves while they walked in hostility to Him, we must, first and foremost, be valiant for the truth. If we be deficient in this quality, it is evident our ability for testimony is deficient; nay, more: in attempting to be a witness, we are compromising the very name we assume to serve. We have not a heart thoroughly set on maintaining the first requisite of service. We may have a certain amount of affection, like that

expressed by Orpah's kiss, but, like her, our affection rests not on that which is alone true, and we shall soon turn aside to our own ways. We cannot too earnestly press on our souls the importance of this simple devotion to truth. Affection will not stand unless it be based on appreciation, or something known to be estimable; and therefore a faithful soul not only loves the Lord, but so appreciates Him that it must adhere inflexibly to Him, as identified with Him, and nothing else will satisfy a truly devoted soul. What is true of Him can on no account be relinquished, and anything false is abhorrently shrunk from. I dwell on this point because so much of the character of a true, servant of the church, and a woman in particular, depends on the place and strength which it holds in the soul. Ruth, we see, was simple and unwavering in her purpose of heart, and she presents to us an imposing type of this essential and ennobling quality, which we shall find meets its full reward.

But before we trace this reward, we may note another characteristic prominently presented, and fully exemplified, in Ruth's history, and that is, simple obedience, in the most servile and inconspicuous toil. She enters the land of Israel, inseparable from the once Naomi (pleasant) now reduced to Mara (bitter); but resigned to her circumstances, nay, content in them, she addresses herself to the smallest opening which is presented to her, which is always an evidence of a healthy and vigorous soul, and without hesitation or demur embraces it. She says, "Let me now go to the field and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace."

It is the most unequivocal proof of the energy of soul when, in any strait, we are not only resigned, but ready to embrace any little opening offered to us, able to humble ourselves thereto, and testify to every one, even to our own souls, that God has not forgotten us, and that what is directly before us is quite sufficient to meet our necessities. We only require to be humbled to find it so. If we were to say or feel otherwise, we should impugn His care and interest on our behalf. Ruth sees that there is no opening for her but in gleaning, and to gleaning she addresses herself; and this was the Lord's opening for her. Very humble, inconspicuous labour, no doubt, but He sees not as man seeth, and He led her by the right way; for "the meek shall He teach His way," and therefore "her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech." "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." When we are docile we are led to fullness of blessing. Unless we embrace the humble opening presented to us, we shall never reach the domain of satisfaction. Ruth was the humble, laborious servant, and as such, she receives her reward for her devotedness to Naomi. Mark! it is for her devotion she is rewarded, more than for her service. Boaz said to her, "It hath fully been shown me all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thy husband, and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore: the Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."

Boaz blessed her — a blessing which he afterwards (like all blessers) shared in himself — and he also commanded his young men; saying, "Let her glean among the sheaves, and reproach her not; and let fall some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them that she may glean them, and rebuke her not." Thus we see Ruth receives more on account of her devotion to Naomi, than she obtains by her honest and continual toil; and this is always the case morally. However great the recompense for faithful service, that of devotion, when superadded to it, immeasurably exceeds it. The fruit is only commensurate to the actual labour expended, unless the labour has

sprung from a true devotion. Had Ruth gone to the field to glean as did the other handmaidens, she would have obtained her due, what her labour merited, but no more. But it was far otherwise with her: devotedness to one object was the spring of all her action, and the result was to her, as we shall find it to ourselves when animated with a like spirit — the ingathering is swollen with ample acknowledgements. And not only so, the devoted one is led on step by step until she attains full rest, honour, and, finally, relationship with what should be the consummation of all her rewards and blessings. The sequel of her history shows us this. She ultimately becomes the wife of Boaz, the true kinsman, who redeems the inheritance; and according to the blessing pronounced on her, she builds up the royal house of David, even as Rachel and Leah built up the house of Israel. The poor Moabitess is brought into close proximity to the throne of Judah, and she makes the name of her kinsman-redeemer "famous" in Bethlehem-Ephratah, the place of death and resurrection! A wondrous result this from so humble a beginning: but one in full moral order and keeping with God's ways, discipline, and training.

And now that we have reached this result in Ruth's history, let us pause, for our soul's profit, to mark the discipline by which the Lord led her, (in fact, that by which He leads every soul who attains the same end,) to this place of rest and honour; for well it is for us to note how He empties before He fills — how He humbles before He exalts. First, she is a widow. Deprived of all human hope in that life which was most honourable to her, and which her alliance with a son of Israel had elevated her to. She next surrenders country, kindred, and the natural expectations which she might have had, by falling back on her former low estate as a Moabitess, for the company of one linked with her condition of widowhood, but who had been reduced from pleasantness to bitterness, and this association entailing on her constant, humble, unremitting toil. Refusing or despising no opening, however humble, she pursues her lowly, toilsome, unobtrusive course from day to day, and daily finds how gracious and merciful the Lord is to her; so much so that it fills her with wonder and amazement, for on the first day of it, she says to Boaz, falling on her face, and bowing herself to the ground, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger." The soul is little prepared for God's unexpected mercies; yet what were those to what followed? What was her former condition previous to widowhood, in comparison to that so full of honour and dignity in which the Lord now places her! Blessed widowhood, to have prepared her for such a place! Blessed process, which led her on to it in the paths of single-eyed, devotedness and humility! Blessed God, to have thus dealt with her!

It will be remembered that Ruth came to Bethlehem in the beginning of the barley harvest, which commenced immediately after the feast of the Passover, and continues her services during the seven weeks of harvest, (a perfect period according to the symbolical numeration of Scripture,) to the end of the wheat harvest, 1:e., unto Pentecost; and after Pentecost it is that Boaz claims her as his own. I mention this as significant, whether we regard Ruth as typifying the Church in a practical or in a positional aspect; for Pentecost typified that full fruition of blessing which the Church realised when, after the seven weeks which elapsed between the Lord's death and Acts 2:1-47, that great day of Pentecost, to which all other days had pointed, "had fully come," and which installed her in the place of privilege and brideship to the true Boaz. On the other hand, though the Church be now in the blessings of Pentecost, yet if she walks not in faithfulness to the truth committed to her, and in patient dutiful service, she cannot realise the high privileges conferred on her, the reason of which is very simple. If I am not true to the Lord, as far as I know, I

am not led by His Spirit; and if I am not walking in the Spirit, I cannot by any possibility realise the privileges of nearness and brideship into which the Holy Ghost is commissioned to lead us. Again, what is true of the Church as a whole is true of every individual member. The woman is here given in type, because, as a unit, she ought to represent the Church, the Bride of the Second Adam, as redeemed from the ruin and shame into which the first woman plunged her. But, whether man or woman, if we walk not in devotion to the truth, and in patient, humble, inconspicuous service as strangers, and non-expectants on the earth, we cannot enter into the relationship and place of rest which our Boaz vouchsafes to each of his faithful Ruths even in spirit now. And the more we comprehend His ways with us, the better shall we understand how He is teaching each of us after this manner: teaching us, as faithful to our light, to walk therein, to the full fruition of His love; as widows in this world, devoted to Him, and serving patiently and obscurely, but satisfied if we realise what is already ours even here — even our union with Him in all that His love can share with us.

May we learn, O Lord, to follow thee!

Vol 03 - The Coming, and the Day, of the Lord.

The Coming, and the Day, of the Lord.

2 Peter 3:1-18.

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It may be felt by some to be strange that the Spirit of God, instead of entering upon the subject of the coming of the Lord, should at once turn from it to speak of His day. And I have no doubt at all that many readers of this, and other parts of the New Testament, have, through haste, been led to confound the two things together, because of that very circumstance. But we may be always sure that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, as St. Paul says in writing to the Corinthians. They, too, were somewhat confident in their own knowledge. They were reasoning about the ways of God. Why could not God, they might have said, have redeemed and saved His people in a way less full of pain and shame than by the death of His Son? The sacrifice of Christ was required to atone. That cross, the apostle goes on to show, which seemed to some a foolish thing, as it always appears to the world, is the profound wisdom of God. Not merely did He accomplish redemption in the cross: He was putting His sentence upon all that is in man, and bringing out by His love the world's inveterate hatred against Himself.

Peter is writing to those who had been Jews formerly, and they would be, therefore, somewhat familiar with the thought of "the day of the Lord," for it is much spoken of in the Old Testament as the tremendous day of Divine dealing with the habitable world. For that is the point. Not merely the time when men will be raised from the dead, to be judged before the great white throne. The day of the Lord is God dealing with the world as it is; stopping all its wheels; arresting men in the midst of all the busy scenes of life, and calling them to account. The Old Testament, as it deals with man upon the earth, naturally lays great importance upon "that day." The great white throne judgement is outside the world altogether. Heaven and earth will then have disappeared; it will be a judgement not connected with time, but ushering into eternity.

Mark the wisdom of God here. These men do not scoff at the day of the Lord; even an unconverted Jew, with the Old Testament Scriptures in his hand, would have been afraid to appear to make light of that. But they were saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" You Christians are waiting for the coming of Christ to make you happy. You are the most miserable people in the world. You enjoy nothing. You separate yourselves from all our interests and pleasures. You find fault with everything, not only with our bad ways, but with our best endeavours; and, after all, He does not come. "Where is the promise of His coming?" This is just the place in which the coming of Christ puts the Christian. What says the Spirit of God to those who derided the hope of the saints? His answer in effect amounts to this, I think:— I will not talk to you about the hope of the Christian, a theme that you make light of. But I warn you of a terrible scene that you have forgotten. There is such a thing as "the day of the Lord" coming.* That is, He

drops the subject of the church's and Christian's hope, the coming of the Lord to receive us to Himself which will take us out of all this scene, bring us into heaven and put us in peace and blessedness before the Father. The Holy Ghost in 2 Peter does not enter into this. In Jude, he just gives us a little passing glimpse of the blessedness of the saints before God. "Unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." There you have a glance into the deep inner joy of God's saints that the world will know nothing about. It can never see what the Christian will enjoy best in the presence of God the Father; nor will they know anything of the coming of Christ which will introduce us into that scene. But the world is to see the day of the Lord, and when that day comes the Lord will have all His saints in heaven, in the full brightness and intimacy of enjoyment of the Father's house. Afterwards He will bring them out and display them in His Father's glory and that of the angels' before the world, and then will come retributive judgement. The Lord will come from heaven and deal with men in the midst of their busy ways, and works, and plans here below. This is what we see taken up in 2 Peter 3:1-18. You mock, he says, at our hope, but I will remind you of your fear, and when you hear of it you may tremble. "Be not ignorant of this one thing (and let the beloved saints of God remember it well) that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years," etc. The Lord can amazingly crowd up events that might have spanned a thousand years into a single day; while, on the other hand, He might linger out those of a day into the patience of a thousand years. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise. He is unwilling to strike the terrible blow that is about to fall on the world. He "is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." These words entirely set aside the horrid idea (technically called reprobation) that any man ever was made for the purpose of being cast into hell. God, on the contrary, desires to save. His heart yearns over men. He waits upon them, entreats them, sends the gospel to them that they may receive it. No doubt it is pure grace and only grace that awakens one soul to the love of God. But it is the sin, the unbelief of man (whatever be the judicial hardening in certain cases) that shuts them up in the rejection of His mercy.

{*The converse of this appears in 2 Thess., but it strongly confirms the same distinction. The apostle launches, in 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12 into the solemn character of "that day," with its righteous, retributive issues for both saints and sinners. In chap. 2 he is developing its special bearing on the destruction of the lawless one, the man of sin, that should arise at the close, the ripened fruit of Christian apostasy. In a word, his subject is "the day of the Lord," as to which the Thessalonians had had their minds shaken and alarmed by false representations; but he turns aside to entreat them by "the coming of the Lord," which was full of the sweetest and most comforting associations, not to heed these groundless rumours. Compare also 1 Thessalonians 4:1-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-28. Their special portion, at least their gathering to the Lord, is bound up with His "coming;" while "His day" is reserved for the judgement of His adversaries.}

Whether the delay be short or long, whether of a thousand years or one day, the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. It will come suddenly, and be most unwelcome in this world. He makes the day of the Lord to comprehend the whole space from the coming of the Lord in judgement, through the millennium, till the great white throne. For all that is implied here. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, etc. . . . The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up," must take place before that day closes.

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness." You may feel, and you ought to feel, what man is in his scoffings against the truth of God; but the best answer to it all is that of a godly conversation — the effect upon your souls and in your walk of the knowledge of that hope, and your sense of the dreadful doom that awaits those that despise not only the righteous will of God, but His mercy. The Lord here shows us the importance of it. "What manner of persons ought ye to be, etc. . . looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God." That is, we do not want this day to be delayed for our own sakes, but we love the patience of God towards men, and that reconciles our hearts to the delay, while personally, we long for the Lord to come; because we know that when He has come and taken us away, the day of God must quickly close in upon the earth.

"Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." That gives the key to Peter: righteousness is the thought in this epistle as well as in the first. The coming of the Lord for His people is not the display of righteousness but the unfolding of His grace. He has begun and He will end with us in full and heavenly grace, which has chosen us to be with Himself. But here I get the day of the Lord, which has an aspect of righteousness even for us. When that day comes we shall be manifested. "The day will reveal." It is the time when we shall have rewards for special suffering or faithfulness of any kind: it is the time which will, therefore, detect where we have been unfaithful, and why we failed. The day of the Lord will not close till all evil has been banished and righteousness brought in and established, all enemies having disappeared. The day of the Lord is as emphatically righteousness as His coming is grace. The world is never said to see anything of the coming of the Lord for His saints. It will miss them, no doubt. The warning of grace will have closed, though there may be raised up a testimony of the coming kingdom and judgements, and some hearts may be opened to receive it. But not a word of hope does Scripture hold out for those who now refuse the gospel.

Vol 03 - On Joh_1:29-39.

On John 1:29-39.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, May 1860.

(1st. Edition, May [03 1860 075])

In this beautiful scene, or succession of scenes, we have a very striking setting forth of Christ, both in the power of His work and in the attractiveness of His person, the character too of His presentation in contrast with the law; and then its effects upon souls. We may remark the great care taken with regard to John the Baptist that he should not have had a knowledge of Jesus previously. And there had been such a remarkable association between the mothers of the two babes, as we find in Luke 1:1-80, that it makes it the more startling to hear the repeated assertion of the Baptist, "I knew him not." God is setting forth that knowledge which is infinitely above nature, which comes from His own teaching, and the direct testimony of the Holy Ghost. And this was therefore brought forward in a peculiarly forcible way and reserved for this gospel. For we should hardly gather it from any other.

When John does see Jesus coming to him, his utterance here goes far beyond the bounds of Israel or even men at large into the wide scope of God's largest purposes. "Behold," he says, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." The law neither brought sin into the world, nor took it out. The law is the strength of sin, aggravating it, but never delivering from it. So far from taking it away, even from the Jew with whom alone it had to do, it only drove its guilt and misery into the awakened conscience. It allowed a man no rest nor comfort that had sin upon him.

But now we have another thing altogether, "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." It was God in the depth of His grace; God appearing in the world that He had made, dealing with the sin that the enemy had brought in. And His way was giving Jesus, that He might be the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world. Such is the first direct testimony of the Baptist given here. Because in fact where sin is not taken away — judged according to God in another — judged in the holy sinless Lamb, that even the world might have full deliverance brought to it, (I am not speaking now of every individual person in the world, but of Jews and Gentiles indiscriminately,) there could be no divine foundation of blessing. This, then, is the first picture brought before us; the full action of divine grace in dealing with the sin that the law could only discover and not remove.

"This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me, for he was before me." His divine glory was essential to give efficacy to the work He undertook. He must in reality be before John, however John might be before Him historically, "And I knew him not; but that he should be made manifest to Israel therefore am I come baptising with water." There you have John's part. All he could do was to baptise with water. That was a sort of token or sign to Israel that the Christ was about to be manifested.

"And John bear record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove." Now you have something entirely different. "And it abode upon him." But even that is not all. He repeats, "And I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptise with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptiseth with the Holy Ghost." That is, in John 1:32, you have the personal seal of the Holy Ghost given to Christ. "Him hath God the Father sealed." The Holy Ghost came and abode upon Him. But a most blessed truth is brought out in the next verse. The same blessed Person, who was Himself thus sealed, was also to baptise others with the Holy Ghost. There you have the two great divisions of our Lord's work — the Lamb bearing away the sin of the world, which is the crowning work of Christ upon earth; and then His great heavenly work founded upon what He did on earth. And these two things brought home to us by the Holy Ghost, call the Church into its proper place. We have not the Church named as such here or elsewhere in John's Gospel; but the grand features of the Church of God are brought out in these few verses.

Then comes the declaration of His personal glory: "And I saw and bear record that this is the Son of God." I believe that, in the use here made of that term, "Son of God," you have a much higher expression of His glory than in John 1:49. Because there it is connected with the earth and with Israel. Here you have Nathaniel, the Israelite indeed, and without guile, the type of Israel so to be viewed by God's mercy. He says, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God: thou art the King of Israel." Acknowledging Christ according to the titles of glory in Psalms 2:1-12, where we learn Messiah is yet to be established in His glory here below. "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." And this, too, as Son born into the world. "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Nathaniel, thoroughly entering in spirit, though not in full intelligence into this, confesses the Lord accordingly. And then the Lord unfolds to him His glory as Son of Man also. How wonderfully blessed is the way in which we learn throughout the chapter the manifestation of Christ, and that, too, in our position, as He is specially unfolded to us now: from His being the Lamb of God, bearing away sin, to His heavenly operation in baptising with the Holy Ghost. "I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God."

But, besides having thus the full revelation of Christ and His work, (though, in point of time, preparatory to it), we have the unfolding of results in souls. "Again, the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples: and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God." Here it appears to me that we have something still more blessed than the testimony of the first day. And it is remarkable as showing the ways of God, that it was not when John brought out the full description of Christ's work on earth and in heaven, that we find any particular effect produced upon his disciples. It was when his own soul was raptured at the sight of the Lord, as he saw Him walking before him. Jesus Himself filled his heart now, not His work, not His glory, but Himself. It is his delight, the satisfaction of his soul in looking at Him that we hear now. He says but a few simple words, not half as many as he had used before, in his wonderful testimony to Him. But there was divine power along with them, "Behold the Lamb of God." It is His person simply, not merely His dignity, but the full grace of His person, as God the Father looked at Him. "And the two disciples heard him speak." What was the effect? "And they followed Jesus." John had been their earthly guide hitherto. But now there was the anticipation of what he himself afterwards said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." He had borne his witness to Christ's work and glory, and now his soul is carried away in worship of the Lord. "Behold the Lamb of God!" The effect was most

mighty upon the hearts of the disciples that heard the outpouring of his heart. And it is so always. It is a mistake to suppose that the clearest enunciations of truth have the greatest effect upon the hearts and consciences of God's children. What God gives through the Spirit the second day is what He most notices as attended with marked effects upon others.

No doubt, the truth that John had brought out on the first day had done its work in their souls, but this made the testimony so overwhelming that they could not stay away from Jesus any longer. He was not only one who met the law, and all the need that sin had produced, but we have here the other great feature of Christianity and its effects: the attractiveness of Christ, an object made known to us that wins our affections, so that we cannot stay away from Him. It is the Holy Ghost that produces it through the truth; but it is the person of Christ that the heart finds its delight in. Therefore, we find the Lord gratifying this desire that His spirit had wrought in them. He turns and sees them following, and says to them, What seek ye? He loves to hear from themselves that it was not merely that they followed Him because they had heard of certain things that He was going to do. But He asks, What seek ye? They answer, "Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?" In Christ we have not merely God dealing with sin, but makes us one with Him who put our sin away. And the effect in this world is, the attraction to His person and dwelling with Him. These disciples go away from all that had been previously so blest to them. To have stayed now with John, away from Jesus, would have shown that God's object, by his servant John, had failed of its adequate effects. But, no; they follow Jesus. The Lord at once invites them to "come and see. They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day." We are not told where it was; that was of no consequence. On the contrary, I believe it was of importance that it should not be told. Thus, the delight and satisfaction of the heart in Jesus draws us to follow after, and makes us strangers with Him. Companions of an unknown land of glory with Him that we become strangers in the world. John the Baptist himself went away from the cities and the haunts of men and dwelt in the wilderness. But that was in correspondence with the moral sentence of God, that the wilderness was better than the city. To use the language of the Psalmist, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest, Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness," etc.

But now there is a new and heavenly kind of isolation — an isolation for the Christian. It may be in the very heart of the city; nor need we go to the wilderness to seek it. Christ's dwelling is an unknown spot; it was on the earth, but of heaven. And it is made so to us, because it is companionship with Him that came down from heaven — the Son of man, who, even when on earth, was "the Son of man in heaven." And it is the more so with us, because of the Spirit sent down from heaven, who knits us with Him there. Left here for a little while, we are strangers with Him who is in heaven. And this is Christianity as a practical thing.

And, oh! may the Lord grant that these things may be increasingly true of our souls — that we may not be satisfied merely with having them before our hearts and consenting to them, but that they may be our daily enjoyment.

In Christianity there is no such thought as that man should first work for himself, and then give up a portion of his time for rest. We begin with Christ risen from the dead, when His work for us was done; we enter on a new reckoning of time, not to say eternity, with blessing from God's full grace. We may have to earn our bread day by day; but we are not labouring aright if we do it for

ourselves. A Christian is more than any other liable to go astray, unless he be always serving his Master in heaven. Let the work be what it may, where there is a godly doing of it, doing it to the Lord, the heart is kept happy, free from the uneasiness of mind and the care that would corrode its peace. The Lord grant, then, that, delighting ourselves in Jesus, we may be content to be strangers with Him. And allow me to say that it is a harder thing to be an unknown, unnoticed stranger in the world, than to be roughly used and persecuted by the world. The most trying thing to the heart is when we are not counted worthy either of a word or a look. Many could bear to be the objects of stripes or imprisonment much better. How happy it is that the Lord gives us this strangership to the world — communion with His own grace. The world may treat us with scorn or slight, but this only shows after all that their hearts, however given to pleasure, are not happy. Anything that is of Christ makes the world uneasy. The more calm and quiet you are, the more the world is afraid, feeling instinctively that there is something entirely above itself. May we be then where Jesus dwells. Such perfect peace is there; such purity; such love, even to the poor world. We are heirs and representatives, not only of the life of Christ, but of His love.

We shall often murmur and complain if our strangership does not flow from this, that we are with Jesus, and because we have such a blessed portion with Jesus, that what is around us is not worth thinking about.

Vol 03 - Nature and the Spirit.

Nature and the Spirit.

Mark 10:1-52, and Php_3:1-21.

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(1st. Edition: June [03 1860 086])

The Lord is showing all through this part of the gospel, that the flesh profiteth nothing. It must be crucified, or go through death. However lovely and amiable, it was all profitless — to Him utterly worthless. In comparing this passage with the other subjoined, we see the liberty that the Holy Ghost's coming has given. The cross is truly known, but yet liberty and power in the bearing of it.

God puts His seal, as it were, upon nature. The creation of His own hands is good; but it is of no profit in having to say to God. At the beginning of the chapter, when they enquire about divorce, the Lord said it was not so at the beginning. It was not according to the natural law, but because of the hardness of their hearts. Christ took delight in the infants that His disciples supposed He would have sent away. But no: He was full of human kindness and divine grace, and said, "Suffer the little children to come," etc. Then with the young man, Christ saw he was a lovely character, and, beholding him, He loved him. He had run to know what he could do to inherit eternal life, having an idea of some great commandment there is to fulfil. And when Jesus tells him the commandments, he says, "All these have I kept from my youth. Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him." And so it ought to be with us. We must love the attractive, amiable, and agreeable. It has nothing to do with the conscience and God. (It is the mere animal. Take a dog's love, for instance.) It was only Christ who could separate between mere loveliness in nature and the wickedness of the will. The young man comes up to Him, and speaks to Him as Rabbi, Good Master, thinking himself something good all the while, (a grand mistake, which proved the evil of his heart and will.) "There is none good but one, that is God." His heart is tested, and he cannot bear the test, and so he went away from Christ, away from the cross.

There are three such cases in this chapter: 1st, this young man; 2nd, the disciples who were going up to Jerusalem, (Mark 10:32,) but could not bear the thought of the cross; and 3rd, the last case is the sons of Zebedee, who desire to be greatest in the kingdom; but the Lord replies by asking if they can drink of the cup He is going to drink of.

The Epistle to the Philippians just takes up the difference the power of the Holy Ghost makes, presenting Christ as the one object. In Php_3:1-21 we see the different feelings with which one there looks upon the cross. (Php_3:4-6.) "Touching the righteousness which is of the law, blameless." This was exactly the case of the young man. But what did Paul do with all that when he saw Christ in glory? He could not, would not, have it when he got Christ. As he says, "not mine own righteousness, which is of the law." What a contrast to the young man now! It is as though he said, No; I would not have my own righteousness, but that of God in Christ. We shall see presently

that he got something that gave him energy and power to work for Christ.

To have to get a righteousness of my own is quite another idea from having it by faith, for that is God's righteousness. What I acquire of my own cannot be God's; neither can they be mixed. My own will not do, because I have got God's righteousness by faith. I can never work out God's righteousness myself; therefore what was gain to me is all loss. "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him." Take love and righteousness. How both were perfectly glorified in the cross! God must be perfectly righteous against sin — but perfect love to the sinner. The young man did not come rejecting Christ; but he was thinking about himself, and caring about his possessions; and this because of self. But look at Paul: It is all loss. He saw Christ in glory, and he cares for nothing else — all is gone besides. Paul had great advantages, too, of nature and religious privilege. Nor was it necessity made him give them up; but once Christ was seen in heaven, he could only count them as dung.

Whatever a man's heart desires most, he strives to attain. See a young man spending all his fortune to get honour, if that is what his mind is fixed upon. If money is what he cares most for, then he will keep his money. But whatever he spends for what his heart is set upon, he does not count a sacrifice. He who sacrifices a thing must set a value upon it, or he would not think it a sacrifice. With Paul, Christ was the object of his soul, and nothing else was counted worth anything. But this sets the soul at liberty. He had Christ for righteousness, and now he has Christ as an object to win.

The disciples again thought they had taken up the cross. "Peter said, We have given up all." But when going up to Jerusalem, they could not understand it. They were amazed. They did not give Him up; but as they followed, they were afraid. The cross was a terror to them. But now look at Php_3:1-21 where Paul says, "that I may know . . . the fellowship of His sufferings." This was not being afraid; but it is the very thing he desires. The disciples, afraid and amazed, could not bear going up to Jerusalem; but Paul says, That is just the thing I want: I want fellowship with His sufferings, and conformity to His death. It was the very thing he saw to be desirable. He is just going to die too. Death is staring him in the face, and he did suffer for Christ's sake. Mark, he does not say, I want to suffer, I want to die; but it is the fellowship of His sufferings, conformity to His death, that I want — to go outside the camp, bearing His reproach. Death would be nothing but death if Christ were not with him.

Look at the disciples once more, who desired the best thing in the kingdom — the highest place next to the Lord, as though they had said. But do we find Paul (who deserves the best, if any did; for he says he "laboured more abundantly than they all") desiring the best place? No; he does not think of himself. It is to win Christ, not the seat of honour, that he cares about. His heart was purified — filled with the Holy Ghost, filled for righteousness, and filled for suffering. He had seen Christ, as it were, on the other side; and by any means, he says, even through death, or anything else — "by any means," he would attain to it. I want to possess Christ at the end, and all the way through; and so it must be by the cross. I am looking to be like Him in the end. Even this vile body will be changed, and made like unto His glorious body. I have not got Christ really yet, and shall not till I am with Him in glory; but by the power of the Holy Ghost, I may be nearer and more like Him as I go on — changed into the same image. (2 Corinthians 3:1-18) It is like a man going along a straight road, who sees a lamp at the end. He has not got to the lamp, but every step as he goes

on, brings him nearer to it, and the light is more and more reflected on his path. Paul had seen Christ in glory, and this fellowship of His sufferings was just a part of the way to Him there. It was the way to the same glory. It does not matter whether it is a little or a great service in the Church — a door-keeper, or an apostle; but when Christ fills the heart, all is simple and easy. Spiritual energy made Paul like the cross: and as he was going on to the glory, he got his affections purified by the glory. A single eye is just having Christ the one object. Temptations, conflicts, things to overcome there are; but they do not divide my heart if Christ is the sole aim of my soul. The Holy Ghost, filling it with Christ, gives righteousness, power, comfort — makes the Christian in the practical sense of the word.

Vol 03 - Notes of a Discourse on Revelation.

Notes of a Discourse on Revelation.

Revelation 1:4-7; Revelation 22:16-17.

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(1st. Edition, June [03 1860 091])

The character in which God is presented in this book is not that in which He stands to the Church. If we speak of God as connected with the saints, it is as Father; with Abraham, God Almighty; but now He is made known as Father. Then when Christ had gone up on high, He further declared it. (John 17:1-26) Now the Father's name is not that on which this book is founded at all. It is as Jehovah, God supreme in power. The names of God carried a meaning with them. If to Abraham He was the Almighty, it was Abraham's business to trust in His Almightyness. To Israel, "thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God." (Deuteronomy 18:13.) God was putting the first man to the test, trying what could be made of Adam. It has been done — He has pronounced on the tree — He has dug about it, etc. — He came for fruit and found none. Then, seeing all the leaves on it, He said, "no man eat fruit of thee henceforth for ever." Then, man's righteousness being nothing, God brings in His own righteousness. If they had to walk rightly, we have to walk rightly. If I am calling in question whether I am a child of God, I have no power to walk as one. If I am not owning Him as Father, I am not on the proper ground of a Christian. I say you are not taking up the name in which believers stand with God. So John, speaking of little children, says, "I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father." That is a settled thing, otherwise you are under law. To be under law is to judge the flesh. Grace begets children, the law does not. The moment I get on the ground of law, I am making myself responsible to God for what He put Adam on to. If I were to say to my child, 'I command you to love me, and if you do not, I will whip you,' could I ever expect to get love? The law is able to judge, but never to make a child. One is the test of the old man, the other is the gift of God to the new. If you think you can be under the law without being destroyed, you destroy the law. What brings me out of law, is the consciousness that I am cursed under it.

Then I come to another thing. Has God done nothing? Christ is the end of the law, has taken all the curse, died under it, and I enter into an entirely new place, Christ having gone through all this. I am a child after redemption is accomplished, or else I would be destroying the law. Christ has magnified it. He has gone and taken away the weight of the sin, and I am called a child. You cannot take the responsibility of a Christian unless you are a Christian. I have no claim of duty until I am in relationship to God. Law says, Do and live; but I have tried that. God brought the law in with a definite purpose. Take law now, and see how long you will love God with all your heart. The law must have righteousness; but I have a better one, cleansed from sin, made a son: then duties come from the relationship from which they flow. You say you abide in Christ: then you must walk as Christ walked. Now this brings us on the ground that the government of the world is outside the particular relationship in which you stand to God. Besides having the consciousness of the

relationship, I have this care in providence also; "a sparrow falleth not to the ground without your Father." I cannot get out of the consciousness of being a child. I may fail as a child, but I must be a child so to fail. Now there is a government of the world, but it is not directly applied to make a measure of good and evil. There was a direct dealing with a people; hereafter He will deal with the Jews by law, with Gentiles without law. If I have given my child no orders, I cannot punish him for disobedience. God will judge this world in righteousness; He says not so to the churches. When the great white throne comes, (Revelation 20:1-15,) there will be the direct application of judgement to soul and body. Besides the final judgement, we get God coming out in this book to punish the world for their iniquity. (Revelation 19:1-21.) Nothing in it relates to the Father and the Son, because the Spirit here is giving a title of God, which is to be the groundwork of the whole book. It is God in judicial dealings. Even when He is styled "Father," (as in Revelation 1:1-20 and Revelation 14:1-20,) it is in relation to Jesus Christ, to the Lamb.

Thus, too, I find in Revelation 1:4, not the Holy Ghost but the seven Spirits of God sent out and judging all things. Then, when I hear of Christ, it is as the "Faithful Witness," not as the sacrifice, or being at the right hand of God, but "Prince of the kings of the earth." Where am I in all this? Am I only to be under the Almighty? That is not the way I know God — not the way I know Christ. Kings are of the earth, I shall be in heaven. I get nothing here which tells one what He will be for me; and yet so distinctly conscious is the heart of a believer of what Christ is for him, and he to Christ, that the instant He says, I am the Faithful Witness, we hear "unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood," etc. I have got, through grace and redemption, into the relationship. I know Him; He is mine, He has made us kings and priests; if He reigns, I shall reign with Him. What is left out in the Revelation, is answered in the heart of the saint. Let me ask you, in passing, Have you got that? Let Christ be named in any way, is the link in your heart so plain, so distinct, so happy, that you own the relationship? Just as a child hearing his father is coming home after a long absence, his heart immediately responds to it, and he says, Oh, that is my father! Are you living in the consciousness that He loved you and washed you, and has made you a king and a priest? He washed me: that is the way I know Him.

We never get this by law. You may command yourself till you are tired, but you will never get into it thus. The law never forms any relationship with God, never gives any faith to the heart: not a fibre that hangs down from God can attach itself to a soul under law. The law gives no object. What does it tell me to look at? Why, at myself! It gives me nothing to trust in. We want something that will take us out of our wretched selves. I see Christ come down; I see that He loved me in all my sins. But how do you know God will have you? Have me! why, Christ came and died for me. I have One, who is just what I want, to take me out of myself. If He did come to me, as the blessed God, when I was a poor wandering sheep, there is something more: He laid down His life for me, and took me out of the place of death I was in, and put me into Himself. I am now in the second Adam, entitled to say I am not in the flesh but in the spirit, and so saved I stand as one alive from the dead. What would it be if I were not this? I should be in the flesh and lost. But I am not.

When you say your hope is in Christ what is it you mean? Is it in a living Christ who has not died? Is it a hope that He will die for you? You say, no. Is it in a Christ that has died for you? You may say, yes! Are you washed from your sins? because that is what He has done by dying. Do you say you are washed from some of your sins, but not all? That is nonsense, because He died for you before you ever committed any one sin. He gave Himself for you, stock and fruit and all. Perhaps

your feeling is, I cannot say He died for me; I hope. Well, what Christ do you hope for? Believe in Him with all your heart, and there is not a single charge against you. If you can say He loved you, and washed you from your sins in His own blood, then you believe in Him and would not give Him up for all the world. Still you maintain you cannot say He died for you. But God says He has, and you must believe God. It is not the belief that you have an interest in Him that you are called to believe, but to believe in Him. I do not say you will take it in at once. God may leave you awhile without the consciousness or enjoyment of it: that is quite possible: but, then, I say there is not a single sin against you. You may not be conscious of it from pride and self-righteousness. He smashes us to pieces that we may know there is no good in ourselves. You say, I do not know whether I have accepted Him. I tell you, God has accepted Him. Where the need is not felt, He may go on to break down the heart till we do feel it.

Turn to the end of the last chapter, Revelation 22:16, and you find the same thing. "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." Here He is in a peculiar and hidden way; not as Son of Man, as in that passage, "Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." How many would wail now if they saw Christ coming? Those to whom, when we bring Christ in, it is a terror to their consciences. The thought of the Lord's coming is terrible to a bad conscience or a selfish heart. "The bright and morning star!" How many would hail Him if He came now? The morning star is seen before the sun rises, seen by those who are not here for the sun to rise on. They are awake in the night, and being so, they have the knowledge of Christ in heaven. It is when Christ is hidden in God, where we by faith see Him as the morning star, while the world is asleep. We see Him inside the cloud, but when He comes out, "every eye shall see Him." It is not merely the fact of being saved; that was at His first coming, but this is at His second coming. It is known in the heart of a child of God, I should say more properly of the Bride, in virtue of the relationship.

Having finished this book, all at once, the Spirit and the bride say, Come. Not only does the bride say it: if only she said it, he might not come; but you have the authority of a Divine Person for saying, Come. The Holy Spirit is down here; and He being in us, we have the very thing that gives the full value of the relationship; not as the seven Spirits governing, but as the Holy Ghost dwelling in the bride. And the effect of the Holy Ghost dwelling in us is also the Spirit of adoption. But now the peculiar character of Christ is as the Bridegroom. The moment Christ is named, she desires Him. Impossible you can satisfy the heart of the believer without Christ. The more I know Him, the more I desire Him. As a Christian I have the consciousness of living in Christ. I have known Him on earth — I have the blessedness of a present relationship — I belong to heaven — I am only a stranger on earth, taking a journey. Christ was in the world, not of it. The home and affection of that life were in heaven, to which it belonged. This being so, I should earnestly insist on the enjoyment of this relationship. We get out of this consciousness if we are not walking with God. You who have got out of the seventh of Romans cannot get back into it. You cannot be under the law if dead unto law. You cannot say, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I either believe I am risen; or if my shield of faith is down, I may get into despair.

We find here the consciousness of relationship. Do you think we can say, Come, without that? He comes to set me before the judgement-seat, where all will be brought to light, and there will be nothing not manifested. I shall be in glory before then. Are all saints saying, Come? Where does the heart go? I ask why are saints not saying, Come? He does not blame, but says, "Let him that

heareth say, Come." First take the place of the bride, then say, Come. The moment you love Him, you will long for Him to come. The first thought is Christ; the second, the coming glory. There are precious souls to be saved, so we can wait for them to be gathered in. Quite right it is to wait, but should you not like to see Him? Christ comes Himself. He wants us, not for anything in ourselves, but because He loves us? And is there nothing in your heart that echoes to His voice?

Prophecy concerns the government of God on the earth; but it does not touch the affections of my heart. I am not longing for Jerusalem to be built, or for Babylon to be destroyed, but for Christ. You may go first; better to wait there than here. But are you looking and longing for Christ? The Spirit of God has given to the conscience and then to the heart the consciousness of the relationship. What next? Am I indifferent to the world? Not so. That would not be the Spirit of Christ. I believe in One who loved and gave Himself for me, when I was a miserable sinner. When I was lost, I found this blessed One. But that is not all. That I might know and enjoy the consciousness of His love, He sent down His Spirit to dwell in me. I have not got Christ yet; but I have got the living water. Believers have the Spirit, but not the Bridegroom. There is a want in the heart that this world can never satisfy. I know what it was to be athirst, but I have got what satisfied my thirst. We long for more because we like it, not because we are athirst. Having the Spirit, I therefore say to the poor world, You may be seeking like Noah's dove to get rest, and cannot. The soul may try to hide its nakedness, but it will not do. Now there are many things which may satisfy the old man — vanity, and a variety of other things. When I look at the poor world, if I have a heart I long for their salvation. Here I am enjoying Christ — His love a spring of joy in my own soul — everlasting, because He is everlasting. How did I get it? It is all the free goodness and grace of God. I look at Christ, and feel I am the bride, and long for the Bridegroom. Therefore I say, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." If I have the Spirit, which makes me look for the Bridegroom, I have that which makes me say, Come. To say that earnestly, I must have the consciousness of having my own thirst quenched. I shall be a sorry witness for Christ if I have not peace myself. That would not do at all; because He does give peace. And I will tell you how perfect the peace. It is "my peace" — "my joy" — "my glory." "The glory thou hast given me, I have given them." The way Christ gives, is giving us Himself, and all that He has in Himself, making us partakers of the divine nature. That is the Christ we have to do with. We are in the world to be a witness of what He is: that is our responsibility as Christians. All our thoughts and feelings are to flow from the relationship to Him into which we are brought. Can I think God would have me unhappy? When I believe that Christ drank that cup of wrath, was it to leave my peace uncertain? We want warnings, but what for? How to behave as children — as Christians. They are addressed to Christians, not founded upon any doubt or uncertainty as to what Christ has done for us, but on the contrary. His word is, "a little while and I will come," and fetch you home, and my joy will be to make you happy. Meanwhile, the Holy Ghost in our hearts gives us the present, living, conscious enjoyment of relationship. He will have His Bride in the house He has built for her — in the Father's house.

The Lord gave us not only to know it, but to abound in thanksgiving and praise for what He is going to display. And if there is a poor heart not knowing Him, to it I say, "Come," and the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse you from all sin.

Exeter.

Vol 03 - Sketch of the Apocalypse

Sketch of the Apocalypse

By the Author of a Tract Entitled "Faith and Works."

W.H. Dorman, Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, July 1860.

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Being led to reconsider the Apocalypse, so needful and so interesting to the Christian, I will, by the help of God, go through some of the third part of it, starting from a portion which I think has not only been mistaken from not having its importance granted to it, but from being wrongly divided. I would not however leave behind me the earlier part.

It might appear remarkable, considering it a form of vision and mystical representation of events, that there should be the exhortation to read and keep the sayings of this book. It is a warrant and call to study it. It is remarkable how much may be kept without unravelling what is difficult.

There are three parts as commonly recognised — things that are seen, things that are, and things after these. How can the sayings of the book concerning each of these be kept? I answer, the first by believing the character of judgment held by Christ here on earth over the Church; secondly, as to the things that are (i.e., by continuous application), they are kept by looking to that which constitutes the remnant in Christendom; and thirdly, the sayings as to the third are kept by the saint keeping himself separate from the principles of the world, which in their result come in the last times under the judgments of God, as necessary to keep himself united to God. We have God, and Christ, and the Spirit in the relationship of the book. Christ is the "faithful witness" of the ways of God (and this is the character He bears towards Laodicea); next, as the first-begotten from the dead, the proof given that He will judge the world in righteousness; and in right, now acknowledged by faith, as well as then in fact, Prince of the kings of the earth.

He made the elders a kingdom; that is, those who are in communion of the divine life as priests, therefore in the kingdom of the Father. But where John was, it was the kingdom (with affliction and patience) of Jesus Christ, a point much left out in theories of the Scripture and our relations to God in Jesus Christ. It is present in "patience" of the future.

Coming next to the lamps, (or so-called candlesticks,) Christ stood in the midst of them with the stars in His right hand. The stars are less apprehended than most of this part. It is likely the figure was taken from the angel of the synagogue, but here for Christian authority, representing in persons the application of the Lord's power and judgment. Angel and leader were His presence in authority in the wilderness and on the entry into the land. "My name is in him." Gathered together unto His name — perhaps presence. (See 2 Chronicles 20:9.) "I am in the midst." They are seen in His right hand and so express His authority in responsibility in the churches.

The first thing to look for is the principle and source of the decay and the development of evil, in the assembly or church, of the age as it passes on." * The defect towards God in the inward life of a Christian originates externally a corresponding evil in some certain thing; it is the defect in itself and the defect of result may be another evil, and so I believe it here. The defect in principle is purely so only in Ephesus. Want of life is want of love, and want of life is from neglect of life. "If ye live (have a life) in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit." There could not be injunction, but addressed to the capacity of fulfilling it under grace. Busy yourself with Jesus: we so look at God in a true mirror. To do so works resemblance, till it may be said, "Not I live, but Christ." We must study all the development of life in the person of Christ. His loyalty to His Father — such should ours be to Him. The spirit of meekness and lowliness, the spirit of wisdom and quickness of understanding in the fear of the Lord and moral and divine grace as it was in Christ.

{*The view of the churches is ecclesiastical. Disobedience and disorder entered into the whole house of God through the failure of that which was specially of God, that is, the church. I do not see that the assembly and house of God are the same thing, which many use so, I believe. I do not suppose that much confusion has arisen from the mistake, but I suppose the assembly to be of believers or those received as such. The house (i.e., those adopted by Christ as service to Himself, in the New Testament, Ephesians 5:1-33, Ephesians 6:1-24; Colossians 2:1-23,) embraces all the relationships and duties of the persons of the assembly of God, which affect many that are not believers, and relationships and duties outside the assembly, but subject to the Master of God's house — the Lord Jesus Christ.}

It does not appear that the works and labours of the church at Ephesus were less, but the root and principle whence they sprung was less than at the beginning. This is the same principle as found in the judgment of the dead. The books were opened. The dead were judged by their works, but the works judged by the life. Therefore, if not written in the book of life, etc. Now the reward of overcoming is in blessed and perfect accordance — "shall eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

In Smyrna it became manifest that the eye of the saints is not towards the world so long as God is counting the works true, but that it is towards God only. It profanes the heart of the saint to measure any works by the thought that the eye of the world is measuring them, or letting their own do so. If the works are still works, but with less divine life as their spring, as in Ephesus, the day is near at hand that the soul will boast of its success; and should the fall proceed, the world will begin to enter. The first part of this case was the case of Smyrna. The chastening hand of God was upon them to keep them to Himself, but the feature was evident, that they had something to show amidst it. They were lessened and brought low to death in this world, but to holding fast the crown of life in martyrdom was promised. "But thou art rich." † It must have been some extension which gave it a measure in its own eyes.

{†To an early thought this might have appeared as true riches against worldly poverty. If there were a succession of churches in the Apocalypse, this would leave Smyrna above Ephesus. But it is *alla* and not *de*, as some copies read; *alla* makes it exceptional.}

Pergamos comes next, and is addressed in much grace. Would not the thought of "angel" include that part which God expected should be true? We should remember that the assemblies are ecclesiastically considered, i.e. as bodies. If life decays, the vacancy is felt. What must it be filled

by, but by superstition and dead works? The doctrine of the Nicolaitans and that of Balaam are next door to each other, and relate both to an evil in respect of ministry. As to the Nicolaitans, it always struck me that the charge against them (namely, holding the community of wives) was gratuitous. Such a perversion never could have occurred while Ephesus was the Ephesus of the Apocalypse. It is more likely to be a spiritual fault and more likely to grow connected with failure of life, perhaps a growth of authority which was not Christ's which is in divine life and power; and we find in Smyrna those that called themselves Jews, and it is a worse state of it in Philadelphia. Through Christ risen we believe on God, the God of life; and spiritual power is through faith in Christ ascended and at the right hand of God. In Ephesus, it was life to sustain good works; in Smyrna, life to exclude dead ones. With the growth of Christianity and the Judaizing tendency of the earliest Christians, as shown in the epistles of the apostle Paul, an accusation of failure in the truth of spiritual ministry, and general tendency to copy the Jewish institutions, was very likely to fall into a form of priesthood as it advances at present to apostasy. To the corruption of ministry is added saint worship, the sword keenly dividing between these evils and life and spiritual power.* Is not Balak taught of Balaam the form of fornication in alliance with the world, and its advantages, to induce to preach other than what God teaches?

{* Death belongs to this state. The general doctrine of most advanced Christians is to exclude being called to account for evil hereafter, (the elders are in heaven before it,) or here, being hurt (not destroyed,) of the second death. God's judgment is already passed; "condemned already" or accepted. The judgment seat of Christ is of those subject to Him. Purgatory touches the principle of life and of cleansing the heart by faith. The person is safe in the Son or there will be nothing. [Does not the judgment seat of Christ, in 2 Corinthians 5:1-21, embrace all sinners as well as saints, though not at the same time nor for the same end, save thorough manifestation of everything done in the body? — Ed.]}

Rome, throughout time, in every condition, has been morally or actually the place of martyrdom. Satan dwells there. The hidden manna is instruction about Christ hidden in heaven, now become so needful and peculiarly adapted to saints in the midst of such a state. If manna were Christ, it would not corrupt and breed worms if kept and not used, which is just the case of instruction and the knowledge of truth. On the white stone a name written is peculiar and individual.

In Thyatira, the characteristics of Romanism are palpable. Jezebel., exercising the calling of prophetess. "Thy wife;" instead of "the woman," (the best reading [? Ed.] in place of the one charged by God with the instruction of His own; thus connected with the angel it would be the Romish priesthood, or, as called by them "the church," claiming the authority of the words of God. "Those that commit adultery with her" — This is a decided call for separation on the penalties named for herself. The usurpation of the prerogatives of Christ has to be confessed against, and to confess will give a share in the prerogatives of Christ when He comes. I will give such the expectation of My coming to sustain Him. Rome claims power over the nations. Keep clear of this claim, and I will give you with Myself what they falsely claim. Separation now begins. I have not yet seen perfectly the reason of the change of the place of the exhortation — "Let him that hath an ear," etc. That the change of place occurring after the three first induces to separation, is not so clear, because in Laodicea it is promised to him that opens when Christ knocks, that Christ will come in and sup with him, and not he come out to sup with Christ. It may look more to individual action on the body; it is surely to overcome the evil of each separate church and of them all. The

object of the addresses is to the body ecclesiastically throughout. Therefore, it is spoken to the angel.

Separation is certainly plain in the other part of the address where, "you, the rest in Thyatira," distinctly indicates it. The address to the individual is separate in this and the following ones. The characters in which Christ judges Thyatira is the most searching and terrible of all the characters borne by Him.

As to Sardis, the return of Christ to His peculiar character, as judging the churches, is remarkable; for here a new feature enters. Sardis, after a state where even natural conscience had been trampled on by corruption, is worldly, orderly, and subject to the world; and therefore He that hath the seven spirits and the seven stars in His right hand deals with her. It is still, however, ecclesiastically. But, as the world, is exactly threatened with the same threat as the forgetful servants, "I will come as a thief," the proper and natural sequel is the same judgment; for they are identified. Life, we see here, is the burden of God's requirement; and the fruit of the absence of life in Sardis and responsibility in life, is the entrance of the world, having escaped, by its means, the excesses of corruption and evil; for the world was tired of and disgusted with them. The things that remain relate to Sardis generally. The few that walk in white are the exceptions in the truth of life and obedience. White linen is the righteousness of the saints — works done in Christ; because they are His. "Thou hast weighed all our works in us" — clear of the world; because what is in it must be defiled with the age. And the character of Christ can only be fulfilled in the company of His, or towards the world in patience, and in peace so much as lies in the saint. Laodicea naturally would be the sequel to Sardis. The world is content with Sardis, and adopts and endows it, and it wants nothing; but Philadelphia intervenes in a little strength (which is weakness), not "denying Christ's name, and keeping his patience," says the Lord in His patient grace. Brotherly kindness in the Church exists as general; not confession, as out of the world, except in those who are pillars. This state of Philadelphia is a general state, and there is promise to eminence in the faith; such as have it shall be pillars. There is also spiritual Judaism of a deep dye.* They adopt it as their standard creed. The dwellers on earth, a characteristic expression of the Apocalypse, answering in some sort to Jeremiah 17:13, are the objects of judgments, while such as keep His word and do not deny His name will be taken away before the judgments come. It is not difficult to see that each is called on to hear what is said to all the Churches; so that we find a code of perfect confession under all the circumstances detailed in them.

{*Perhaps some foreshadowing of the works of antichrist at Jerusalem, but in Philadelphia it is those that cleave to the covenant of commandments and ordinances, — in fact, clericalism. It presses on me greatly that we are in Philadelphia now. The present spiritual movement is its character, and honours it. "I come quickly" is said as encouragement to keep true against commandments and ordinances, and as what may be looked for. And the honour is being saved out of the great tribulation. But little strength is weakness; therefore the saints have to study what is the Jachin and Boaz of such a condition. The heavenly calling and church association in the apprehension of the mystery and Jesus known as Lord in confession, are these — the rest will pass in time into Laodicea.}

They close with Laodicea — no violent apostacy, but ease in the world, and, because of it, having no sense of need when all was wanting, and lukewarmness towards Christ as the result, and

rejection on account of it. Christ seems to hide Himself behind the moral requirements of the stranger and pilgrim; gold, divine and heavenly; white garments as to personal righteousness; and a clear sight by which evil is perceived, that we may walk without the defilements of the age out of which Christ gave Himself, that we might be delivered according to the will of God and our Father. There may be comfort in religion, which would be sown in the weakness of Philadelphia, instead of confession of the Lord. Christ is the faithful Witness of the ways of God — the Chosen that cannot deny Himself — Head over every created thing — Great Angel over all.

The Lord will surely guide us when we meditate on the causes and substance and results of the failure in the assemblies. Nothing can be more salient than that lack of life and faith of life are at the bottom of it. But life to what end here? Life, not only in its internal character, but life in subjection to Himself and for Himself, whom we are to confess and serve according to power, which is promised to those who are subject and obey His rule† — who is not on earth, but at the right hand of God, till God has prepared His enemies as the footstool on which He shall trample, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints and admired in all them that believe.

{†Peitharchein. See Acts 5:32; Titus 3:1, for the use of the word.}

The phase of the religion of the world, as in many parts of it, is thoroughly favourable to such a state as is described in the Church of Laodicea. Civil and religious liberty against the ecclesiastical tyranny of Thyatira would afford such a condition, and it can at any time receive an indefinite extension. It is Sardis in the fulness of its fruits. There is no persecution to make confession bright. Its condition offers no exception in it to bring forth the praises of the Redeemer. If any one answers the knock given by the Lord the FAITHFUL WITNESS, it is all that is left out of the mass. It is a civil reign over the earth in independence of God, in conjunction with a ruined confession.* What is to be done? We are heavenly, it is true — in heavenly places in Christ Jesus as our origin and present privilege before the Father; but we come under some of the earthly rights of Jesus, because we are in the place of them, and are on proof whether it is in Thyatira or Sardis or Laodicea we worship the Father. Blessed calling! Do we confess openly Jesus as Lord, as well as believe that God raised Him from the dead? "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; but with the mouth confession (of Him as Lord) is made unto salvation." In fact, hear what the Spirit says to all the Churches; save yourselves from out the state of Laodicea; "touch not the unclean thing, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty."

{*I would not put too much on the application of a name, but it is laou dike, as niko (ton) laon may indicate a former abuse and departure.}

Something, though much need not, is to be said, and it is hoped for blessing, as to the fourth and fifth chapters that follow. They are the introduction of the Book of the Apocalypse as the judgements that follow on the rejection of the testimony of the church by the Lord. They are all however addressed to the churches, an abundant evidence of their importance to all those that confess Christ upon the earth; and we may say that this third part shows at once what had been the growing defect of the churches; that is, growing insubjection to Christ the Lord and the Lord to come; for the sin of the world as here shown is to be overcome in the vengeance at last to be executed according to the will of the Father and Christ's reign to begin. The churches spued out fall into the world and take their fate with the world and as the world. They are spued out as fitted to the state of the world, and subject to its fate, and reproved with its reproof. Those that have had

ears to hear have known and followed that subjection to Christ and to the Holy Ghost that God required, whatever the form of evil of the time or mixture of times was, and are saved. I am sure this insubjection to the Lord is the great defect of modern religion. It is not accounted of, but God has His own amidst it all, and knows them, and great and peculiar blessedness it is to be enabled to enter into the counsels of God, and to apprehend what place the saints have as to the glory and rights of the Son.

The apostle is called from the scene on earth to what is preparing in heaven.

The actors in the scene in the first of these chapters are, HE on the throne and they on thrones encircling the throne, and the seven Spirits before the throne, and the four living creatures in the midst of the throne, and there is the yet empty sea and the rainbow of promise to the earth. The living creatures and the four-and-twenty elders are only those that could exercise us by any difficulty. The living creatures in the midst of the throne (thus manifestly divine) I believe to be the expression of the attributes of God as manifested in all places and things. They are here with God and in the throne and about it. But they are to be found everywhere wherever God's action or the fruits of it are found. Their highest office was over the mercy seat. They had an office at the gate of the east of Eden; they had so in creation. They had a significant one, though only in part, in the curtain of the new temple. It is only the attributes of God in anything or in any place that are to the praise of God or can justly fulfil the mind of God. How in perfect accordance they are found crying in the midst of the throne, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty, that was, and is, and is to come — a cry that also in all places and in all relations is the claim of the character and majesty of God. And when all that is created praise God, they characteristically have but to say, Amen. Cherub is ordinarily given but as an appellative only. The nearest approach to the sense is something great and excellent. Nothing is great and excellent but what is of God. And they vary not day and night, for He is ever the same and must ever be so recognised, and Holy, Holy, Holy heard wherever found. All that is of Him must be to Him and holy.

In the next chapter, the Lamb is in the midst of the elders, and they with Him within the circle of the throne, and the seven Spirits which were before the throne are the eyes of spiritual guidance, ("Thou shalt guide me with thine eye.") In this chapter we see them, but in attendance. All becomes ready for action in the fifth chapter.

As to the elders, while the living creatures cry, "Holy, holy, holy," they say the praise of the Lamb. In fact, the song belongs, not to any, but in regard of redemption; and it is in the character of redeemed that the elders stand in the next chapter. The clothing and the crowns and song of the elders mark them. The white garments are the righteousness of the saints. They have crowns — golden crowns. These crowns are theirs before the crown of righteousness is given, in the day of the Lord's glory, if this is the representation of actual and present state at this time.

To me, I own that the saints of the Old Testament would not come in here; but as the remnant will, they reign with Christ. Nor do I see how I can divide the elders; but the Lord can teach. I feel thus much — that likeness to Christ answers best the manner they are presented in. It seems to agree with the "better thing for us." What is that? Is not the heavenly call of the saint in Christ? ("For thy pleasure — they are and were created" is old English for "because of thy will.")

The fourth chapter presents all in its place and prepared — in attendance, so to speak.

Revelation 5:1-14. Christ now comes forward. There is but one able to open the book that describes the destiny of the world, of which the iniquity is so near full but still borne with in grace — though fearfully afflicted yet sought to be reclaimed. Never let us forget grace, God's grace, and grace because of His grace. God never consents to evil in His mercy, or in not letting His anger go forth to destruction; we are apt to consent to evil when we do not avenge it. (It is always the feeling of the world that the saint gives evil its scope by suffering wrong.) For we are much truer to our passions than to God's holiness, and our kindnesses are mingled with the flesh.

To return — Christ, wondrous grace! took the world with its burden. He became heir, (the elders are co-heirs,) having worked redemption; and in right of His having done so the Lamb, and the Lamb alone, is for this reason able to open the book. The Lamb, in the midst of the throne, and in the midst of the elders, (their place is changed,) opens the book of the world, now to be made known to the seven churches. It is in the hands of the Lamb; delivered to Him by Him that sitteth on the throne. He is as a lamb that had been slain in the midst of the throne — perfect power, as denoted by seven horns being now His, and perfect spiritual action. As to the prayers of the saints, they are odours, and they are in the bowls in the hands of the elders as incense. We see them in Revelation 8:3-4, cast into the earth and the power of them, with the fire taken from the altar.* The Lamb had not appeared in the former chapter. He now shares with Him that sitteth on the throne the adoration of all.† To the former actors is added the great assembly; all is ready to carry on the vision.

{*While it is necessary to speak guardedly, a view here of Colossians 2:18 will be in place. It is part of the apostasy. The angels were never at any time an object of regard (Christ coming as such excepted). In the Old Testament, the ordering of the things of the Old Testament was committed to angels, as we are more than once told. This was all changed under the New. Instead of ordering, they take a lower place, as ministers to the heirs of salvation. This place in the Colossians seems there explained — that that rejected ministration, which had been of God's counsels, Satan now takes up, and ordinances, and would give them as of God, a place in the New Testament, to the deception of the saints, whose feebleness of spiritual apprehension and of the knowledge of God, had exposed to his wiles, and he reintroduces them; and thus the beggarly elements cast into the world, and now its rudiments, are again brought in.

†From the view taken of the elders above stated, it might naturally be concluded that the reading of the Codex Sinaiticus, would be to be preferred, though the strangeness of the Apocalyptic Greek is apparent.}

All that can now be proposed to be done is in the way of arrangement. I find explanations so fully provided, and for the most part so just, that little that I am given to see can be added. In venturing a new aspect of arrangement of some parts, I do it in confidence, or I ought not to do it; and, as true, will have the power of persuasion that God may be pleased to give it. Nor need it be considered as destroying the suggestion of arrangement already offered, as far as such can stand with it, for it is exceptional here and there, and not more.

I gave once a short sketch of the Apocalypse in German, and found it unexpectedly in English. It was very short, and in deference, which I still hold in general, of a person deeply versed in the word of the Lord, avoided the twelfth chapter, because my sense of it was different; but being further persuaded of the truth of my view I leave it in the Lord's hands. It has taken large

dimensions and an important place, for I find in this chapter a great key to the arrangement of the whole book.

I see the twelfth chapter neither belonging in its entirety to what goes before nor to what follows, but divided between the two, and closing so as to admit of what follows after chapter 15.

As preliminary, however, to entering on this view, there is an assignment of the various expressions of time which it will be needful to set forth. It is not the key to the view here offered, but which, had it not accorded with it, would have shaken it, but for something not perceived.

The expressions of time are threefold — that is, a time and times and half a time, 1260 days, and forty-two months being the same extent of period, according to Jewish reckoning. It will be found that 1260 days are, in regard of the half week, previous to the great tribulation; and a time and times and half a time, refer to the Jewish position in the last tribulation, and the 42 months to the same period; but in respect of the great Gentile oppression. But the holy city being trodden under the foot of the Gentiles could not be less in this case than this power, and it is not used in application to anything else, and I trust this will be clearer as I proceed. The 1260 days, as the first half week, are so placed as to be alone capable of application to a more extended period of some kind, and so it has been justly applied, and variously true, and to a yet more extended thought of general time from Christ downwards, and which is the case in this twelfth chapter; but not excluding the more strict use of it, closing the first half week. The use of time and times and half a time by Daniel is decided in its character by the period he speaks of and those concerned. This period we find in this chapter. The grand conclusion of Daniel's prophecy being 1290 and 1335 days at the close exceed these periods, whereas his proper subject is, as in chap. 7 of his prophecy where this period of a time and times, etc. occurs, for it relates to the fate of his people in particular.

I should, I think, safely say that there are three applications of the 1260 days; that is, the strict real days, or three and a half years, a period of 1260 years, and general time. It may be all three, or the first and last of three, in this chapter. Again, the period of 1260 days is applied to the period of the testimony of the witnesses, in strict application to the first half week, and their time of testimony is closed by the entrance of the Gentile powers, that is to endure forty and two months.* It occurs again in its proper application in Revelation 13:5.

{*Had time been mentioned in Matthew 24:1-51, a double application would have place, finishing at the 14th verse; while what is subsequent would have been, if time had been mentioned, a time, and times, and half a time.}

Looking then at this chapter thus, we find it beginning with Christ the Judge and Ruler of nations taken up to heaven. The Second period begins with Michael driving Satan out of heaven. The 10th, 11th, and 12th verses [Revelation 12:10-12] belong to the song in heaven and date before the time. The 11th verse is distinctly, as a matter passed. Satan is now at the commencement of this period cast from heaven, and his work on the earth towards the woman begins and is to continue for the appointed time. It does not conclude with the deliverance of the whole with which the Apocalypse concludes, but leaves this to the actual overthrowing of the resistance described at the end of the book. It leaves Satan engaged in pursuit of the ten tribes against whom save the remnant, he prevails. The remnant come up to the land; they are late enough to know what is

before them in a Saviour.

It is no doubt understood by the reader that the time, and time, and half a time, and the forty-two months apply to an identical period, though each with a peculiar application, and that these two periods relate to the last half week. The 1260 days belong always to the prior half week, and therefore capable of extension, and embrace Christianity and the history of the world as Christendom as well.

We have now to go back to the part of the book belonging to the first half of the twelfth chapter in strict time.

The view I have, as far as I can say that I have received, is that the close (not the very last portion) of the visions of the chapters 7 onwards introduce the time subsequent to chapter 12 and also develop the result in anticipation. The sixth seal I would look to be that breaking up of nations which will make them constitute the "sea" out of which the beast is to arise. In this chapter God in His never-failing grace manifests two bodies perfectly preserved, one for earth, the other for heaven, during the great tribulation that is to follow. This intervenes, and then the seventh seal and seventh trumpet end the mystery of God. The trumpets I regard as far more Jewish, if not essentially so, than the seals. There are many marks of this. Trumpets were the Jewish instrument of awakening the people, under the law. The feast of trumpets relates to this. The meaning of the temple in chapter 11, which is in fact the sixth trumpet, and the vision of the new economy in the same chapter, ready to be manifested at the end, all tend to show that this was more specially dedicated to this portion of the dealings of God and coming in with the close of Him. All that relates to the earth moves round this earthly centre of God's purposes. The whole appointed to the Lamb. The sixth trumpet brings on in the east the same whirlwind of disasters answering to the sixth seal elsewhere. The contents of chapter 10 do not enter into the question of arrangement. It marks, however, by the declaration of the mystery of God being finished, that it corresponds to the same place in the seals. Of chapter 11 enough has been said.

We now come to the second part of the Apocalypse — the separation of the two parts being bridged across by chap. 12. This latter portion is given wholly to the forty and two months, till judgement brings in Christ the Lord, with the marriage of the Lamb and the bride, who is to share the honours of the inheritance with Him.

The first chapter of this portion sets out with the period of forty-two months, and we find them in Revelation 13:5.

As the sum, the first thing presented to us is the imperial head now having received Satan's power and throne and great authority, and to work forty and two months.

The beast arose out of the sea. The second beast found in this chapter arises out of the earth. The sense of both is familiar to most. Satan is the rival of God. Satan has his man, the blasphemous head, wielding the power of the beast. God has His man, Christ. Satan's man is seen as reigning as the blasphemous head of the worldly empire, having ten horns with diadems, and seven heads, of which he was (as continued in an eight) the last. This empire bears irrefragably, the stamp of the Roman Empire. We have, set forth in vision in Revelation 14:1-20, the Lamb on Mount Zion, the place of KINGLY power, (set over here in vision against Satan's man of Revelation 13:1-18) to whom God has given to have authority over all things, and to break the rebellious nations in pieces

as a potter's vessel. He has His earthly attendants in the 144,000. The fall of Babylon is foreseen, and the subsequent trial of yielding or resisting the obligation to worship the beast. And the harvest and vintage is proclaimed.

Revelation 15:1-8 opens with the declaration of the seven last plagues. I own I see a distinct purpose in the word "last," put here side by side with the last trial of grace in calling the nations to the allegiance of God, to whom from everlasting to everlasting allegiance is due. As before, also when judgements were to come in, is revealed the body of the saved amidst it, (and the sea of Revelation 4:1-11 is filled,) as has been God's gracious way to declare His preservation of them that confess His name and the name of His Christ here, even the company who were victors over the beast. Blessed victory! Strange victory! He that loseth his life shall keep it unto life eternal.

But the Lamb of Revelation 14:1-20 : and the company in Revelation 15:1-8 do not take the part to faith in the view in which we see in the first part of Revelation 12:1-17. It bears the impress of the victorious Messiah of the Psalms. "All the nations shall come and worship before thee." And the song of Revelation 15:1-8 is of Moses and of the Lamb, victorious over the nations. The sixth vial of Revelation 16:1-21 has its analogy, but no identity, with the sixth seal and trumpets. Under the seventh vial, Babylon falls. The religious and social condition of Babylon forms the subject of chapters 17 and 18. Her fall is at the hand of the beast and the ten kings; and he is alone worshipped, save by the saints, which becomes the signal of the coming forth of the Word of God,*

{*The four empires perish together. Three in impotence, and one in fullness of power. Greece exists, Persia exists, Shinar is to exist, and the sea is to come and the boast to arise as the fourth, and all to be ground to powder by the stone cut out without hands.}

Chapters 20, 21, 22, belong to the blessedness that follows. There was little in the last half of the Apocalypse to note as to arrangement. The contents of Revelation 17:1-18; Revelation 18:1-24 might induce one to enter into this field. I have only to say that the development of the evil has yet to find its chief director. The characteristics exist plain enough to be seen now, and have been ably spoken of.* They are ripened for judgement under the direction they will receive. — W. H. Dorman.

{*See the notes (translated from the French) on the Apocalypse by J. N. Darby, and the exposition of the Apocalypse by W. Kelly.}

Vol 03 - "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end."

"Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end."

Job 1:1-22, Job 2:1-13.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, August 1860.

(1st. Edition, August [03 1860 113])

The chief thought upon my mind in reading this portion of the word of God, was a simple but, at the same time, a comforting one. It is this:— That even where Satan is working with the children of God, it is God Himself that prompts the trial, and not Satan. It is God who takes the initiative, in praising His servant. It is not Job that is found out by Satan, but God speaks of Job to Satan. In other words, the first person who acts, who even sets the trial agoing, is God Himself. Now, at all times, whether before the Lord Jesus came or since, there is one grand truth that lies at the bottom of all divine doings or revelations — that God is supreme — "God over all, blessed for ever." He is "the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth." He may allow heaven itself to be, in a certain sense, defiled by the presence of a rebel, * one that has already been dishonoured there, and that is about to be judged there by and by. For it is said, the kings of the earth shall be dealt with on earth, but "the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones on high." The scene of their great sin against God is to see their retribution.

{* Hebrews 9:23; Ephesians 6:12.}

But although the earth itself is a platform for iniquity of every description, yet still there are those upon it that are very near to God; whom He loves; whom He turns, even from heaven itself, to look upon. Not that there may not be many things to correct in them: God was going to chasten His servant Job at this very time. But that does not hinder the feeling and expression of His delight in him. Just so a parent regards his child, and speaks of him with love and complacency. It may appear to the eyes of others that there is blindness to the faults of the child: but it is a parent's love, and those that understand it can appreciate it. Such, but in a far higher sense, is the love that God has to His beloved children upon the earth.

It was in this consciousness of being above all evil that God speaks to Satan about His servant Job. He knew what that enemy was, and what he was especially towards man. And He knew that if any were more obnoxious to him than others, it was those men that were called by grace to be saints of God. But God, knowing His power and love to be above all the evil that Satan can do, actually makes use of Satan for the good of His own children. And this is the marvellous story that is so fully developed throughout the Book of Job. We know that the end of it is the full blessing of Job, and through him even of his friends, when the battle has been fought and the victory won. But the precious thing that meets us at the very beginning of the Book is, that it is God that begins the trial. Satan may be the instrument of it, but there is always God above and before Satan. In man's ways mischief first comes in, and then a remedy is provided. But that is not the way of God.

Redemption is not merely a remedy for the evil that Satan and man have brought upon the earth; it was always in the mind and in the heart of God. It was not a mere remedy wrought in to meet the evil. But it was the triumph of God; the full manifestation of what He is as rising above all evil. For God Himself would not have been known as He is but for redemption. Therein He is not merely looking at man or the devil, but He must have an opportunity for showing out His love. He must make known His power, wisdom, and love in meeting evil, in using even the chief of evil, as a means of greater good to His children than if there had not been such an one at all. What man does is to deny the evil, to hake light of it, and so despise God; or he makes him in some way or another to be the cause of it, and so hates God. But what a joy is it for us to see God as He is, always above it all.

You will find these two thoughts throughout the word of God, two great ways in which God displays Himself. First, there is His grace that delivers, that forgives and brings near to Himself. But, besides that, there is another great object in the Bible — the government of God; His government of the world once, and His government of souls now. For they are two things, quite distinct in their nature — the grace and the righteous government of God. But it is well to remember this, that whatever may be the form His government takes, it is grace that sets the government agoing, where His own children are concerned. It is true, that the Father "without respect of persons judgeth," but still it is "the Father." So here; it is God Himself that, at the very start shows how near Job was to His heart. He challenges Satan to consider His servant Job, and see whether there was any like him on the earth. The enemy comes and insinuates that it is not for nothing that Job serves God. God, therefore, allows Satan to try him in his circumstances. And what is the consequence? Job only falls down and worships the Lord. He is brought into a better tone of soul than before. The devil was allowed to try him; he is brought into another kind of tribulation. But the end of it was, if we may so say, that he gets the crown of life. He is upon his face before the Lord, praising His name. If he had known before the blessedness of the Lord's giving, he now learnt the blessedness of His taking away.

Then comes another trial; and now it is his person that is touched, a much harder thing than when it was merely his circumstances. This the enemy knew, and he accordingly says, "Skin for skin; yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." The Lord permits Satan to do his worst with the person of Job, only reserving his life. Still, not only did Job not fall, but, though his wife is a part of the trial, in all things we find him shining out increasingly. And it is not until Satan has done with Job that the Lord comes in and puts His finger upon the point that needed His dealing with, through Job's friends.

Think of where we now are! It is not only that we can reason from what God is as supreme above Satan, but we have to do with Satan as an enemy that has been overcome in the cross, and resurrection, and ascension of Christ. It is not only that we know that God must be above Satan, but we have seen how He is so for us. Satan was at the cross, God was there, too, and the Lord Jesus Christ was smitten. And there that Blessed One, falling under the whole power of the enemy, overcomes him and rises alive again for evermore with the keys of death and hades. "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." The Lord has won the victory, and we have this heavenly and new fruit for our souls to feed upon.

Whenever we can see "Satan" in anything, whenever we can discern the power of evil, and judge it as evil, it is powerless as far as we are concerned. It is his wiles, his deceits, that we have to dread. But the comfort is, that let all the power that Satan wields be put forth, touching our circumstances or in any way nearer still, in all the confusion that he may introduce, we owe it to the Lord to cherish simple peace in Him, and the certainty that He will appear, that He works, that Satan will be defeated, nay, that the very trial itself is for the safety and bringing out of greater blessing for those that are looking to Himself.

Vol 03 - The Righteousness of God.

The Righteousness of God.

(Fragments of a discourse, October, 1860.)

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What is the "righteousness of God?" It is God taking up the cause of a sinner; God working; God giving; and all in Jesus. He has sent a Saviour. He has sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, as a sacrifice for it, has condemned sin already, so that there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. The righteousness of God, then, is not your being righteous towards God, but God righteous towards you who believe, because He has found in Jesus all that satisfies His heart and His holiness. It is the consistency of God with what Christ has done for sinners and suffered for sin. God has placed Himself under what I may call a bond to honour Jesus, in the persons of those who confess His name, because of what Jesus has undergone on the cross.

The righteousness of God is "without the law," apart from it altogether. It is not even the law as it was accomplished by Jesus in this world; that did not touch my guilt. What I want is that my sins should be purged away. Will that blessed One, who is true God and perfect man, will He put His head under the sword of God's judgement in my place? He has done it! Therefore all is changed for the soul that repents and believes. God is not now bound to execute judgement upon man, save upon him who rejects His Son; but He has to be righteous in view of what Jesus deserved at His hands — the blessed man who bore sin, and has borne it away. If I believe in Christ it is no longer a question of the first man, Adam, but of the second man, the last Adam, who is in the presence of God, the perfect witness of divine righteousness; and it is God now that is just and justifies him that believes in Jesus. His concern is to honour and requite His Son. Did God want a righteous man? There was the sole perfectly righteous One. Did He look for a heart full of zeal for His own house? Jesus was the one. Did He seek a man willing to suffer everything from the world that God might be honoured? nay, be far more willing to bear even the wrath of God, and take upon Him the judgement of sins? All was found in Jesus. And therefore it is no longer man that is weighed in the balances and found wanting, because he cannot meet the claims of the law, that is, the measure of righteousness due to God. But it is God who has got a new kind of righteousness; a righteousness that justifies instead of condemning. Not only have we an Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous, but He is the propitiation for our sins, yea, also for the whole world.

Thus God Himself now is, we may say with reverence, under obligations to His Son on behalf of sinners. For He sees before Him, a Saviour, a spotless Lamb, whose blood suffices for the worst of sinners. The gospel is the manifestation of the righteousness of God without the law. If the law enters in the smallest particular, so that we are under it, you are a lost man, and so am I. The gospel is God providing a sacrifice, or substitute, to bear His wrath against my sins. If I have faith

in Christ and His blood, I am entitled to say, my sins are gone. By Himself He has purged my sins — not partly by Him and partly by me or others; but by Himself, to the exclusion of everything and every one else.

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." The prophets proclaimed that that righteousness was "near to come;" the sacrifices connected with the law pointed to it as the ultimate work and way of God. All centred in Christ — in Him who was called "The Lord our righteousness." He alone, who was God, could perfectly satisfy God. It is now, therefore, a question of God showing Himself righteous, in honouring the Lord Jesus and His sufferings for us. We cannot make too much of Him and His salvation. God sees such blessedness in Christ, that, because of what He is and has done, He can meet the case, no matter how hopeless otherwise. The sinner may have been ever so abandoned, ever so unfeeling, ever so high-minded. "Such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified;" because God has, if I may so say, such delight and confidence in the salvation that is in Christ, and the Holy Ghost has sealed us in virtue of it. God is righteous in forgiving me, because of the shed blood of His Son. Without it there is no remission; with it, what is there not? God is most jealous about His Son. He will never slight His person; nor overlook the worth of His death. May you cast yourselves upon God, as One who cannot but be righteous to what His Son calls for at His hands! His blood was shed. Can you ask anything of God, or bring anything to God, so precious as that? Can you add anything to what is infinitely efficacious? That blood "cleanseth from all sin." God Himself gives it to you and thus commends His love. Receive it from Himself, resting on His word. He guarantees its eternal value. (Hebrews 10:9-17.)

Vol 03 - The Morning Star.

The Morning Star.

Revelation 22:1-21.

J. N. Darby (?), Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, November 1860.

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Christ presents Himself to us as "the bright and Morning Star," which appears just before the day. Whatever manifestation of glory there may be, all glory is connected with the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. For "to him every knee shall bow;" and that it should be so, He will come again. It must be the desire of our hearts to see the evil set aside which has desolated this lower world, that had gone wrong and been blighted by man's sin and unfaithfulness to see all set right.

In the seventh verse He says, "Behold I come quickly." The Lord announces that He is coming, and gives the prophecy with "blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book," — they who listen and take heed. But He applies His prophecy in a different way afterwards in verse 12, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give to every man," etc. It is not in the sense of a promise, but He goes farther to pronounce what will be the character of His dealings when He comes, as a warning against negligence and indifference, and encouragement to those who have been faithful, that they might be patient and bear with the evil. "Be patient, brethren, for the judge standeth at the door." "Behold I come quickly." It is a solemn warning that He announces to every man's conscience: He is going to judge every man according to his work. The Lord would apply it to the saints also to keep their conscience alive to their responsibility. For as He executes judgement on the world, so the fruits of the works and ways of the saints will be shown out, but not as connected with condemnation, and not at all affecting, therefore, their salvation.

In the manifestation of a saint's life, two things are brought to, light: 1st, the fruits of the operation of the Spirit of God in the walk and ways of a saint; and, 2ndly, the value of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, which at the first makes him a saint, and which is alike to all saints, to the feeblest as well as to St. Paul himself. In this portion there is no difference. Christ is as much my righteousness as He was Paul's when He made an apostle of Paul. We may be very little in ourselves, but still the righteousness is the same. We have the same life and are partakers of the same glory. The many brethren all go together in Christ's blessed redemption; but then there is the reward to each according to his works. I have said so much that we may understand what the Lord's grace is. "I Jesus have sent my angel to testify these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and Morning Star." All in which God is setting up glory on the earth will come out of that. He is the root — the source of all the promises; and he is the offspring or fulfilment of the promises, "made of the seed of David according to the flesh," and this now as risen from the dead.

But we have a better portion as risen with Him — the same portion as Himself. He presents Himself as the bright and Morning Star. He is speaking of Himself — "I am." It is what Christ is: what He presents to our heart and conscience, whether saint or sinner, is Himself. "I am the bright and Morning Star." Now, it is I myself coming to put everything right. Is Christ precious to you? If Christ is not precious to you, you are at war with God. If He is not more precious to you than everything beside, then you are in a bad state as a saint. If you are tired of hearing of Him, then what God delights in wearies you, and heaven could have no charm for you. For heaven itself would not make you happy. if you have no delight in Christ; for there He is the chief object of delight. Is it still true of you, that you see no beauty in Christ that you should desire Him? In God's sight He was perfect beauty — all loveliness; and where there is anything of God in the soul, He is the desired one, to see Him, not that we may be charmed for a moment as with a beautiful picture, but to know Him, to love Him. He has laid hold of the affections. We may not have the answer yet, but there is the desire, there is the thirst in the soul after Him, which he alone can answer. If you have no desire after Christ, and can do without Him, then your heart is still alienated from God, who delights in Him alone, and there is not a common thought between you and God; for when He is saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," you have no delight in Him, and do not know Him as the desire of your heart. I am not speaking of duties, nor of victory over this and that; but I ask whether, day by day, Christ is the desire of your heart? O! how often when we desire to talk of Christ, the soul turns aside the conversation from the subject, because the conscience is uneasy and knows that Christ is not loved.

The Lord, calling Himself the bright and Morning Star, awakens in our souls blessed hopes before the morning comes that is to usher in the day, thus bringing in the blessedness of that time when evil is put away before the day comes in. It has not come yet; it is the night, but our proper position in the world is as children of the day, during the night:— that is, as having nothing in common with the world.

We ought to be gracious to the world, but we are not of it; we are children of the day. Hence all that is in the world is discordant with our hope, and must be all trial to the Christian, except when he is inconsistent with himself. As connected with the Morning Star, we are associated with Christ, hid in God, and we have our portion with Him before the day comes in which "He will arise with healing in His wings." The world will see Him then, but to us He says, I have given you a portion with myself before the day come. That is, Christ revealed to the soul as the day-star which is to usher in the day. "I will give power over the nations — He shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessel of a potter shall they be broken, and I will give him the Morning Star." Besides all the rest, He has given us what Christ is. He will associate us with Himself. The morning star precedes the day — that is our portion with Christ — our sweet hope: a Christ revealed to the soul, before the day is come. This tells of the day coming, and is known to those who watch, who are awake in the night, they see this star, and know Him in a way the world does not. And they not only know Him in this way, but they know they have the same portion as Christ. "I will give Him the Morning Star" — thus associating us not only with the blessing of the day itself, but with Himself in the bringing in the day. It is not merely the thought that I shall have the glory, but have it with the Lord. If I am looking at the day, I shall have the glory. But if I am looking at Christ, I see Him in it and say I shall have it with Him. — "So shall we ever be with the Lord." That is all that Paul need say to comfort the Thessalonians, and the necessary effect of knowing this is, the desire that He should come.

That characterises the saint. Christ is revealed to the soul, as He is not to the world, in the consciousness that we are to be with Him and to be like Him for ever. "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come." The proper affection of the soul is to desire His coming. Christ having ascended up on high, and the Holy Ghost come down to witness of His exaltation, the eye is fixed on Him in the revelation of Himself; up there and having seen Him, the heart responds. The way He fixes the affections is by saying "I come." In the next place, there are those in whom the Holy Ghost awakens the desire, and who can answer "Come." That which stamps the power of the revelation of God is that the heart is really fixed on Him, and the soul desires His coming, if the world is not between our souls and Him, "to be with Him and to see Him as He is." Can you truly say, "All here is dross and dung compared with Christ?" What we have to do is to advance in the knowledge of Christ. Now it is the character of everything in the world — all that daily occupies my soul and spirit is that which hinders my soul's satisfaction with Christ — hinders my affections flowing out to Him — hinders my communion with Him. It is the character of all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, etc., not of the Father, etc.; so that the heart gets occupied with it and cannot advance in the knowledge of Christ, nor say, the one thing I desire is, "Come, Lord Jesus." There must be an entire estrangement from the world to say, "Come." The next thing, the heart must be fixed on Himself. Another thing is, the conscience must be perfect. No one could desire Christ to come, if his conscience whispered he might be punished with everlasting destruction, etc. You cannot say, Come, if your conscience is not purged. How can we have a perfect conscience? I will tell you. "As it is appointed unto men once to die, and after that the judgement, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin," etc. Then the coming of Christ is in connection with a perfect conscience. In speaking of a perfect conscience, I must have a perfect measure: I must look at God's judgement about sin in the perfect sacrifice of Christ. Are you in the light as God is in the light? for the light manifests all evil. What matters your conscience, if you have not been in God's presence? How often our conscience is not up to the measure which God requires! If you make a mistake, is your conscience up to the light as God is in the light? This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light. Christ has been presented to every man's conscience for life, and as the perfect pattern of life, like God, and always pleasing Him. There is the light. "The word that I speak unto you, it shall judge you in the last day." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart." Christ did — are you like Christ? You know you are not up to that measure. Take Christ's life down here. He never did anything for Himself, and you never did anything but for yourself. Show me one instance in which Christ acted from mere natural affection. Was it when His mother and His brethren were without? No; for His reply was, "Who is my mother and my brethren?" Christ never did anything to please Himself, except in the sense of delighting to do the Father's will. Do you say God has sent His Son into the world to be the light of the world, and that He will after all judge by another principle? If it be so, that the light has come into the world, have you that light? Are you like Christ? Or if not, are you condemning yourself that you are not? Have you allowed Christ His place and authority in your heart? Have you joined in the condemnation against yourself, saying, God is right — taking the judgement of God and siding against yourself? If so, the soul has taken the path of light and truth. Do you judge sin as God judges it? Not by saying, That is wrong, when it must condemn another. This is not conscience. But when you say,

I am wrong, and God is right, and thereby condemn yourself, you so feel the need of grace. Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. A perfect and effectual work is done. It was done according to God's estimate of sin; so that sin is put away in God's sight, and that makes my conscience perfect. I see here, in divine energy, Christ coming down and putting away sin according to the poor sinner's need. He did not appear without sin the first time, but with sin, in the sense of bearing it, not for Himself, but for us. Personally, He was ever without sin. When He comes the second time, it is without sin, having once borne our sins, and blotted them out for ever. So entirely has He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, that He has nothing to say to sin, but, as He said, to "come again and receive you to myself." Is there anything about sin there? No. The first time it was about sin; but He will come a second time, without sin — not to receive us in our sins, for sin is put away, but to receive us to Himself in perfect, divine love. What! am I to be where Christ is? Yes, but not to carry my sins in there. God could not bear it, for He is perfectly holy. No. If Christ is there, all my sins are put away. Thus, the conscience being purged, there is no hindrance to my saying in full liberty of conscience, "Come:" If Christ says, "I am the bright and Morning Star," then I have nothing to fear; but it is the joy of my soul to look for Him, and to be with Him. The affections set on Christ, and the conscience being thoroughly purged, I say, "Come." The soul desires Christ, knowing its association with Himself as the bright and morning star, and says, "Come." Judas said, (not Iscariot,) "Lord, how is it thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" And according to this is the proper hope of the saint. "Let him that heareth say, Come." There is the love of a known relationship. It is founded on a known relationship. One cannot love as a brother one that we do not know as a brother. I cannot love a man as my father, if I do not know him as my father, and that I am his son. It is founded on a relationship existing; so all the affections of a saint belong to a relationship already existing. Grace puts us in relationship that we may have the affections proper to that relationship. And unless I am walking in worldliness, or so as to grieve the Spirit of God, there will be the desire to see Christ, that I may be with Him, and be like Him.

When the relationship is known, there will be the love of the relationship. But you must be a wife and know it, to love like one. Well, you are one now. Conduct yourself like one. And this is true of every one who has heard the voice of the Shepherd and believed. And let him come in the consciousness of the relationship and join to say, "Come." And I would say, if there be anyone present who has not yet got the consciousness of relationship, let him receive Christ and this relationship at once, that he may rejoice with us at the prospect of Christ as the "bright and Morning Star," and say, "Come." As long as we are in the world, we are where Christ is not known. I have not got my place yet in glory; but I have got the well of water springing up within me; therefore I turn in the consciousness of what I have got in myself and say, "Come." It is the Spirit within me that awakens the desire. Why am I longing to see Him? Because I know he loves me. Why to be in the Father's house? Because it is my proper place and portion as a child. All the springs of joy are known as our own in that relationship: therefore I can say, "Let him that is athirst come." That is, the joy I have myself in God, necessarily shows itself in love, and every desire for others to have it too.

Besides this, in Revelation 22:16, Christ is the bride's object; and the moment He says, I am the bright and Morning Star, she, directed by the Spirit, says Come. "And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

The bride is not the water of life, but she has it and can say, Come. It is Christ for the poorest sinner.

(J. N. Darby? — compare above last paragraph with similar in Collected Writings vol. 28 page 203)

Vol 03 - "Christ is all and in all."

"Christ is all and in all."

Colossians 3:2.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, November 1860.

(1st. Edition: November [03 1860 171])

The tendency is to satisfy our souls, even when we are born of God, with one of these truths, instead of enjoying them both. And although they are blessedly harmonious, as all truths must be, still there is a manifest difference between the two statements, "Christ is all," and Christ is "in all." For I apprehend when the Spirit of God says that Christ is all, that He thereby puts down completely in the things of God whatever we were in nature, and all that is of the world; that He thereby excludes all questions about the difference between Jews and Gentiles — between those who had thoughts of God, exalting themselves above others by covenant, or rite, or law, as Israel had; all questions of wise or ignorant, as to the learning of this world — barbarian, Scythian, bond, or free — it matters not what, as to their social condition in this life; so that He gives a most comprehensive glance at the ways in which men draw lines of demarcation. These have their place before the eye, as regards the world; for clearly natural relationships exist, and very rightly so, but not in heaven. And we must remember that Christian worship goes upon the ground of what is true in heaven. Therefore it is that St. Paul, when exhorting the Hebrew Christians, invites them to draw near "into the holiest of all," because it is there that faith carries us. Our bodies may be together in any place on earth, but it is in heaven that the true worship is carried on in spirit, in "the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man." Therefore we may say, that the only real place of worship now is heaven, where our Priest is, and where our sacrifice is presented. There we by faith stand in the presence of God Himself; consequently, in what has merely to do with God, Christ is all. Everything that pertained to us in the flesh completely disappears.

But there is another side of the truth. While there is the negation of all the distinctions of the flesh as to the things of God in that statement, "Christ is all," it is most important to see that Christ is "in all." There is not one of those who bear His name but what Christ is in him. Faith acts on this. This it is which draws out the only love that is worth having, and that God recognises in the things that concern Himself; that love which is of God, and which God Himself is. What is it? Not mere sympathy because of community of sentiment; that is the parent of all sectarianism. What is it that binds together those who naturally may have nothing in common? Christ is in all. Then comes, along with that, the most solemn responsibility. Wherever what is not of Christ is displayed in a Christian, it is not to be passed over and made nothing of, because, as might be said, "for all that Christ is in him." The real truth is that Christ is in him in order that all that which is of the flesh and inconsistent with Him who is our life may be judged and put away. Anything but this as a principle in our souls would be to do evil that grace may abound. Still it remains true, and it is a most precious truth, Christ is all, and Christ is in all. If the one truth makes nothing of us, I may say that

the other makes everything of us. The one blots out what is of the first Adam, while the other just as much gives the full and proper value of Christ to every one that belongs to God, spite of much that might be trying and painful individually. It is the character of the last Adam attached to all the saints. It is in their mutual relations that the greatest trial is felt. The family circle may illustrate this. You may often find a great deal that is very pleasant and courteous outside the home, that is never known in it. This, of course is most sorrowful, but it is just in the home circle that the trial comes chiefly; for we there see much of one another's failings. It is the same thing in the things of God. We are put to the test by our relations with the saints of God. Do you, do we, know how to practically reconcile these two truths — Christ "all," and Christ "in all?" To love Christ in all, and at the same time to exalt nothing but Christ? I speak now of the relations of saints one with another in the things of God.

But there is another Scripture that I must just say a word upon, because it is often confounded with the one we are looking at. It is in 1 Corinthians 15:1-58 — an expression that we are all familiar with. God shall be all in all — a totally different truth, which does not refer to the same time. It has no bearing upon what is going on now, but upon a state of things that we may say is still far distant. It will not be true till then, except to faith, which gives a present existence to all truth. But if you come to the accomplishment of it, when will God be "all in all?" Not even when we are taken to be with the Lord, nor when the Lord has brought back His ancient people, and blotted out their iniquities, and made them to be the grand instruments of His blessing here below. Even then it will not be true that God is "all in all." When will it be, then? When the Lord shall have delivered up the kingdom. He will receive it for the express purpose of making good all the promises of God, and putting down all the evil that rises up against God. That will be the object of Christ's earthly kingdom. And when everything is put down, and the last enemy is destroyed — when there will be no death to touch the body, and no devil to tempt the soul, (for I am not now speaking of the temporary binding of Satan, but of the time when he is entirely set aside and cast into the lake of fire,) then, and not till then, will God be all in all. In the millennium, when there will be the full blessing in heaven, and a grand measure of it upon earth, still there will be the control of evil under the government of Christ. But what will be most prominent then? Man will be all in all, in the person of Christ. As man, He will take the kingdom, which will be the vindication of Him who was crucified. It was as man that He suffered, and it is as man that He will be exalted in that kingdom which will be the display of Him as (so to speak) man all in all. And when He has used all the power and glory with which He is invested, to reduce everything into subjection to God, then will come the eternal scene, when God will be all in all. This will be the blessed answer to what man has been doing from the first — arrogating to himself what belongs to God. Even where it is a question of a sinner getting the forgiveness of his sins, man is trying to have them forgiven by himself — though "who can forgive sins but God only?" All through, it is man taking the place of God, and taking it, alas! in wickedness. When Jesus is exalted in this blessed kingdom, all the object and result of His glory will be to the glory of God the Father. And when all is perfectly put down, and not one blot is left upon the whole universe of God; when all evil is judged, and good is brought out in the full glory of God, better even than when creation was first put forth (for the new creation is better than the old); then will shine the grand truth of all eternity — God all in all; God — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. For we must be very tenacious as to this. It is not that God the Father may be all in all — which is never said in Scripture, and would be derogatory to the Son and Holy Ghost. But He who has been holding the kingdom as man will deliver it up, that GOD (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost)

may be all in all — the praise of every creature, without one single thing to dim and tarnish the scene for ever and ever.

Vol 03 - Christ, the Propitiatory.

Christ, the Propitiatory.

Romans 3:25.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, January 1861.

(1st. Edition, January [03 1861 204])

The mercy-seat was the cover of the ark in the most holy place. There God dwelt in glory. The Shekinah, which marked the presence of the God of Israel, was there. And upon the mercy-seat there was blood, the blood of a victim slain upon the day of atonement. On that day one man stood forth in the midst of guilty Israel — one man confessed the sins of Israel — one man slew the victim for Israel, carried the blood into the sanctuary and put it upon and before the mercy-seat — seven times sprinkled the blood upon it, and seven times before it. God now declares that what that type held out in prospect, the work of Jesus is: that all the substance of that which was foreshadowed in the blood-stained mercy-seat, is now true in Jesus. Think what a blessed thing that is! Not a soul but one brought the victim, and there was one victim slain for Israel and no more. Not a soul goes in of all Israel, but one, the high priest. And he went in not merely for himself and his own house, but for Israel. The goat, whose blood was shed for Israel, was so entirely distinct in the type that, as the high priest was a mere sinner like another, he had a separate sacrifice or bullock slain for himself and his own house. But Christ needs none, and therefore can be wholly for the sinner. How thoroughly there you have the substitute! How entirely the question is taken away from the sinner and laid upon Him that is mighty — the only One that could meet our ruin in the sight of God? On that day the great confession was not Israel's, but the high priest's. No doubt they had been troubled and mourning before, and on that day they did afflict their souls, and did no work. But if there is one thing that, more than the law or than hell, makes sin to be thoroughly felt, it is God's judgement of it in the cross of Christ. Oh! the goodness of God who brought out all the horrors of my sin, that He might take it upon Himself in the person of Jesus, and become responsible for it! If a man has to suffer for his own fault, he makes up his mind to it, and tries to harden his heart in pride, or sinks into despair. If you have to answer for your sins you are lost for ever. But what touches the heart is, another suffering for his sins. And when a soul knows that God Himself has become a man in order to suffer, that is, measured all sins in His own divine light, and brought out their true blackness — that the blessed Son of God has had it all laid upon Himself and borne its punishment — that now the blood is shed, and more than that, sprinkled upon the mercy-seat. O what love, what truth is this! The blood of Jesus sprinkled upon the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat. And lo! the veil is rent and I may enter in. What meets me there? My sins? Not one is there. The law? It is completely hidden from view. The lid of the ark — the mercy-seat itself — shuts it down. The law is, no doubt, there: it is honoured, and is where none can sully or gainsay. But as far as I am concerned, nothing so establishes the law as faith. Its claim was so sacred, and God's majesty so bound up with it, that Christ Himself must be made a curse by that very law and suffer all the consequences of it, if He took the sinner's place. And He

did! His death sanctioned the law in the most solemn manner and to the full. But Christ is also the end of the law to everyone that believes. If the seal was upon the law in Christ's death, for that very reason I am completely delivered.

The light of God's presence shines only upon the blood on the mercy-seat — and what does that blood speak? Has God any fault to find with it? Can He, looking at the blood of His Son, say it is not sufficient? His word is, that it cleanses from all sin. Listen, now, you who do not know what it is to have rest for your souls. God Himself speaks to you by His word; He has brought your sin before you; He has told you that all your attempts to get better are vain — that they are, in fact, but setting yourselves up against the sentence of God: your works are wicked, your nature hopelessly evil. God Himself declares, "There is no difference." And if you are resolving and labouring to improve, you are just trying to make a difference. God, I repeat, declares there is none. Oh! the hatefulness of the heart, where fruits of the Spirit have never grown. It is a wilderness indeed, full of briars and thorns. Such is man's heart in God's sight and estimate, yet His joy is that the wilderness should rejoice and blossom as the rose. But the question of sin must be settled first. I must be delivered and justified, before the fruits can appear. How is it to be done? "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood." He points to the mercy-seat. Not a single thing but the blood of Jesus is offered there. God is looking at that blood. And when in Israel the sin had been all brought out and confessed by the high priest, what was not their gladness as, from the presence of their God, he came forth the witness that all sins and iniquities had been put away? Israel did not see the blood sprinkled within — they believed it? they had been in humiliation and sorrow till then, but all was changed now. Why? Because the blood of atonement was upon the mercy-seat. And yet that was but a goat's blood. Whereas, now, the Son of God has died, and His blood is before the living God — that great and only-sufficient sacrifice for sin. God now proclaims, throughout the wide world, the eternal efficacy of that blood for poor sinners. If there is no goodness in me towards God, there is goodness in God for me. Have I known this from God? Then I have repented. God stands to the value of that blood. Have I taken His word for it? This is faith, and there is the first place where the battle must be won. "Christ has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." Am I to look at my own heart and say, now I know that my sins are gone, and that I am a Christian because I feel myself to be a little better than I was a year ago? The Lord preserve you from such a delusion! It is but the old man again, essaying to make a difference where God has said there is none. A Christian is one who has confessed himself completely lost and bankrupt. He is miserable about it; he feels that He has wronged God, but believes that God has wrought salvation in the cross. Hence He can weigh all and own it to God. For the first time he is really honest in heart. Begin, then, with Christ and His blood. Having Christ for my sins, I have also Christ in me to produce the fruits of the Spirit. I want to bring praise to Him. I desire the whole world to know He has become the object and life, as well as the salvation, of that poor wretched creature who was born blind but now sees.

Vol 03 - 2Ch_20:1-37.

2 Chronicles 20:1-37.

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(1st. Edition, January [03 1861 206])

Circumstances of outward trial and difficulty are what we have here. It is not a question of internal conflict, which is often really unbelief and the unjust power of the flesh. This is not the proper warfare of the Christian. Conflict in Scripture is the power of evil against us, because we are with God and know it. It is either the aggression of the saint in taking further possession of blessing and making advances for the Lord; or it is the violence of the enemy's assaults upon us, because we are on His side. But proper christian conflict is never the mere experience of the working of sin within us, though the latter may have been painfully realised also. We have all of us been so much under the law that it is often with great difficulty we have recovered from its effects; it is apt constantly to come in.

Where we understand the ways of God more simply according to His mind and word, we have an immense show of Satan's force brought out to attack the people of God and drive them from their place of blessing. Thus, we find Israel here surrounded by enemies; but they were seeking the Lord, and the way in which He used these very circumstances for good was what chiefly pressed on my own mind, and leads me to say these few words. For we are entitled, because we know what God is, to be quite sure that there is never an assault of the devil upon us, but what, if our eye is towards the Lord, we shall be more blessed than we ever were. "Believe in the Lord your God," Jehoshaphat says, "so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper." Blessing would come, through the goodness of God, even if there were not the quiet confidence which is due to Him. But it is clear that as His children this is not what we desire. It should not be merely the Lord to make up for and cover our cowardice. We ought to desire to enjoy what God gives us for that purpose. This scene is intended to teach us a great truth. When there is a mustering strong of the adversary, and we see no loophole of escape, nor any thought of how they are to be defeated, if our eye is only simple in the confidence of His love, we are entitled to go into what seems to be the battle with songs of joy. And this not merely like Israel after crossing the Red Sea, when their enemies were gone altogether, but we are privileged, even when we are about to begin the battle, to sing as if the victory were won. The battle that we have here is one of the few where they did not strike a blow. This is exceedingly sweet to have God so manifestly taking up our cause, that there is not the need for a single stroke on our part. It is a painful thing personally to have to wound any one, and it is a great mercy where God far more than answers the confidence He inspires, and the enemy is defeated without our fighting. God intends that the first taste should be that of the trial; but that the best thought should be what is God for us, and what He feels about those who join in all their strength, to crush, if it were possible, the glory of the Lord in the poor one of His choice. May our hearts be towards Him! The valley through which we have sung before the battle, is the valley through which we shall return singing again, and enriched with

more than we can carry.

Vol 03 - Rom_5:18-19.

Romans 5:18-19.

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"As by one act of offence [it was] unto all men for condemnation, (i.e., it was unto all men to condemnation,) even so by one accomplished righteousness [it was] unto all men for justification of life." So it runs literally. The meaning may be thus explained. Supposing you had only the one act of Adam by itself, it would have plunged all men into condemnation. On the other hand, the work of Christ in itself would have brought complete deliverance unto all men. But that is only the tendency towards or unto all men, not the actual effect upon them. Here, in this chapter, we have, in verse 18, the tendency; and in verse 19, the effect. "As by one man's disobedience [the] many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall [the] many be made righteous." "The many" who had to do with the one man that disobeyed were all men, because all were children of Adam; so by the obedience of Christ shall "the many" — His class — be made righteous. In the first clause, therefore, "the many" means all men; in the second, it means all saints. You could understand in the first clause "all men" but not in the second. The respective families of Adam and of Christ are instanced. "Therefore as by one offence [it was] unto all to condemnation, so also [it is] unto all to justification of life." It is the aim a thing would reach if unimpeded. If all had submitted to it — Christ's death and, rising again — they would have been justified; that was the tendency. But in verse 19, we have the positive result. "By the obedience of one shall [the] many [those who have to do with Him] be made righteous." Headship, first of Adam, then of Christ, is the great truth brought out here. "Justification of life" is the actual condition of a Christian. The life he now possesses is the life of Christ risen. And as there cannot be a question against Christ risen, so there cannot be one against the Christian.

Vol 03 - The Way of Grace.

The Way of Grace.

Exodus 34:9.

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(1st. Edition, February [03 1861 215])

By looking at the fact, that grace was manifested in Christ, and reigned through righteousness, we see that God cannot be known, or practically enjoyed, but in Him, who was the expression of His grace. Sin reigned through the law, and must be judged by the law. Grace cannot judge, but the righteous law of God did, as indeed Christ yet will another day. The moment Christ is now looked at, perfect grace is seen; the Father's name is revealed, and His love made known. God in Christ deals in grace. Moses, in his measure, understands this, the people did not. The law must impute sin; but Moses by faith, seeing the place Christ has, does not take one under the law, which could only distress, but exhibits the place of grace. Indeed, the people were never properly under law, for before it was given the golden calf had been made, and so there was an end to all standing on that ground. From Exodus 32:9, they are looked at as a stiff-necked people all through. Moses now makes everything to depend on this principle of grace — the Lord's glory. On the ground of the law, all was over and wholly lost; but Moses takes the place of mediator, and intercedes on the plea of grace.

In the indignation of holy wrath he broke the tables of stone, when he saw the golden calf; for how could he put the righteous law of God beside a false God? Still he could say, "They are Thy people;" and the very same thing that makes him zealous for God, make him zealous for the people also — it was God's glory. When he pleads with God for the people, he says, "Why does thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand?" What will the Egyptians say? Will not the enemy say, For mischief did he bring them out? "Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever." With God Moses pleads his glory for the people, and with the people He pleads for the same glory.

In principle, Christians can take this place, the place of intercession. If we see a Christian sin, we can go to God and plead with Him that He is His child, and ask God, for His own glory's sake, to deliver him; for Christ's sake, knowing the grace that is in Him, that the enemy may not triumph. Then we can turn round and sharply reprove, saying, How can you sin against such perfect love, and grace and holiness? How can you grieve a heart of such unheard-of compassion and goodness, and be reckless of the mercy and glory of the God of all grace?

"Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up to the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin." (Exodus 32:30.) He had only a cheerless peradventure to leave with them. "Moses returned unto the Lord and said, Oh, this people have sinned, as great sin and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sins" — then, in true zeal for God's glory and real self-sacrificing love for the people, he adds — "If not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written." But the Lord said to him, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." This is the principle of the law, and under that law God cannot clear the guilty nor let the wicked go unpunished. Everything hangs now upon mediation. But Moses, though taking the place of intercessor, was not perfect in the knowledge of grace. He could only say to the people, "peradventure I shall make an atonement." He could not put away sin. It was altogether a different thing with Christ. He could put away sin. He did make an atonement. There was no peradventure with Him. He bore the sin, and so to speak, made a transfer of what He Himself was to the poor sinner. God has to retire into His own sovereignty, which allows Him to act in goodness and mercy towards the wicked. In His sovereign grace He then could say, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy." (Exodus 33:19.)

Moses now pleads with the people, just as he had been pleading with God for them. They counted on blessing, because they were Abraham's seed. So may Ishmael and Esau, then. This could not be. Yet Esau was just as much a child of Abraham as Jacob. Then hope must stand on the sovereignty of God, as we see in Romans 9:1-33. If they take the ground of righteousness, they are no better off. The golden calf had broken the very first link of the chain that could have claimed help from the law; for they had made "another god." Moses shows them that all claim and title and expectation was clean gone. Deliverance comes from the sovereign grace and mercy of God; for the law "cannot" clear the guilty, but visit iniquity to the third and fourth generation. Now, under grace, it becomes a question of God's righteousness in Christ. "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." (Romans 3:1-31.) We find that he who sins can only be spared on the ground of atonement, through the sovereign grace of God. Israel, as we have said, was never fully and strictly under pure law; but a mixture of law and mercy came in. And this is just what the people of the present day delight in. They will have the law; and they talk of trying to keep it, and of looking to the mercy of God to pardon them when they break it. But the law must ever be the ministration of death and condemnation. (2 Corinthians 3:1-18.) The first time Moses came down from being on the mount with God, his face did not shine. He then brought solely the law, and that was the sure sentence of death — nothing, surely, to make his face shine. It was the mixture of mercy which produced the effect on Moses; but the law prevented the people looking upon the glory; for they could only see it in a legal way. The law had claims; and they were guilty. Israel could not behold the glory.

How different our position! There is no longer a veil needed nor allowed: it is rent. We can look at the glory in the face of Jesus Christ, in the fullest certainty of forgiveness; for we know, by and in the gospel, He could not be in heaven if sin was not put away. Moses said, "peradventure" — the atoning work not being done. But there is no peradventure with Christ. As long as the law had a claim, He could not go up; for God had "laid upon him the iniquity of us all, and by his stripes we

are healed." When I see Christ at God's right hand, I ought to know there is not one speck of sin imputed to me. He has put it all away; and the dealings of God with me now are upon the ground of an accepted atonement. Law and mercy will not do for the Christian; for had not the failure been met in Christ, the law would still have claims on him. "We are not under law, but under grace." God's government is another thing: He does put his people under that, and He will exercise it over them; for He is the moral Governor of His redeemed.

Let us look at the place Moses takes. It is wonderful what he can ask from God in grace on behalf of the people. How blessed the consciousness of His dealing with them on the ground of mercy! In Exodus 33:1, God says to Moses, "Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt, and I will send an angel before thee. . . . Say to the children of Israel, Ye are a stiffnecked people. I will come up in the midst of thee, in a moment and consume thee; therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee that I may know what to do to thee." Now we can understand this thing in a human way. Suppose my child has been thoroughly disorderly, rebellious, and disobedient; I can say to him, Stand by, my indignation is great, humble yourself. The people are obedient; they strip themselves of their ornaments; they bow to God. Everything now depends on the Mediator. Moses takes the tabernacle outside the camp, and pitches it far off. The living God and a strange god could not dwell together. Things now are well reversed. The Lord speaks to Moses face to face, as a man does to his friend; and Moses returned into the camp as God's witness. But Joshua, the spiritual leader of the people, does not go out of the tabernacle. The people had seen the cloudy presence of God stand outside the tabernacle door, and they worship. The people have but one character — they are stiffnecked. God said so, and Moses did the same. But he says to the Lord, "Thou sayest, Bring up this people; but thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me," etc. Moses recognises what God had told him, and takes the place of mediator. He does not dare to entertain a thought of going up alone. He desires to know whom God will send with him. He had found grace in God's sight, and this place of grace makes him bold to ask. It is wonderful what requests he can make. "Show me now thy way," — "and consider that this nation is THY people." It is God's way: not merely a way, but the way. The Lord would have him go the way that would be well-pleasing in His sight. This will be the desire of every soul that understands the love of God's heart. It will not satisfy to find a way which my conscience will be at ease in — a way where there is no great evil; but "Show me thy way" — the right way, in which I can glorify God — His way who was meek and lowly of heart — that good and acceptable way of Christ. If I am in the enjoyment of his love and grace, my own way will not do: it must be His way. Moses, as we have said, knows it is useless to attempt to save the people, unless he has the Lord's presence with him. "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." When grace is seen, the very reason that God gives why he should

not go with them (because they were a stiffnecked people, lest He consume them) becomes the ground on which Moses pleads that He should go with them. "If I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; FOR it is a stiff-necked people." It is beautiful to see how grace comes in, and pleads that as a reason for God's presence in mercy, which, under the law, would have consumed them.

Do you think Moses would ever have got the rebellious, stubborn, stiffnecked Israelites through the wilderness, where there was difficulty at every step and danger in every turn, if God had not been with them? This is exactly our position. Our only standing is in grace, through the mercy of

God, on the ground of atonement. This is the righteousness of God. We are a forgiven people, but in that we are stiffnecked and continually erring; and this is just the very reason why we so much need God's presence with us. Do you think we should ever get "up hence" with our evil, treacherous hearts; with our stubborn, wayward, unsubdued wills, if God was not with us? If there was the slightest question of the imputation of sin, then, of all things, we should most dread God's presence. But sin has been imputed to Christ, and cannot be imputed to us who believe. He was the propitiation for our sins. We are pardoned through His blood, and sealed by His Spirit until the day of redemption. We are God's people, though stiffnecked and rebellious; and on the ground of grace, we, like Moses, can plead this as a cause why we cannot go up hence without Him. While walking through the wilderness let us hold fast grace. But we must not forget that God is the governor as well as the guard and protector of His people. He will deal with them according to the principles of His own government, and we shall get from His hand according to our ways. Do you think He is more indifferent as to the walk of His child than His servant? Do you suppose He will act towards the obedient and the froward alike? No! If you are not so walking, as to be guided by His eye, He will draw you in with bit and bridle. For He not only bends and bows the will. but He must break it, that we may walk according to the good pleasure of His will. To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.

Vol 03 - The Passage of the Jordan.

The Passage of the Jordan.

Joshua 3:1-17.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, February 1861.

(1st. Edition, February [03 1861 217])

We often lose a good deal of the practical value of the teaching that is given us in this book, from thoughts that we have probably received from the days of childhood. Thus the passing of the Jordan is often thought to mean passing the boundary that divides us from earth into heaven when we die — that it is entering into the heavenly Canaan through death. I do not doubt that it is passing over the boundary of death, and entering into Canaan; but it is not when we leave this world, but while we are still in the body. It is that which God has even us in the resurrection of Christ, and in His present taking possession of the heavenly places for us. And what will make this plain to all is, that when we get to heaven, we have not got to fight with the Canaanites, nor with anything answering to them. Fighting is not the business of heaven; but it was the special business of the people who passed over Jordan. It was more their business than any other thing. It was not so much the work before them in the wilderness. There, the great lesson was dependence upon the living God, and, in the next place, the learning of self. There, God was proving what the hearts of His people were; and, what was infinitely better, the people were proving, or ought to have been proving, what the living God was who had taken His place in their midst. But conflict with enemies was not the great thought of the wilderness. And therefore we only find them meeting with the Amalekites, at one time, or with the Midianites at another. The wars that they had in the wilderness were comparatively few: whereas, when they passed the Jordan, for a time there was nothing but war. The passing of the Jordan, therefore, does not mean the literal death of the body, but the death of Christ, and our union with Him; whereby we are even now planted in heavenly places — and that too for the purpose of our wrestling not with flesh and blood; for, as the Apostle Paul tells us, "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places."

Now there is a good deal of the meaning and power of this lost by the children of God, from the idea that the main part of our conflict is with ourselves. That is not at all the case. Self-judgement is a different thing from conflict. Daily self-judgement is most right and needful — the constant review of our ways and judgement of self, and of the flesh. But there is a restless, indefatigable, subtle enemy, that makes it his main business, not merely to entice the Christian into sin through the flesh, but, by darkening the truth, to hinder souls from enjoying the fullness of the blessings of God's grace and God's glory in His beloved Son. That is the main work of the devil, as far as the Church is concerned, and that is the special thing which we have to watch against. We may examine and judge ourselves day by day, and it is a very right thing. But if the soul is ever so jealous about that, it is not enough. It may, at the same time, be hindered from the full enjoyment

of the Lord Jesus. One main reason is this: the Lord has put before us an inheritance of blessing — "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." But we are slow to take advantage of it. We think, perhaps, that it is presumption; or some may fancy that, instead of venturing on such a subject, it would be more practical to be dwelling upon our ordinary duties in life. But this would not be enough, because it is not Christianity. It is not the measure of what the Lord has called us to now. There are certain things that all saints from the beginning of the world have walked in. It never was right at any time for a saint to lie, or to be dishonest, or to do anything immoral. In all dispensations there are certain moral duties that necessarily are inseparable from life in God. But this is not Christianity. A saint may do all that, and yet not enjoy what I call Christianity. To be thoroughly Christian is to enter into the calling that is now ours through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is what is represented by the passing of the Jordan. It presents the same death and resurrection of Christ that had been previously given us in the passage of the Red Sea, though in a different point of view. The death and resurrection of Christ as seen there is Christ separating us from the world — Christ bringing us out of Egypt. But all that may be, and we may not have the least enjoyment of our heavenly blessings.

We may thank God that we are delivered — that we are not going to be cast into hell. But is that enough? It is not. If we stop short there, if we do not enter further into our blessings, Satan will be sure, at one time or another, to gain a complete victory over us, as he did over the Israelites. For instead of their conquering and driving out their enemies, we read of Canaanites, Perizzites, Jebusites, etc., who kept their possessions in peace, in spite of Israel. And so it is with many a child of God. They are kept in evil that does not appear to be such, and is not considered so, because it is not moral evil. For even a mere man is bound not to sin morally. But a Christian is a person who has his eyes upon the Lord. Any one can judge an outwardly immoral thing, but very few know that what even godly people are doing, is entirely contrary to the Holy Ghost and to God Himself. There are many so-called religious practices that are sins, and these are what the Christian ought to have his eyes open to. The Lord works this in us by giving us to know that we have got a heavenly inheritance. The Lord Jesus, by His death and resurrection, not only has brought us out of Egypt and into the wilderness, but into heaven itself in spirit. We are even now seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We have got now the stamp of heaven upon us, and God is looking that we may walk in the sense of this great privilege, making advances, gaining victories, and wresting what Christ has given us out of the hands of the enemy. Supposing a person truly converted to God, and made happy in the knowledge of his sin being for ever put away, the next thing is — he does not know what to do to please God, or how to worship God. If he simply goes on as he was before, assuming that what he did when he was unconverted as to these things, is what he is to do now, (save only, of course, with a new aim and power,) he cannot make any progress; and it is thus that the devil keeps possession of the place of blessing, and shuts out the heir of glory from his calling and inheritance. Of course, I only speak of the matter of practical enjoyment. The enemies are still undisturbed in the land. But we ought to be seeing what the inheritance is that the Lord has assigned to us, and whether our worship and our walk are really according to God, and suitable to the place in which He has set us. If you make morality your standard, you will be sure to fall below what you propose. Whatever we put before us as our criterion, there will always be a falling short. If we have Christ risen and Christ in heaven as our object, we shall prove the power of His resurrection, not only in lifting us up when we are conscious of our exceeding shortcoming, but in strengthening us "to press forward towards the

mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

In the beautiful scene before us, we find that the people passed dry-shod over Jordan. And what made it so remarkable was, its being the very time when the river was overflowing its banks; it was fuller then than at any other season. So in the death of Christ there was the fullest possible outpouring of God's wrath; and upon His beloved Son, sin — our sin has been judged to the uttermost. And, as in the type, they passed over as if there had been no Jordan at all, so, in the reality for us, there remains no judgement, but fullness of blessing. We are passed from death unto life, and are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

And now, when they have entered the land, what do we find? The manna ceases — they must eat of the old corn of the land. The food that had sustained them in the wilderness does not any longer suffice. And what is the old corn of the land? It is Christ, as the manna also was; but Christ in another way: it is the food of resurrection. The corn of the land was the fruit of the seed that had been sown in the land, and that had died and sprung up again. It was Christ in resurrection. The Lord grant that our souls may feed upon Him thus! To say that Christ thus known is too high for us, — to be content without enjoying Him thus, is thus far to be content without Christ.

Vol 03 - To Correspondents.

To Correspondents.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, February 1861.

(1st. Edition, February [03 1861 223])

If "G.H.L." were to send his statement of evidence as to the seventy weeks of Daniel, the Editor might be enabled to form a better judgement whether its publication would tend to profit. But he cannot for a moment allow that to deny symbols in the prophecies is a help to understanding them. In his opinion, it is as erroneous as the opposite theory, which denies any part to be literal. The truth is, that in almost all the prophets there is a mixture of figures with ordinary language; which to a really simple mind, occasions no insurmountable difficulty. The source of mistake as to Scripture lies in the truths communicated, far more than in the words which convey them. Again, he thinks that it is puerile to gainsay the fact that symbols are the rule, the language of every day the exception, in a large part of Daniel and the Revelation. None have done more harm than men like Tyso, who, overlooking this in their zeal for letter, have propounded the grossest absurdities (e.g., that the locusts of Revelation 9:1-21 are "literal insects, bred in the smoke of the bottomless pit, as insects are, commonly, in a blight;" or that the woman in Revelation 12:1-17, is "some pious and excellent woman, perhaps a queen.") Symbols, figures, plain language, all occur, here and there. One theorist, according to the character of his mind sees nothing but figure; another reads nothing but letter. Real wisdom bows to what God gives and as He gives it; accepts and seeks to understand all that He reveals, whatever the form. Verbal inspiration has nothing to do with the matter. Has not God been pleased to use both symbol and language, and the words of daily life? To assume that all is literal is to close one's eyes to facts, which need no further evidence for such as can see.

If "G.H.L." merely raises a question as to a particular prophecy, such as the seventy weeks, the case is altered. By all means let him prove, if he can, that years are not intended. Only let him be aware of the delusion, that those who argue for the letter everywhere are the only true and faithful expositors of Scripture. A symbol, if clearly and certainly understood, is quite as determinate as any other mode of expression. It is a mere misconception that the language of symbol is necessarily vague and inconclusive. The vision of the beasts in Daniel 7:1-28 is as clearly symbolic as the angel's narrative in Daniel 11:1-45, is literal; yet the difference of view even now about the wilful king far exceeds that which has ever existed touching the four imperial powers. "G.H.L." seems to think there can be no doubt that we are all wrong in regarding Rome as the fourth Gentile empire; but here, at least, unanimity is against him, and he had not literal language, but symbol; so that, on his own principle, he should not be too confident.

Further, the Editor would remind "G.H.L.," that those who profess to be literal interpreters exhibit a very large amount of conflict and inconsistencies in their schemes, and that the mystical school can scarcely be said to surpass in monstrous explanations what has emanated in our own day

from their antagonists. The argument founded on diversity of opinions is a fallacy; if true, it would be destructive, almost equally, of both parties.

Vol 03 - "Strength made perfect in weakness."

"Strength made perfect in weakness."

2 Corinthians 12:8-9.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, April 1861.

(1st. Edition, April [03 1861 255])

It is a natural thought, the first thought perhaps even for a godly soul, to desire an answer of the Lord in the removal of that which is trying and painful. We know the Lord's great compassion — that He cares for His own — that He feels for them and with them; and we are prone to gather from this that He must appear speedily for us when any blow, humiliation, or sorrow comes upon us, specially that which would seem to make the Lord's glory to be questioned and thwarted in various ways. And this was most plainly so in the case before us. The enemy was taking advantage of this thorn in the apostle's flesh to lower the apostle and his work. We are disposed to expect an immediate answer from the Lord in the way of the removal of the trial. It was so with the apostle himself. He cried to the Lord about it; he besought Him thrice that it might depart from him. But he mistook the Lord. It was not so that He heard. The Lord did hear him. But the apostle had this great truth to learn: — the Lord's way of answering is much better than our way of beseeching. Even were it the Apostle Paul — a man with such an amazing knowledge of what was most suitable to God and most to be desired by His children — even he had to learn that he was not the Lord — an apostle had to learn that the Lord's ways are above our ways. I believe that this desire of an answer from the Lord coming at once in the way of meeting us in our difficulty and sorrow, is rather one that was taught, and that God acted upon in His ways of old, in dealing with His ancient people Israel. When they were in any difficulty or trial, they cried to the Lord, and He heard and delivered them out of their troubles. But it was not so necessarily now. It is not always in removing the distress that God acts. This is not the characteristic way now with Christians. I do not say that He does it not in many a case; for He pities the weakness of His children, and does not lay the same burden upon all.

But there is something more blessed than the mere setting aside of the trial, and that is the power of divine grace which enters into it, and lifts us above it, the distress, it may be, continuing, the sorrow going on, the thorn not removed, but ourselves raised entirely above it.

And I believe that this heavenly way of meeting sorrow and trouble, is specially the one in which God triumphs in His dealings with the church. Because it is not power coming into the tribulation, and preserving saints through it, that is the characteristic of the church, any more than it will be a mighty deliverance at the end of the tribulation, and the execution of judgement on surrounding enemies. That is not the manner of the Christian's deliverance. And as it does not answer to the way in which the church will be dealt with at the end, so it is not the principle of the Lord's dealings with us all through. It is a higher thing, the lifting us in spirit above, even while the sorrow may be still adhering to us. Perhaps there is sharp trial, difficulty, and that which is heart-breaking, even in

the church of God itself. The apostle must know this in a way that seemed to frustrate all his desires for the blessing of the church. For the thorn given him was something that made him to be scorned in the eyes of others, and that was an immense trial to himself and to every one that loved him, appearing to be a hindrance, even to the work of the Lord through him. What a thing it looked that the Lord should have sent upon him something that he even had not before, that which made him an object of contempt to others; for that is what the thorn in the flesh was. So that, in some unexplained way, carnal persons, who looked to the outward appearance, were in danger of losing their respect for him. It was not that the thorn was a sin, or something evil he did — it was nothing that people commonly call an infirmity, which, as thus applied, is really a sin; but it was something that was entirely beyond the apostle's control, and that made him an object of contempt to others. We can readily conceive more than one thing that would have such an effect; but we are not told what it was, and we ought not to go beyond the word of the Lord. We do know that both the Galatians and Corinthians were affected by it, and even reasoned from it that he was not called to be an apostle. Paul himself was exceedingly tried by it, and brings out this to the Corinthians themselves. He shows them that it had been an immense exercise to his own mind, the more so as he had had special revelations from the Lord; and that, along with this great honour which had been put upon him by God, but which was unseen by men, there was the thorn given to him in the flesh, producing what men could see and feel, and naturally tending to destroy his influence. But the apostle had a deeper lesson to learn than he had ever entered into before, God giving such a sight of Christ, and such a present knowledge of His love, not by removing the trial, nor by a present answer, it may be, but by lifting him in spirit completely above it, so that he should realize the full weight of it, might even know what it was to die daily, because of the sorrowful circumstances of the church, and now also by reason of what he felt in himself; for there was this that was so painful to bear and so apparently undesirable, because of its effect upon the minds of others. Thus he learns that there was something still better. "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness." Oh! for faith to rest in this, to believe it about ourselves, to apply it to present circumstances of the church of God, to rest with unhesitating certainty in the assurance that, whatever appearances may be, however plain the impossibility for us to set things right where they are wrong, we may have our confidence unshaken in the Lord, just as one can rest in His salvation and know that it is perfect, so should we be calm in the certainty that Christ is Son over His own house, and that His love to the saints now is as perfect as in the matter of bearing their sins. But as individuals may not enjoy the salvation of Christ, so, too, shall I be weak and cast down if feeble in my faith as to the Lord's care for His Church, and His entrance into its sorrows, or if burdened about it, as though the whole blessing of the Church rested upon me. It is plain that this resting upon Christ as the head of His Church would not make the members less feeling and watchful. On the contrary; where we realise that Christ is identified with everything, the sorrow will be intensely known; but there will be confidence in the Lord when we can confide in nothing else, and our faith will not be disappointed. The Lord is coming Himself, but ere He comes, He never ceases to be head of His own church, nor fails to nourish and cherish it.

Vol 03 - The Presence of the Comforter.

The Presence of the Comforter.

John 14:1-31.

J. N. Darby, Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, May 1861.

(1st. Edition, May [03 1861 267])

Having spoken on other occasions, first, of the quickening of the Spirit, secondly, of the Spirit as a "well of water springing up to everlasting life," and, thirdly of the Spirit as rivers of living water flowing out from us, * I now desire to look at the further blessings connected with the Spirit of God dwelling in and with us, the personally-present Comforter, no less than the power of life, communion and communication.

{* Bible Treasury, Jan. [3 1861 202], Feb. [03 1861 219], Apr. [3 1861 254]}

We have seen how the quickening is connected closely with Christ; and not only so, but entirely and singly with Him — born anew of the Second Adam, in contrast with the first. Then we saw the Spirit of God become a spring or source of divine refreshment in us; and there are the blessings flowing from it. There are also blessings and relationships flowing from this — there is not only power given through the Spirit dwelling, but there are relationships resulting from the redemption accomplished. There are not desires only, but development and power of union and communion.

We have the Holy Spirit in virtue of the work of Christ, which gives perfect rest. In Christ we are set in the presence of God. The Spirit unfolds all the consequences of our being thus brought into God's presence by the work of Christ — the consequences in glory, the glory to come. And, more than that, the Spirit of God becomes the power for the exercise of those relationships. No man can learn the blessing of a relationship, except in the exercise of it. As in nature it is so, so with the divine relationship. All depends on the presence of the Holy Spirit down here. Two great truths are connected with this — first, the accepted man, the Second Adam, the Lord from heaven, (not only man in creation,) is in heaven. The One who came down is gone up, and is in the presence of God. Secondly, the Holy Ghost down here associates us with all that Christ is in heaven. All that the Church has here is founded on this.

Thus we have three important truths as the result. First, the Holy Ghost makes my person His temple; therefore it is said, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God," etc. I must use my body as a vessel, an instrument of the Holy Ghost. His presence is the measure of my condition: His dwelling in me is the measure of my conduct. It is joy to be filled with the Holy Ghost. Power also is the result of being anointed with oil. "We have an unction from the Holy One," etc. "Led of the Spirit." The fact of the Holy Ghost being here is the immense principle of the Christian's life. The next thing is, we are brought into fellowship with the Son; and the next is fellowship with the Father. When Christ ascended on high, by virtue of His having become man, He could say, "I ascend to my God and your God;" and in virtue of His being God, He could say, "to my Father and your

Father." His having made us children by adoption, we have this special relationship with God: and so true, so deep, so real a thing is it, that it is said, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God," etc.

Thus "being rooted and grounded in love," that we may "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," be filled with all the fulness of God. This is the amazing, infinite sphere and measure of blessing which we are brought into by the Holy Ghost, because the Holy Ghost dwells in us. He becomes the spring of affections and feelings suitable to the relationship. It cannot be otherwise. A man feels it in his prayers. He finds his heart going out after the Lord. He has desires he cannot help expressing about earthly circumstances and the Church, etc. (See Ananias, Acts 9:13.) There is that kind of intimacy between him and Christ that he can reason as it were with Him. "Lord, I have heard by many of this man." Again, if it is a question which concerns me as a child, I naturally ask my Father for certain things I want; but the soul cannot have freedom of intercourse with God in His majesty, unless our hearts are clear before Him as our Father. We want, in certain things, to go to God, as God, and in others as Father, and in both we have this blessed freedom of intercourse through the Spirit as well as that of the members of the body, with the Head, Christ. All are the free gift of God. When I fail, I fly off to my Father to get help, for I cannot have communion with God when I have failed; and as a member of the body I need the Holy Ghost to take of Christ's and make it mine, because His. This is not community. All is gift to us, but all that Christ has is in glory, as man is ours, for He has given it to us. The Father gives another Comforter that He may abide with you for ever. This is consequent upon Christ's going up to the Father. Christ goes up and receives the Holy Ghost, because of what He has done for others. As Head of the Church He receives it, that the members may share it with Him. Jesus received the Holy Ghost down here for service. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power. (Acts 10:1-48.) But what is said in Acts 2:33? "Having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost," etc. In the one case He was sealed by the Spirit at His baptism; in the other He received the Holy Ghost, to shed abroad in us at His ascension to the Father, "The Comforter whom I will send unto you from the Father."

He calls Him "another," because Christ Himself was their Comforter while He was with them. Christ was to go away; He could not abide here; He must ascend into heaven. "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place." Christ being our Advocate there, the Spirit comes to advocate our cause here.

It is said "The Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive." The world having broken with Christ, can have nothing whatever to do with this Spirit of truth.

John 14:17. They were not merely to have this Comforter as they had had Christ, who only abode as their companion, and then went away, but He was also to be in them, and not only with them.

In John 14:16, it is, "I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter." Here Christ is obtaining the Holy Ghost for them.

In John 15:26, it is, "the Comforter whom I will send unto you." As divine head of the Church, though a man, He had a title to dispose of everything, and He sends the Holy Ghost. See also John 16:7. Then, another thing is, the Father sends Him in Christ's name, because of His acceptance of His work.

John 14:26. The immense, the unchangeable resting place of all blessing is the name of Jesus.

As to its present condition, all connection between the world and God is closed. (I do not speak of providence.) The world then sees Him no more but Christ says, "Ye see me." What an immense difference between the church and the world! We see the blessed one — He is the object before us. The Son having been rejected from the world, all communion between the world and the Father is closed. They say, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him." Now is the judgement of this world. "Upon us the ends of the world are come." — "But ye see me." When the world sees nothing, we, in the power of faith, "behold him who is invisible." Our eyes thus always resting on One in whom the Father finds delight (not the natural eyes, of course,) I know that my affections are set upon the One in whom the Father is fully satisfied. There was an adequate motive for the Father to love Christ. It is undiscerned by us in our natural minds, but the Holy Ghost brings us into blessed communion with the Father's mind. "Because I live ye shall live also." Believing in Him makes me know what His estimate is of Christ, and it is also by virtue of believing in Him that I have life. Not only is the object the same as the Father Himself has, but the life is the same. "Because I live, ye shall live also." He unfolds this connection afterwards, ver. 20 — "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."

This is not said at the beginning of the chapter. It could not be said, until there was union through the Holy Ghost being given. They ought to have known the Father by Christ's being with them, but they could not know this farther thing — "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father," etc. When the Holy Ghost was sent down, the Church knew not only the union of the Father and the Son, but also their own union — "ye in me." The Holy Ghost then leads to Christ as the object of our souls — to Christ as our life, and to our knowledge of Christ in the Father, and we in Christ. This source of life is in us. "Because I live ye shall live also." This is more than the fact of the security of life, but that the very one in whom He lived was to be the source of life to them. We have then the Spirit of adoption crying, Abba Father, instead of bondage. Viewed in connection with the Father Himself, and with the Son it is "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit."

All this is in virtue of accomplished redemption. The Son having taken His place at the right hand of God, my relationship then is founded on Christ, and in all the perfectness of Christ's standing before God for me. But the power to enjoy it is the Holy Ghost. Christ takes His place on high. Sin is all gone, for He has borne it away, perfectly atoned for it, in having been made sin. He has glorified God about this very thing — sin. The holiness and the love of God have been made known by the dealing with sin upon the cross in a way in which nothing else could have revealed them. Having done it all, Christ enters the presence of God, the new man; and where He is, we are. Therefore the place of the Church involves entire deliverance from all fear, because having "the Spirit of adoption." I am not before God now as my Judge, because I am His child. My very existence as a Christian flows from this. I am born of God — a child in the house. In virtue of being thus born, I have my existence before God as His child — the work of Christ, of course, being the foundation. He has borne the judgement: law, sin, etc., are all gone; and I am free from every charge before God.

The reasoning goes on, (Romans 8:18,) If children then heirs, etc. All we have and are will be manifested in glory; but we are now speaking of the position, before the Father, with Christ, the model-man, "the first-born of many brethren." Have we lost anything of the majesty of God in all this? Certainly not. Christ has brought God to us in all His glorious attributes, instead of taking from them. The soul has all the holiness, majesty, as well as love, brought home to it. Reverence

and adoration are wrought there by the Holy Ghost. A son does not the less admire the excellence of his father, because he is his father.

All true worship is the returning back to God from us of all that the Holy Ghost has revealed to us of God. (John 14:26.) "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance." It is said, "The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name." This is the full character of our relationship with Christ. "He shall bring to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you:" not only what He is, but this is the remembrance of all that Christ expressed on earth; and it is a delight to my heart. Every word that came from Christ's mouth was God speaking through a man. Comfort, wisdom, love, all came from Him in perfection. "Thou hast given me the tongue of the learned," etc. The Spirit does not, of course, reveal to me Christ as now on earth; but I have not lost Christ a bit, as to what He was down here. He brings all that He was to our remembrance now. The Holy Ghost gives me Christ as the manna that came down from heaven, as well as what He is now as the hidden manna; and that is giving me to feed on Christ. Mark the difference between Christ's commandments and those under the law. Christ was life, and all His commands were the expression of that life which He had in Himself. So with us; for we have the life in Him. Christ is our life, and His precepts are the guidance of the life which we have in Him. Did life result from what we are doing, all would be over with us. I see the ensnaring world all around me; but I have not only the word of Christ to direct me, but I have the power of divine life — Christ Himself — to help me. (1 John 1:1-10.) There is an object before me; but there is more — direction for my feet in what He is.

John 16:13. "I have many things to say to you," etc. It is not here the path, and teaching in general as we have had, but when He, the spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all truth." This is a present thing; "He shall take of mine and shall show it unto you" — different from His being the remembrancer of what He had said while He was with them on earth. What He hears He speaks; these are the things in heaven brought down to earth, by the Spirit who is on earth. It is the revelation by the Spirit of all that Christ is. Having taken this place on earth as the servant, what He hears he makes known to us; and Christ is now in heaven for us.

The Spirit also shows us "things to come." He brings out all the glory before us, the future hope. I thus look forward to the time when God shall unite all in Christ as head — "in the dispensation of the fulness of times that he might gather together in one all things in Christ both which are in heaven and which are on earth." In the future all the glory is to be Christ's and we are heirs of it. It is to come, but the Holy Ghost makes it known as ours. Thus I look forward to the time when all is manifested, and I am to share it with Him. The glory belongs to one who has identified Himself with and suffered for me. It belongs to Him who "loved me and gave Himself for me," and all His glory is ours, and this is not all, for He says, "All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore, said I, he shall take of mine and shall show it unto you." Thus I am to know what that is — yes, my soul is to know all the glory which this humbled Christ is to have. "He will guide me into all truth." Every thing is set in its right place in the soul, Christ being the centre of all and all centred in Christ. All is our own as members of His body, etc. If God has set Him to be head over all, it is to His Church. The Holy Spirit leads us not only into the hope of the future glory, but also into the consequences of union with the Lord Jesus Christ now in the most intimate relationship possible. The Holy Ghost shows us in Christ all the affections of Christ in exercise towards us, by virtue of that union as the bride of Christ the Son, as Ephesians goes on to show; not only how the head is connected with

the body, but the husband with the wife. "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church." This is enjoined not only as a duty, but according to the example of Christ Himself. "No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church." There is this ministry of Christ towards us because of the relationship. Mark the double character of holiness and power there is in this. Take care you do not grieve the Holy Spirit who brings you into the enjoyment of all this. Whatever is of the world and of the flesh grieves the Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed, etc. It is the measure of what becomes a Christian — a spiritual man.

Then, as to power, we are to be filled with the Spirit — so filled, that as to our place in heaven, we shall be all joy. In the fulness of communion the soul gets its place in the heavenly choir, singing, and making melody to the Lord. But, then, I am in this world of sorrow, and what am I to do? See God in it all, "giving thanks always for all things unto God and our Father," "rejoicing in tribulation." It naturally takes some time to work this thankfulness in us, but of Jesus it is said, when He was rejected by Chorazin and Bethsaida, "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee." He saw God in it — and so, when we can see sorrow coming from God, that His hand is in it, we can say, Oh! then I will thank thee for it. It is not so directly with us sometimes, but it is wrought in the soul afterwards, when the risings of the flesh are subdued.

Being filled with the Spirit is having Christ the actual source of all that arises in us of thoughts and feelings. A man's spirituality is measured by this. When there is nothing else but Christ, we are filled with the Spirit. What liberty is this! What freedom from sin and all besides to serve God! The liberty of the saint must be a holy liberty. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath set me free from the law of sin and death." We have the spirit of adoption, founded on redemption; thus we have liberty towards God and from Satan. What would have been taking Christ's liberty from Him if it had been possible, would have been hindering His doing the Father's will.

There are two things for us to think of from this subject — first, the amazing grace which has set us in such a place, even as the temple of the Holy Ghost; secondly, how we are called upon not to grieve the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, that we may not occupy Him with our faults and failings, instead of with those blessed things which are ours in Christ.

May He keep our affections fresh and happy in fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.

Vol 03 - Brief Thoughts on Ephesians.

Brief Thoughts on Ephesians.

Ephesians 1:15-23.

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It is always good for our souls to draw near and review the proper starting point and pattern, if I may so say, of the blessing that God has given us. We are all apt to stop short. There are certain blessings that we cannot do without. We cannot go on for a day with the least measure of comfort, if the spring of our confidence in God's mercy is weakened. We need to know the remission of sins as a constant daily thing: but that is not enough. We shall never be able to glorify God, if we only take what we need. And, more than that, where the soul is content merely with what we actually want, we often lose the joy of it, and, by the just retribution of God, we begin to question whether we have, after all, got the remission of sins or whether we may not have been deceiving ourselves. Whereas, where the eye is kept open though in the midst of so many circumstances in this life that tend to close and darken it; but where it is kept open upon Christ, we shall not be satisfied without knowing what is the extent of the blessing that God has given us. For Christ is the only object of faith, the only One that satisfies us, as indeed He is God's object; and if we have got but one mind with God about Him; our communion is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. In God's ways with Israel, He makes a great deal of two particular points in their history; one was the crossing of the Red Sea, and the other was the Jordan. In Psalms 114:1-8 we find these two things brought together, where the sea is referred to, ("the sea saw it and fled,") and where Jordan is spoken of as having been driven back. Now, we have got our Red Sea and our Jordan too, and we need them both. We need much more than the passover, in which, as it were, God has not yet come near us. He is only passing by outside. We should want Him near, for it is not best to keep God outside, in the sense of our sin. It is not honouring God to be merely shivering in the thought of a judgement that we cannot meet. The judgement is met, and so greatly has Christ magnified God and brought honour to Him, even about our sins, that God can come in, instead of merely passing over, and can put Himself in our midst, dwell among us, and have us to dwell with Him.

The way in which God has brought about this wonderful height and depth of love towards us, is in our Lord's death and resurrection. As we find here, the apostle prays for the saints — "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead," etc.

Not a word is here spoken simply of redemption. He had already brought that in, and they knew it. But he desired them to enter into much more — "into the hope of his calling;" and what have we there? The whole extent of our privileges. It is God who looks at His Son, and who calls us out to

be fellows of His Son, to be partakers with Christ, to have the same place in His love that His own Son has. Now there is nothing so hard for the heart really to lay hold of as this. It is so entirely beyond every thought or feeling that can issue from us. And how does God give our hearts to enter into it? By dwelling upon Christ; by having the word of God that brings His work in Christ before us, mixed with faith in them that hear it. And, as in the unconverted, it is by the word preached that the Holy Ghost acts to bring them to God, so with the Christian to bless him all the way through. We do need to be taught of God, to enter, more deeply than we have done, into what God has given us in His Son. If we do not, some difficulties will arise which will demand the knowledge of that which we have not got, and there will be weakness, there will be the consulting of flesh and blood, instead of going forward in the strength of God, with the eye fixed upon Christ. We need not use the death and resurrection of Christ merely in a selfish way for our own need, without going further, without the desire of seeing what it is that His sacrifice, already offered, capacitates us for. Christ Himself is beyond His own sacrifice, infinitely blessed as it is. He that died is better than any thing He has brought me in His death. We are prone to take His death only, because it touches the question of our sins; and most precious this is: it is quite right; and we cannot value it too much. But it is quite wrong to stop there: we must push on. The apostle was always labouring for this with the saints. If, as in the case of the Galatians, they had got away from Christ, and were putting themselves under the law, they required, of course that Christ should be formed in them again. But where the soul has found peace and rest with Christ, God desires, and we should desire, the opening of our eyes, that we should enter into the hope of God's calling, and the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. These are the two great parts of the ways of God. The one embraces the knowledge of Himself and of His love, and our privilege who are by grace called to the enjoyment of it. It takes in past and present, and looks on to the future. For the hope of His calling reaches out to what we shall be in His presence. It is a question between God and His children — what He is to us and what we are in Christ; not of the glory which will be conferred upon us and displayed before the world, which is just what is meant by "the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints." There I get the honour that will be put upon us, and in which we shall shine. But is this the best thing? Far from it. To be saints of God, to be in His presence, at ease and at home in the presence of God, to have the privilege of beholding His beloved Son, and seeing Him in the glory which He had with the Father before the world was: there is the hope of His calling. He has called us there, where no angel can be, no creature, save those who have a divine nature imparted to them, and who, by the Holy Ghost, are capable of entering into the deepest thoughts of God. And this is communicated to us, even here in this world, that our hearts may rise up to the consciousness of the dignity of our place in Christ. Conscience alone will not keep a person from sin. There must be the affections brought into play, and such an acquaintance with God, such a familiarity with His thoughts and feelings as that they become the meat and drink of the child of God.

This, then, is what the apostle desired for the saints. First, he sought they should understand the hope of His calling, the full extent of the privileges of Grace, from before the foundation of the world till the world is no more. Then, he presses the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, which is rather the scene of display that will come out before the world in the scene of creation. The hope of His calling goes beyond that. It is the working out of the counsels of God's own heart and purposes — the communication of His own divine nature, making us one with Christ. This is far beyond any inheritance that we can enjoy, and will last when the inheritance, in

the sense of the kingdom, is over.

But there is more than this. The Apostle goes on: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." There is what I just referred to passingly as our Jordan. In the Romans we get our Red Sea — the death and resurrection of Christ as that which ushers us into this world as a wilderness, or place of trial, where our heart has to be proved, and where God is testing us how far we, who were the servants of sin, are willing now to be the servants of righteousness. But in Ephesians we get a deeper thing still than that — the enjoyment of Christ as taking possession of our heavenly privileges. It is not, therefore, the death and resurrection of Christ as bringing us into the wilderness; but the death and resurrection of Christ as bringing us into heaven now. Are not our souls too often satisfied short of this? Content with what is more simply suited to our need, or with what would be considered more practical. Why is it so, that we rest short of entering into what God gives us in His beloved Son as He is in His own presence now? It is because we are not spiritual: it is the power of nature coming in that hinders us. Nature always clings to something present — something that touches our wants as we see them; whereas, where the heart is more in the presence of God and the enjoyment of Christ, while we are still more sensitive as to what glorifies God, yet we learn a power in Christ, and not merely in the fact of certain things being right or wrong. It ceases to be a mere question of habit. It is God unfolding His Son to us — His own thoughts and feelings as revealed in His Son: and this is what gives us power. Because if I see that God has really wrought in Christ this wonderful work; far beyond that of creation — the raising up of Christ from the dead, and setting Him at His own right hand in heaven; if we read that act in the light of God, we see what sin was — what Satan was — what the judgement of God was, who now, in grace, passes over all. All is gone now — all is passed over for us, that God might magnify Himself. While we are in the world, over which judgement is hanging, we are raised above it all — we have the liberty of heaven while we are on the earth. This is passing the Jordan. We have passed in the person of Christ outside this world; we have taken our place in heaven, have been made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. That is, we have been put at ease there, which the thought of sitting gives. All thought of pilgrimage is lost sight of in this range of truth. Our being pilgrims and strangers, though most true and blessed, is not so blessed a place as being seated together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

And if a person were to say, This is a higher region of truth outside my reach, I answer, God is jealous over us. He has called us out from the many things that once hindered us — has showed us the present state of the Church and what He is going to do for us by and by. We are not come to set up the Church again, but are resolved to commit our souls to nothing but that which is His will about the Church. We may fail ever so much — we may mourn the many difficulties on every side, through lack of wisdom, grace, righteousness, etc.; but the place that God has given us in His grace abides unchangeable wherever there is faith to own it. Our business is to leave room for God, and not to hinder the Holy Ghost. It is not enough to have been brought into this blessed place. It is but a means, and not an end. There is often great danger of resting complacently in the fact, that we are meeting together in the Lord's name. But let us not think that we have done anything. It is the mercy of God that has brought us where He can deal with us, and where He will deal with us, where He will not suffer one single thing that is contrary to His name; who will work in

private, and work in public, so that His name be honoured. This is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe. Why should we distrust Him in anything? We might see everything crumbling around us, difficulties that we cannot surmount, sorrows in seeing hearts turned away from the truth. But if it is the power that wrought in Christ when God raised Him from the dead which now works in us, why should we doubt? The power that raised Christ from the grave is necessarily above everything else. And it is the way of God to allow things to come to the worst before He interferes. There may, perhaps have been a leaning upon others, more likely upon our own understanding, which is a shade worse than leaning upon the understanding of another; but the grand thing that God brings out is, the blessedness of having Himself, the certainty that He will appear and deliver, that He will work according to the mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead. If, when we think of the hope of His calling, and the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, we may feel ashamed to think of our failure and shortcoming, yet what comfort to think that the power which wrought in Christ is the same that has to do with us, whether it be power for us or in us! The Lord grant we may enter into this which He brings before our souls! It was God that led His people through the Jordan, God that caused His own ark to stand there in the midst of it; and not a single Israelite's foot was wet. Well might Israel trust Him about everything! For if God had wrought such a work as this before they entered into the conflict with their enemies, would He not be with them all through? Could there have been one doubt of victory, if they had thought of the Jordan? It is when we forget what God has done for us, that we show self in one form or another. But where even the sense of failure drives us back to God, then comes this bright comfort before our souls — the exceeding greatness of the power to usward who believe. Therefore let us not in anywise look to the right hand or to the left; but let us look upward, where Jesus is. Let us think of Him, rest upon Him, who has so wrought toward us, and who will so work in us. The Lord grant that our faith may be very simple!

Vol 03 - On Rom_8:1-39.

On Romans 8:1-39.

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It is a grand thing for our souls, on the one hand, to be firmly established in the grace of God towards us, to allow no insinuation of the enemy to raise a question touching the efficacy of what Christ has wrought for us — the fulness of the redemption that is in Him, and, on the other hand, to use all the liberty, the comfort, the certainty of God's love towards our souls, as a reason for not sparing in us that which is contrary to Him. Nothing can make up for a soul's slighting what is due to God; nothing can justify a heart in indifference to His glory, in carelessness about sin. Whether it be our own sin, or the sins specially of our brethren, or any sin against God, we ought to feel all that offends Him. Even if we hear of it in the world, it should be a sorrow: much more what touches His honour in the Church. But I am sure that we ought to be humbled most of all by what touches His honour in ourselves. Now God has amply provided for this; and the chapter before us is full and explicit upon it. In the very beginning, the exceeding blessedness of the portion of every believer is brought out. It is not only that we have Christ for us, but we are in Christ. What and who is He in whom we are? What does God think of the Blessed One in whom He has set us for Himself? Is there a single fault that God finds with Christ? Is there a conceivable blessedness that He does not find there?

Now, this is exactly what we want. Full of faults, without one single thing in us which God's eye could regard with complacency and delight, He who has been pleased to put us in Christ before Himself, has been pleased to give us the knowledge of it. For it is not something done in a corner, or something mysterious and concealed from the knowledge of those to whom this exceeding grace is shown. The God who thought of such mercy has revealed it fully, that we may not have one cloud in our souls, but the positive, absolute, unvarying certainty that we are in Christ before God. We can look back at Adam, and see what we are by nature — not to speak of the bitter fruits all the way through. We can see him sinning and rebelling; we can see him covering his sin and throwing the blame upon his wife, and virtually on God Himself; we can see his pride and untruthfulness — for such is always the effect of sin naturally. Such is the flesh. But we are not in the flesh. By that wondrous work of Christ, by death and resurrection, God has now a blessed way; and He has applied it to our souls, and given us the knowledge of it, that we are no longer regarded as what we are in Adam, or in ourselves; but, as the wife is not viewed according to what she was in her father's house, but married as she is to her husband, so and much more is it with us. She may have been in the humblest position before, but it is her husband's name, and his position, which gave and determine her place now: she has a new relationship, which she has now acquired in virtue of what is in him. So it is with the Christian. Only, in our case, it is not merely a name that we receive. In the earthly instance, the wife might abide as worthless as she was before; but with the Christian it is not a nominal title. In God's ways it is a reality of privilege and

relationship which His own power has established, and His own Spirit has made true to the soul. And although there is that which reminds us of what we were — that old, abominable nature, which is not in the slightest degree changed by our having a new standing: yet there is this precious truth — that the more we enter into our place in Christ, and appreciate Him to whom we belong, the less power our nature has to show itself. Where we question the blessing, where we doubt the grace, and hesitate about the reality of our relationship to Christ, all is weak and dim and uncertain. There may be godliness; but it will always be godliness under the law — the effort after something in ourselves instead of the living upon what God has given us in Christ. And although there may be a measure of separation from sin, yet there will be the danger of thinking something of ourselves because of it — the comparing ourselves with what we were, and thinking how much better we are; or comparing ourselves with other people, and thinking that we are not quite so bad. All this results from one fatal error — the constant tendency of man's heart to think of himself and of what he may be to God, instead of thinking of Him who is the fullness of grace, hiding himself, and the Holy Ghost giving him a power beyond himself. It is remarkable that, in this very same chapter, where we have, first of all, the fullness of the deliverance, we have, next, a plain statement of the irreconcilable evil of the carnal mind, and solemn exhortation to the Christian, who has the Spirit dwelling in him, but withal, the flesh to judge and the deeds of the body to mortify. Still there is a perfect deliverance — a deliverance that will not be one whit better when we are taken out of this world and brought into heaven; for, I maintain that we are not a bit more forgiven in heaven, or more secure in heaven, or more precious to God in heaven, than we are made on earth: for what gives us our preciousness and stamps our character before God, is something that God has given us in His Son while we are on the earth. Hence it is that departing from this life is merely a circumstance; the essence of the blessing is in Christ, and we are in Christ, and there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.

Nor is this a mere general standing for certain persons; but the apostle goes on to say, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." He appropriates it to himself: he makes it a personal thing, not a mere vague matter, in which the positive joy of it is all lost to the individual soul. The same word of God that shows the common standing of the saints in Christ immediately makes it also a personal thing. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." it is entirely a question of God working for His own glory. Man wrought to the shame of God and his own sorrow. God now has taken the work in hand, has done it perfectly, and He communicates this to us. He wants us to enjoy it, and to be settled in the happiness of it. We are brought there in Christ. Why should we not believe it and keep it always before our souls? Why should we not treat any doubt of it as coming from the devil? — For we must remember that the enemies' spite is not so much against us as against Jesus. And if we belong to God, and have got the blessing of His blessing and glory that he has lost for ever and ever, therefore it is that he hates us. Leaving his own first estate, he had rebelled against God, and all hope was lost for him — because there is no call for a fallen angel. Yet for us who had chosen him for our friend instead of God, the grace of God has come down to such poor, sunken, low ones, and has most richly blessed us. Therefore the hatred of the enemy is turned against us. Well, immediately after the Holy Ghost has shown us the full deliverance in Christ, now, He says, as it were, I must let you know a little about yourselves. The fact of our being in Christ does not

hinder that we have got the flesh in us; and the flesh is a hostile thing to God. It never seeks God's will. But the difference between the unconverted man and converted is, that the former has got nothing but flesh; while the converted man, besides the flesh, has got a new nature, which he did not possess before — a new life, which he derives, not from the first father of all men, but from the last Adam. This is what the apostle goes on to show. You have got this evil nature still about you, though you are not regarded as in it, but as completely delivered from it. You are no longer called by your old name, but by your new name, because it is Christ, that has taken you to Himself; and the Holy Ghost is the seal of it. "To be carnally minded is death." I do not take this as referring merely to the unconverted man. It is true of the converted also. Does he allow the fleshly mind in himself? So far there is the working of death.

In the latter part of Romans 8:1-39 it is a godly soul, under law, struggling with the flesh, but without any sense of deliverance, and therefore completely miserable. Here it begins with deliverance as a settled thing: but yet in the one thus delivered there may be the yielding to the evil thing. And what is the effect? Loss of joy — loss of the happy spring of confidence in God. It is serious where allowed, which is different from being overtaken in a fault through unwatchfulness, and which the soul goes to God about and renounces; there is nothing in that to keep the soul under the power of evil. It is a sorrowful matter, of course; but for all that, God gives perfect deliverance from it, I mean, in a practical way. But, on the other hand, if a little evil is allowed, perhaps the very smallest thing, what may not be the issue? For, as we find in Matthew 18:1-35 where a brother begins only with a personal trespass against another, his conduct about that little wrong may at last become so bad that he is no longer to be treated as a brother at all, but as an heathen man and a publican. The thing began with only a little spark, but it became a great fire; and not an atom of Christ appears in the man whom we once entreated as a brother. Yet even then it is not said that he is an heathen man and a publican, but, "let him be to thee as an heathen man and a publican." He does not show one single spark of divine life, there is no answer to Christ in his soul; and when it comes to that, "let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." This is very solemn; but the same thing is true in daily experience. If there is something I cling to, and that I allow myself in day by day — perhaps it is a little sin — perhaps no eye sees me — but what will be the issue of it? I get doubtful, clouded; then I begin to get hard; I no longer grieve at the loss of joy in my soul; and perhaps I end by becoming bitter against the very saints I used to love, and despise the truth which I would have died for before. This may go on for a good while, until perhaps some dreadful sin is allowed for the purpose of arousing the careless soul. And I am assured that there is never a case of open outbreak of evil, but what there has been for long a great deal of careless walking in secret without God previously.

The apostle here shows the working of the flesh. It might have been supposed that because there was the complete deliverance, there could not be this working of the flesh. But here there is a man who begins with deliverance, with the certainty that there is no condemnation, and still there is that wretched flesh; and all that can be done with it is to mortify it. "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

There it is evidently taking in the twofold thing. If a person has nothing but the flesh, he is unconverted; but if, as a believer, he allows the flesh, so far death works. If he sows to the flesh, he must of the flesh reap corruption. "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye

shall live." There it is not speaking about Christ, but of the power in which the Holy Ghost works in a man who is a Christian. If the power of that life is not manifested, the person is miserable, and makes others miserable. On the other hand, "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." It is not only as many as live in the spirit, but as are led of the Spirit of God. No doubt it is the case with all the saints of God that they are led by the Spirit of God in the main, but not perhaps in the detail. Yet it is not the spirit of fear that we have got. God does not wish to alarm us in the least degree, but only this — Hold fast your liberty as firm as a rock, but never allow that which is contrary to God. Never allow the little beginnings of evil. If you do, you will find, so to speak, that there is death in the pot. There will be that form from which no power can deliver you except the renouncing of self practically, because you have got Christ. God has wrought this mighty deliverance for you; and, prayerfully and self-denyingly looking up to Him, we shall have His power against self in our souls. But what follows this? We have the Holy Ghost as One that comforts us, that intercedes for us, that sympathises with our groans in all our sorrows, that helps our infirmities. Then come the last verses After everything, and taking in all the trial, yet the blessed truth comes out — God is for us. But whatever the joy of this wonderful truth, let us remember that the object of God in giving it to us is always for the exercise of self-judgement, and with a solemn warning before our souls that it may be a very little evil that is allowed, but that very little becomes the parent of a great deal of sorrow and of shame.

Vol 03 - The Rest that Remaineth.

The Rest that Remaineth.

2 Samuel 7:1-29.

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It is a natural thing for the heart of man to seek present rest; it is a snare even to the saint in one form or another. And happy are they who, by the power of the Spirit of God, are able to detect and watch against it. But it often comes in a very subtle guise, and takes the shape of piety itself. Where it is not connected with anything that seems of the world or self, as with one's family, and the like, it may be to seek present rest for what bears the name of Christ upon the earth. Now, it was particularly this that was at work in David's heart. For he was a blessed man of God, and earnestly desired that God Himself should have a house worthy of His name in the midst of Israel. It was unnatural to his mind, it did not seem right, that he should be so favoured of God, and that God Himself should have only a tent to dwell in. But this chapter brings out that the portion of faith is the best portion of all. Whatever might be the harvest of joy in circumstances; whatever even the power of God appearing for His people, putting down every obstacle, and creating a scene glorious and bright here below, yet, for all that, the portion of faith in patience is better still.

Now, this is a most wonderful truth for our souls to learn. Because, no doubt, nature would greatly prefer the place of Solomon to that of David. But David's lot was, morally, far superior. Outwardly, Solomon had everything that the human heart could wish, and it came from God, who Himself was crowning Solomon with every natural blessing. What was the issue? There are very weighty things for our souls to take heed to in this, because we all know what it is to have some exercise of heart about that which is precious to God. It may work in many ways, so as, perhaps, to trouble our hearts, and damage our confidence in the Lord; or it may weaken our affections towards the people of God, in whose ways there is, doubtless, much that is trying and sad. But this is not the question. These are things that the enemy of souls has always sought to stir up against the name of the Lord. We have to consider, not only what is His side in each question, but what is the temper of soul that He would have cultivated in us, in respect to the evil that we see around, and that we cannot set aside. It is of the greatest importance, because, in one or other form, you will find the same feeling at work among saints now as there was in David — the desire for God's rest before the time. And it is striking to see that Nathan was not able to judge it. He thought it was perfectly good. He was a prophet of God, yet he did not understand. It is only God Himself who can give the happy conviction that the portion of faith is the best of all; and this must now, in Christ's absence, find itself in the midst of evil, which it abhors. Nothing would be easier for God than to set everything right at once by His power; to put an end to all that disturbs and causes sorrow. But He does not, because He has something better in store for us. There will be judgement, no doubt — God's sentence executed on everything that is contrary to Him; and then there will be a bright time

for the earth as well as for the heavens. But we have to remember that the heart of the saint should enjoy a far better portion now, by faith, than even if the days of heaven upon the earth were come. For those days will not be so bright as that inner, higher, light which is in heaven, in the presence of God Himself. And it is the drawing out of the tender love, the restoring mercy, the long-suffering goodness of God, through all this time of weakness and need, that brings out the depths of His character — His grace.

And faith has to learn, in the midst of a scene of contradiction and difficulty, and apparent frustration, too, of all that our hearts desire for the Lord's sake, not to doubt God, but to be sure that everything is in His hand, and working onward, strange as it may seem, for the glory of His Son. Many of these things cause the utter crushing of all that is dear to the heart. Everything that pertains to man, or that springs from him, is withered up by this word of the Lord that alone abideth. But God exalts Himself, blessed and blessing, above all, for ever.

So David had to learn on this occasion. In one sense it was a very pious thought of his, and not unworthy even of a godly spirit. He felt rebuked at his own dwelling in a house of cedar, and where was God to be? But God must give us what is worthy of Himself if our hearts desire Him. And He knew David, the man after His own heart, and gave him accordingly. It might be by no means that which we should choose, but what God chooses for us. When Nathan had told David, "Go and do all that is in thine heart, for the Lord is with thee," that very night the Lord comes in, saying, "Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the Lord, shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?" Then, in, the most touching way, He shows how He has been a pilgrim Himself, how He had wandered about from one place to another. "I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel, spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me a house of cedar?" He never sought a place of rest then. "Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheep-cote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel." And further on: "Also the Lord telleth thee, that he will make thee an house." The Lord always must take the place of the better. He would not allow such a thought as that David should be building the Lord a house. He must build a house for David, and better far than anything that Solomon could raise.

Thus, not in word only, but in deed and in truth, did David learn the deep feeling and love of God towards him. There was, also, no doubt, the circumstance that he was not a suitable person to build the house of God, because he was a man of blood. But grace ever comes in and triumphs. It was not so much to hinder David from doing good that the Lord thus dealt, as for the purpose of giving him something better. Wherever the heart is towards God, and the desire is for what is according to His mind, if He takes away any thought of ours, it is always to accomplish a higher counsel of His own. And so it was on this occasion. The Lord brings out before David the divine future of His house. David goes in and sits "before the Lord;" and a more beautiful and touching rising up of David to the thoughts of God never was seen before in all his history. "He said, Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" All that the Lord had hitherto done! and was it a little thing? "And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come" — yea, it was for evermore. "And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?" It was the manner of God.

As bearing upon our souls and what is before us, is not this full of instruction? We might desire a reign of the gospel, and union among all saints; and it would be a great comfort to us in one way, supposing everything were going on in the Church, if not in the world, as we might value and find rest in. Assuredly we ought to feel every departure, and judge, specially in ourselves, wherever we fail; not only in our personal walk, but also in grace and wisdom to meet the difficulties around us. Certainly we ought to feel for and groan with the Church of God.

But while all this is true, have we not to remember that the heart which desires present establishment, would be too glad to hear that, if not all the church, at least the part we have to do with was going on prosperously? But what would be the consequence? We should forget the present lone state of the church altogether. So narrow are we that we should cease to mourn. If David had had that beautiful house to build and adorn, would he have realised as he did how such a God was dishonoured in Israel and all over the earth? Whenever things go on according to our desires and feelings in the little circle that surrounds us, we are apt to think that it is all well. We ought to be thankful for it; but if we are in any way resting there, it shows that we fall short of His mind, who never fails to look onward to the full glory of Christ. On the other hand, the heart often wastes itself in querulousness about things around us, and is thus taken away both from the truth and from the hope, our thoughts and exercises being more about others than Christ. The effect of having Him before us more simply is, that we are able to meet the case of others more fully and deeply. Thus everything will be thoroughly and holily judged; but it will be in a spirit of intercession, because it is along with Christ.

The Lord takes a far deeper and fuller judgement of evil than any of us. But how does He act towards His beloved ones?

What God would give us, is the portion of faith while things are trying; that so, spite of the sense of all present contrariety, our comfort may be in God — not our rest yet, for that will be entirely heavenly, when the Lord will come and take us to be with Himself in glory. But even now, the place into which the knowledge of this would bring us, is one of quiet, and peaceful, and humble waiting upon God. Had David ever such lowly thoughts of himself as when the Lord had thus spoken, and he sat before Him? Had he known before how precious he was to God? Never. Instead of having our best affections undermined by constant suspicion and anxiety, if we understand God's thoughts and desires, we shall know deeper lowliness, but more simplicity and confidence in God in our souls. And all this comes from a fuller acquaintance with Christ.

Vol 03 - The Object of Prophecy.

The Object of Prophecy.

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In ordinary works on prophecy it is assumed as an admitted, incontestable truth, that the church is specially regarded in Daniel; and now, many believe that a godly Jewish remnant is in question, and cite the word in proof. This is a capital point. Why not discuss it? Why preserve a silence so absolute? It is necessary to their system that it should be the church; but they cannot demonstrate and assume it without proof. In truth, it is an utterly false principle, that God guides the world in view of the church. Christ and His glory are the end of God's counsels. The church will share His glory, and consequently it also enters into His counsels.

But the difference is complete, because, if Christ is the end, the Jews, of whom He will be head and chief, are the object of God's government as to the world, and even the arrangements of the nations. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Now, this revealed end of God's arrangements on the earth is set aside, and the church, or heavenly people, are substituted for Israel. It will be readily understood how completely all is changed thereby. For example, the greatest part of the prophecies apply to a time when Israel is more or less owned on earth. This fact is overlooked and shut out of the common system. Now, when Israel is owned as the object of God's dealings, the church, where there is neither Jew or Gentile, is necessarily out of the scene. It is no longer a question of long years, but of "a short work" of God on the earth, of days whereof it is said, except they were shortened "no flesh could be saved" — a passage where the Saviour Himself directs our attention to Daniel and the predictions of the time, times, and an half, or 1260 days.

This, then, goes to the bottom of the question in dispute between the two great schools. The historicalists in general avoid it carefully. They talk of the approaching tribulation as if it must needs be for the church's portion to pass through it. They leave aside the Jews, as if they certainly were not concerned in such predictions; and thus the whole subject is involved in endless perplexity. Now this confusion of the church with Israel, profoundly injurious in spiritual things, becomes capital in prophecy, and most questions treated by these writers depend on the solution of this; because if Israel means Israel, the prophecies of Daniel, Ezekiel, etc., have an application which is not admitted or seen, and the system of interpretation, save certain analogies, is unsound from one end to the other. To omit the Jews, and apply all to the church, is confusion; to do so without discussing the point, is to build without any foundation whatever. If the predictions of Daniel refer to the time when the Jews enter the scene of prophecy, all is overthrown. Now the Spirit says so several times in the last chapters of the prophecy, (Daniel 10:14; Daniel 11:14;

Daniel 11:30-31; Daniel 12:1; Daniel 12:7; Daniel 12:11,) where these numbers occur; and the Lord, in speaking of Jerusalem and the great tribulation, sends us to the prophecies of Daniel, where these numbers are given.

These men talk as if the statue in Daniel 2:1-49 were the key of prophecy, and the abridged plan of God's government of the nations. On the contrary, God's government, of the nations properly called, ceases during the duration of the powers represented by the statue; though, of course, His providence always acts. It is the time of the Gentiles, during which Israel is set aside, and God's government of the Gentiles, with Israel as the centre and pivot of his rule. Before the statue, there were various independent nations which were the fruit of the judgement of Babel, and Israel occupied the central place, and God has established His throne there, whence He governed all the nations in relation to His people. Then came Israel's sin, ruin, and judgement, and at the capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldean king, the divine glory visits the city, and leaves it for a season. (Ezekiel 1:11.) Then God set up imperial unity in the hands of a Gentile chief over the known world, His own people being in bondage, and Jerusalem trodden down by them till the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. Then He will resume His direct government, and judge the imperial power, which will have rebelled against Him. Is God's government of the earth confined to the time during which He has delivered His people to His enemies? Clearly, the period of His people's captivity is not properly, still less exclusively, the period of His government, and the system which considers it as such and which takes neither of this people nor of the mass of the prophecies which apply to them, is necessarily false. Daniel was of the captivity, and God gave His servant the divine light, which showed He had not forgotten His people, and to Daniel speaks naturally and only of this time. But his most detailed prophecy was after the Jews returned to Jerusalem — a circumstance which shows that the true captivity, the times of the Gentiles, still existed. Daniel just goes up to the judgement and the beginning of God's covenant, and there always he stops. He never describes that government or its effects; he abides prophet of the captivity.

The system of the nations and of Israel chosen, then, subsisted till Nebuchadnezzar. It will be renewed in a more excellent manner when the beast is destroyed. The interval is the time of the beasts, of the Gentiles, in contrast with the government of God.

Vol 03 - A few words on Fruit-bearing

A few words on Fruit-bearing

John 15:1-27.

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There are two ways in which God displays Himself and His character: one is His grace — His grace shining in a dark world where there is nothing like it, nothing that even comprehends it, nothing that has sympathy with it, but on the contrary, where it is always rejected, always despised. And yet, if there be any one thing which has power in the hand of the Holy Ghost, it is the grace of God. It is the grace of God that bringeth salvation; it is by grace also that any are saved. It is the one thing that not only gives comfort, and peace, and pardon, but that enables a soul not to sin; as we see it written in Romans 7:1-25, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

But, then, it is only the Holy Ghost who can enable a soul to bow to the grace of God; and this He does by utterly breaking down everything of man's pride, everything of strength within. The law never did that; it killed, it condemned, it proved the guilt; but there never could be the conviction that there is no strength in man under the law. But when grace undertook, which is the same thing as saying when God undertook, the work, how different! It was an effective thing, when God dealt with the heart; not merely as that which had to be detected, but when God undertook to produce what was according to Himself, when it was to be a new creating, when He was giving eternal life. It is a deeply humbling conviction that I have nothing in myself but sin; that if God deals according to the one thing He finds in me, the whole question is closed. Therefore, if a soul is brought to God, there must of necessity be repentance — the moral judgement of its condition fixed in the soul by the Word of God. This was not the case with Simon Magus: he wanted what would minister to himself. There was no repentance in his case; it was merely a change of mind that was utterly valueless. But the working of God, producing the sense of utter ruin, goes with the faith that the Holy Ghost produces. There may be but feeble testimony — much clouding of truth — but still the sense that it is God acting for Himself and from Himself, God new-creating, God forgiving through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, God justifying, and giving me a new place. This is the only foundation on which a soul can stand before God: — God loving in spite of all that is unloving, loving where there is nothing but what is subject to eternal wrath. Indeed, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

In a chapter like the one I have read, all is changed. We find ourselves upon totally different ground. It is a question of fruit, not of life; of communion, not union. Therefore, we are reminded, through exhortation, in the strongest manner, that the Lord expects obedience as well as love; and more, that the love of the Father depends upon our keeping His commandments. How are these

two points to be reconciled? The answer is, that here we have the righteous dealings of God with those who bear Christ's name. There is no word here about God going out in love to an unconverted soul, nor of his dealing with evil in us. This is brought out in previous chapters. John 13:1-38 tells how the Lord deals with evil in us; then in John 14:1-31, He says that, though He is going away He is coming back again, and that meanwhile we have the Holy Ghost; so that if He goes away, we have the Holy Ghost to abide with us. John 15:1-27 shows that He looks for our being witnesses for Himself while He is away, while it also brings out most blessedly His relation to us while He is above. The Father looks for sweet fruits suitable to Christ in those who belong to Christ. It shows the righteous government of God in those who are saved; and what will give them power to walk rightly, producing fruit acceptable to God, and what will stand. To see this clears all the difficulty. God is not speaking here of union with Christ; if you think of the last, it is the very fullness of grace. There is no way in which God has so surpassed in His dealings of grace, as in making us one with Christ. But the very figure by which the Lord illustrates His relation to us in this chapter is suitable for earth, not for heaven He says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The figure of a bride, or a body — many members with Christ the head — equally suits earth or heaven. Doubtless all who are spoken of as members in the body are branches of the vine, too; but when the Holy Ghost speaks of the body of Christ, there is no such thing as cutting off a member, while this is said of branches of the vine. The body of Christ never can be broken. We may find disorder in the assembly, and vessels to dishonour in the house of God; but the body is perfect, and nothing can mar it. Those who are made members of the body of Christ are taken clean out of their old state, and united to Him for ever. In order to get perfect peace, my soul must rest upon this work of God. Our chapter has not one word which gives this rest of soul, but all is connected with responsibility. Christ Himself takes the place of One upon earth producing fruit for God — Himself the source of fruit, bearing the root and stem to those who are His. There is a constant tendency in Christians to forget how they may draw upon Christ for their daily life; but yet what blessedness that we may have to do with Him for everything; and this not in law, (that is what the Jew had to do with every day), but under the responsibility which flows from grace.

The question is, what is to give us power to do the will of God here below? Christ says, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." What an exceeding comfort it is that my Father is pruning me every day, taking pleasure in seeing how the branch is getting on. The 3rd verse, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you," refers not to the blood, but to the power of the word in practical separation. This is true from first to last. A man is not a child of God by counsel, but when he believes in Christ. The word of God always deals morally — it deals with sin. There is, then, "the washing of regeneration." The word is afterwards applied to the detail of life. The Lord here speaks of the moral hindrances to fruit bearing, and He says, "Abide in me." "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me." Here we see most clearly how He cannot be speaking of union. That cannot depend on myself: whereas here is the possibility of my not abiding in Christ. But how is my soul to be strengthened for bringing forth fruit? There must be the personal dealing with Christ in whatever is put before me, as the only way of walking with God. The one thing essential to anything being right in a Christian sense is, that Christ should be the first question in it. This applies to every-day circumstances and difficulties. In service, too, there is not a single feeling that we can trust in ourselves; but if the heart really looks to Christ, all is turned

into profit. We have got a Blessed One who has been here — gone through all trial and temptation from without, (trial from God only to bring out what His beloved Son was), and Him we have to turn to in everything.

John 15:1-27 takes in not only the sons of God, but those who name the name of Christ. There are branches that never produce fruit. A man shows that he has faith and belongs to God by bearing fruit. A soul may be in much darkness, and there are many who put themselves under legal obligation; but where there is faith, there must be a measure of fruit. This chapter, then, brings out Christ not for salvation, but for the great business of bearing fruit to God. The expression about being "burned," if unfruitful, would be quite unintelligible, if the Lord had been speaking of union. It is not what God has wrought, but it is profession that is introduced here. There was a new thing in the earth at the beginning of christendom, which embraces all that are false as well as all that are true. There are many who name the name of Christ, but have no sense of what is due to Christ. They use His name as a mark of difference, but they do not care for Himself.

John 15:7. Here we have the heart's reference to Christ, whatever comes before it. Is it a question of caring for the sheep? Is it not because they are sheep, but because they belong to Christ. Then the heart will be sustained through the difficulties and disappointments that arise. Is it about trial in circumstances? Take the case of a person in a family, the head of which is unconverted. There may be the temptation to quit the place; but when I think of God's will, there is peace in my soul. It is Christ I belong to, Christ's will that I have to do. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." This is very emphatic. If your first thought is of Myself, "ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done." It is first Himself, then His words being in our minds and the heart in communion, the prayers put forth are those it is in the heart of God to give. Then follow, "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love." It would be utterly destructive of truth to apply this to salvation by Christ, or union in grace. But when He has saved us, when He has brought us to God, and given us the certainty that God loves us, then He says, "Think of Me." If you are in any difficulty, think of Me." Then the Holy Ghost can present the suitable word to keep and help me. If I look at the difficulty, and do not think of Christ, Satan comes in. But if I turn to Christ, fruit is produced, and the Father is glorified. Some say that Christ's yoke is a hard thing. But is it a hard thing for Christ to say, Now, when you are in trial, think of Me; when you are in joy think of Me, or you will be lifted up; when you are in sorrow think of Me, or it will crush you?

This thinking of Christ is the true path of real holy joy. The sense of responsibility is not to cast us down, nor the presentation of it. "These things," the Lord says, "have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." It is not only that He wants me to be thoroughly happy as to the question of eternal life, but thoroughly happy in going to Him for all my strength in bearing fruit. The soul never gets full peace till the sacrifice of Christ is seen, nor full of joy by the way till the heart is acquainted with the secret of making Christ the object of life. Think of Me — I am the true vine, the only one from whom the sap flows, by which the fruit can be produced. Christ is here putting Himself forward as the encouragement to the heart. If I look at the fruit I think I ought to produce for God, I shall not bring forth any; but if thinking of Christ, there is as real power in Him to produce fruit as there was to save my soul. But Christ must be personally before my soul. The very confession of difficulties, and telling Him of that; which tries and burdens us, is one way in which He would have us to think of Him. It is the way we find Him everything for

every-day life, after having found Him for eternal life — find Him not only for heaven, but for earth. The Lord grant that we may search into His words, not as law, yet as words of authority. The child delights in his father's honour; and he loves, too, to know that he himself is an object of delight. If it is the word of authority, it is written for us that our joy may be full. May we then commit our difficulties to Him, and they will be over. May we refer our souls to Christ in every matter that comes before us day by day.

Vol 03 - A Word on 2Co_1:1-24

A Word on 2 Corinthians 1:1-24

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(1st Edition, December [03 1861 375])

I do not pretend to say every Christian is practically in the state in which Paul was when he could say, "Death worketh in us, but life in you." (Chap. 4) Paul held himself as dead; life only was acting in him — the life of Christ was unhindered in him — death as regards the world, and all that is in it; therefore Christ only was working in him. The Christian should hold himself as dead; so would the life of Christ be displayed in him. It is important our hearts should understand what practical Christianity is. It is not merely gracious effects produced in man as passing through the world as belonging to it. The Christian does not belong to it at all, no more than Jesus did. Jesus was not of the world. (John 17:1-26.) All that is of the world is not of the Father. Was there ever the smallest link between His heart and the things of the world? We are brought into the same place of separation. Our wills must be broken, lusts judged, and then fullness of divine consolation is poured into the soul. Paul was a vessel into which the direct flow of comfort could be poured. Self must be crucified. He knew what relationship with the soul and God is; tribulations were only the occasion of bringing it out. He could thus "glory in tribulations;" he could "glory in infirmities," etc. They only brought him into more direct communion with the blessed source of strength. We prove the blessedness of what God is, and thus it flows out to others.

1 Corinthians 1:8. "For we would not have you ignorant, brethren, of our trouble, which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life." The occasion brings before him the distinct consciousness of what life and death is. There was no hope as to natural life. How does it find him? With the sentence of death in himself. If death finds a man where natural life has no place, they only want to take that which has already gone. Paul takes Christ's cross into his heart; he reckons himself dead; he holds himself as one living in Christ who had already died. He therefore trusts in Him who raiseth the dead. Here we get the expression of Christ in his soul. It is not merely one passing through the world with the wheels a little better oiled, but every link with the world must be broken.

The sinner has to do with God as a judge. Israel in Egypt was saved from God who was executing judgement: but when they had passed the Red Sea (type of death and resurrection) they get a place with God — the full salvation of God — Egypt done with totally and for ever, because Egypt has nothing to do with God, nor God with Egypt. He has taken Christ once and for ever out of this world, never to return, save when He comes to reign. When the world put Christ to death, the sentence of death was put on all that is in it; but we have complete deliverance out of it. Israel is brought to the other side of the Red Sea; Egypt is behind. They are brought out TO GOD, and so are we. Christ went down into death for me. In Him I come out the other side, as dead to the flesh and the world. I have got a new place where Christ is. I have left the place of sin by faith, and have

got a place with Christ. I am "accepted in the Beloved." If a Christian, I am not alive in the world. Where have I got my life from? Christ in heaven. That is not the world. The first Adam was turned out of God's paradise. God did not create the world as it is. God created paradise; and this world has grown up to what it is now, sin having come in. God has taken the Second Man into heaven, in virtue of the work done for me. As a sinner, my place is in the world; as an accepted one, my place is in heaven. Have you got into the place to be able to say with Paul, "when we were in the flesh?" (Romans 7:1-25) In Romans 8:1-39 : we read, "Ye are not in the flesh if so be," etc. We are not alive in the world; we are in Christ. If I speak to a sinner, I say, There is salvation for the vilest. To the believer I say, You are in Christ before God. It is Christ and nothing else. To realise this practically, you must hold yourself dead: death must be applied to everything down here. Then we get the inflowing of all that belongs to the new life. If links with the world are broken, we have the consolations of Christ abounding, the blessed inflowing of divine favour as it rested on Christ Himself.

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." (2 Corinthians 4:8-9.) The poor vessel may be troubled, but not in despair, for God is there. It may be persecuted, but not forsaken, for God is there.

"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." Here we get something more. In the death of Christ, was there one link with the world left? Not one. He looked for pity — there was none. He might have looked for justice; but the judge washes his hands and gives Him up. The priests cry, "Away with him," etc. His very garments were taken from Him. He stands alone, deserted, and cries out, "I am poured out like water; all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels." Was there, I ask, a single link with the world left? Not one. There was no one ingredient wanting in the death of Christ to make His cup bitter. And Paul could say, "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus," etc. There should be no more link between me and the world, than there was in the cross of Christ. In verse 11 we see God passes Him through circumstances which keep this alive in him. Then are things and circumstances which God uses to write the cross upon our will and nature. Death must be written upon all, that Christ only may be seen. How wonderful to be permitted to walk through the world, and be the epistle of Christ! We are called to manifest the character, ways, spirit, and temper of the Blessed One who is perfect. If self is not crucified, it cannot be so. I am put before God in all the perfectness of Christ Himself: and Christ, in all His perfectness, is put before me. Do you shrink from this? I do not ask, Do you realize it? Paul could say, "Not as though I had already attained," etc. But how often is the language of the heart, Spare a little nature, it cannot all be crucified! as much as though it were said, Do not let me have all Christ. How then can we know the power of joy, if we are thus making terms (I do not say we should own to this, but do not our ways speak thus?) with God, not to have Christ out and out? If I cannot say, "To me to live is Christ," as my object, my eye is not single. Paul could say, "This one thing I do," etc. He had no other object; he reckoned all else dung and dross. It did not cost him much to give up dung and dross. If Christ has such a place in our hearts, the rest is easy, though such a life passes us through exercises and trials. If we reckon ourselves dead and risen, we get a free, open channel between us and heaven for divine consolation to flow. As a child of God, my place is in Christ, and there is no end to my blessing. The cross has settled

my place in Adam. Will you be before God in the day of judgement to answer for what you have done? or have you believed the fact that Christ has come into this world, and taken the whole question up for you, and set you before God in virtue of what He has done, instead of what you have done? He disciplines us that we may be emptied of self, and find everything in Christ, and Christ everything to us. But He begins the lesson with the assurance, I love you perfectly. I bring you into the desert to learn what I am, and what you are; but it is as those I have brought to myself! He gives us a place with Christ, but then shows us what Christ is and what we are. The discipline of the way teaches this; but if He, in His love, strikes the furrows in the heart, it is that He may sow the seed which shall ripen in glory. Are you content to be in the wilderness with nothing but the manna? or are you saying, We see nothing but this light food? If we want it for our journey, we shall find it every morning, and find it enough; but if we want to settle down, it will never satisfy us. Are you content to have the flesh crucified? Have you so tasted the love of a dying Jesus, and the glory of a risen Jesus, as to wish for nothing else? He creates a void in order to fill it. May the Lord give the distinct consciousness that we are redeemed out of the place of sin and condemnation, and that we have got a place with God! That is peace; then we shall have the joy of communion. We are as white as snow "accepted in the Beloved." "We shall be like him." It is perfect love. I know that love, though I cannot measure it. I cannot measure eternity, but I am sure I shall never come to the end of it; yet I know there is eternity: so with God's perfect love. We learn and prove this love in the wilderness, in a way we never can in heaven: our very need brings it out to us. This world is a terrible house to live in, but, an excellent school to learn in.

Vol 03 - Thoughts on Service.

Thoughts on Service.

Php_2:1-30

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, December 1861.

(1st Edition, December [03 1861 377])

One great object of the Holy Ghost in this epistle is, to make known Christ to us as the servant, and this He does, that He may produce in us true-hearted service. God has His own way of doing this, as He has of doing everything: it must be suited to Himself, and it can only be through His Son. There is not a thought of God's love but what we get in the face of Jesus. He wants to endear His Son to us, and so He associates us with Him in service down here, as He has associated us with Him in the glory above. In this epistle, the Holy Ghost is looking at the path of Christ in service. God does not merely call some special ones servants; there is no such thought with God as confining service to those that receive some splendid gift, or are filling some particular office. There is something much deeper meant by being a servant than the office of bishop, deacon, or the like. It is not the law, nor the appointing to office, that can make servants; but fellowship with Him who calls to service: this puts us in the path and gives us power. It is the Spirit uniting to the Lord Christ that gives us the place and the power.

In this epistle we find a full picture of true Christian experience; there is not another scripture where we get it so prominently brought out. In Romans 7:1-25 it is the experience of a Christian, but not true Christian experience. We find there a soul anxious about its state, but not one thought about Jesus — much about self and the law, but not the Spirit. Christian experience is appropriating Jesus, and in this epistle I see Him come down in the full energy of service, and this is needed. I want more of Christ — more power for service, and I can only get it by looking at Jesus. I want to be carrying Him continually to God, who is in full favour with Him. He is my righteousness and my glory, my alone power. He is God's triumph over sin for me — His resurrection is the triumph out of death and out of all my sins. The 7th of Romans is the experience of a soul not come to the end of itself, but feeling the burden of sin; but what is rightly called Christian experience is that I should realise in my soul what God has given me in His grace. If God has not given me enough in Him to put me in His presence, then He cannot do more. He has not another Son to give. God cannot disparage the work of His Son. The Holy Ghost came down here to witness to me of Jesus, and to show me what is the new covenant of God's grace; and this should remove every cloud. The Lord Jesus has been to the cross: that is the blessed beginning, the ground of my hope. He has been raised up out of the grave, that is my rest, and the character, if not end, of my hope. What a difference it makes to a Christian when passing through trial in service, if he has Jesus for his object — when, in the midst of his difficulties, he sees Him as his standing and his strength, the ground from which he acts! If I am put in a place of service by God, it is to Him I have to look, and on Him I have to trust, and not on man at all. If I am God's servant, it

is not for the glory of the flesh; the flesh I must judge: if I do not, I shall be sure to get humbled by it, for it will lead me to disgrace Christ.

We do not get here a soul anxious about its state, as in Romans 7:1-25, although, as we have seen, that may be the experience of a believer — of most Christians, doubtless, at one time or another; but not true Christian experience. Now, what we have most prominently brought out in this epistle is the experience of the Christian servant, and what it is that qualifies and gives the heart of every true Christian courage for service. It is not Christian affection, love, or humility, though these must be; but it is not that which encourages: what keeps us, as well as what sets us in the path, is, what we have, and what we are, in Christ. We must have bowels of mercy, kindness, and compassion; but that does not give us power. That which strengthens is, what we see in Jesus and get from looking at Him. "If there be therefore," (Php_2:1.) etc. God reveals to me His Son, and that draws me out to serve Him. In this chapter we get a full-length portrait of Jesus, as the servant. He was the Son, and He took the place of the servant; and we must be made sons before we can be servants. We must have the place and affections of sons in order to render true-hearted service. The spirit of a Christian servant is not doing merely what is commanded, but the doing whatsoever delights God: the desire of the servant should be to please the Master. "Fulfil ye my joy, (Php_2:2) The Holy Ghost is here showing us Jesus as the true servant, and Paul His faithful follower. He was the chief of sinners, and followed His Lord more closely in service than any other. He had received much and he loved much. We have seen Jesus as the servant come down from the glory to man. His was no condescending grace. He came down to glorify His Father and to serve sinners. Not to gloss over evil, but to do the will of God in the service. The Holy Ghost is here exhibiting Jesus as the servant, that those who are dear to Him may follow in the activities of love and service. It is not so much what is required from them, as what is good for them in fellowship with Him.

But the time of active service is often the time of greatest danger. At such seasons, Satan is specially vigilant; and Christians should be very watchful lest they bring a reproach on the name they wish to honour. "Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory," etc., (Php_2:3.) There can be no question as to there being different places as to service; it would be folly to say or suppose there is not: but there is a sense in which we should be esteeming others better than ourselves. We should be seeing them as they are in Christ. It is what they are in Him that is the spring of all true Christian glory, and the alone ground on which we render true honour to saints. It is apprehending them as they are apprehended in Christ Jesus. It is valuing them in measure as valued by Him. "Who, being in the form of God," etc., (Php_2:6-7.) It is from coming to God as sons that we become servants — not servants and then sons. He who was equal with God "took upon him the form of a servant." The Holy Ghost shows us this in order to cut off the thought that Jesus worked Himself up to be a Son by being a servant. He was the Son, and He took the place of the servant; He had the high one, and He took the low one. He was the Son — that was His own by right; or surely He who was so very jealous over the very least of God's glory, would not have associated Himself with Him in the highest, if it had been to rob God. There was nothing the Lord Jesus was more sensitive to than what belonged to God; as indeed it is the prime element of all true righteousness that, first of all, God should have His rights.

We must be sons before we can be servants; and the only thing that can enable us to discharge any service acceptably is the power we get in looking at Jesus — in knowing what we are and

what we have in Him. All other energies lift up after a fitful sort, but they do not fit us for service.

There is one thing God would always have us remember, that is, what we are in His grace. The world and the flesh would make us forget we are in Christ. The devil ever aims to keep us off the consciousness of our ground of standing. If I am thinking of my home as God's word speaks of it, and of Jesus as the Holy Ghost makes Him known, I am attracted by His love and sheltered by His power. I am raised above the world's vanity by the glory I see in Him, and kept out of temptation by the beauty of the place He has brought me to. Is it that I am brought down so low that none of these things affect me? Am I so fallen that the thought of this glory cannot lift me up? I do not take a place of service to get dignity. I cannot be higher than God has made me in Christ — "bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh" — bound up with Him in life and glory — made to sit together in Him in heavenly places. This is my positive position; and it is not humility to take a lower place than God has given me — and no higher could He bestow. I belong to the risen Jesus, and with Him and in Him I share all given glory. I have a place at God's right hand, and I am down here to do His will — to be His servant. And nothing fits me for serving, or gives me power to walk in obedience, like the apprehending my association with a glorified Christ. Nothing gives me power to abstain from evil as the realising my union with Him once-dead, but now exalted in heaven. "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him," etc., (Php_2:9-11.) I do not the least doubt the cross is the foundation of every blessing; but it is the risen Christ I belong to — the One who has died and is now in glory, having established a righteousness for me. God's righteousness was declared for man when He raised up the Man, Christ Jesus, from the grave. Paul, in the third chapter, says he would not have the righteousness which was of the law, now that he had the righteousness which far surpassed it in Christ. He did not desire the righteousness of man, now he had, through faith, the righteousness of God. Our highest blessing, as well as our perfect righteousness, flows from belonging to the risen Jesus, and the knowledge of this is Christian experience. And this is fully brought out in the Philippians. It shows us what was so largely true in Jesus, and what God would have to be true in all His people.

Now, what is the effect of seeing Jesus? "We are changed as by the same image from glory to glory." "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have obeyed in my presence," etc. The true victory God has gained for us. He has provided the great things, and will He not care for the little ones? He has made us new creatures in Christ Jesus by His Spirit, and will He not keep us by His power? Power does not depend upon prophets or apostles. When they were here, they were made by Him channels to convey blessing; but now they are gone, God can, and will work otherwise. Strength never depended on man. Paul and Peter, and others, were the vessels through which the heavenly grace reached the people; but they were not the source of it. Servants God had before the apostles appeared, and He has them now they have disappeared. He will, at all times, provide for His own people. In the millennium, it will be blessing come down from heaven to the earth; Christ over the people, and Satan not there. But what keeps me now, is the power of God in grace who has united me to a living Christ above by His Spirit; and my strength depends upon Him, and not upon man at all. It is by looking at Jesus, and not Paul, I am strengthened. Man is very often the thing that charms, but he cannot give strength. Paul says, "as ye have obeyed not only in my presence, but much more in my absence." They were feeding on Jesus, and that gave them power to obey, and it delighted Paul; he did not want to set himself up, he wanted Jesus to be glorified in them; and the more sensibly the Holy Ghost keeps us in the love of Christ, the stronger shall we

become. That is the energy to lift us up; all other power is unavailing. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," and do not give a false expression of the grave conflict you have entered on.

You, not Paul only, must fight. That is your business, "for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of His good pleasure."

As a Christian is occupied with Christ before God, the more will he walk according to the pattern of the true servant, and the more perfectly will he exhibit the character of the heavenly man. (Php_2:16-17.) What a faithful follower of the Lord Jesus Paul was! It is beautiful to see the sympathy of his heart and the forgetfulness of himself: he lost sight altogether of his apostleship, if I may so say, in the delight he had in getting upon common ground with the Lord's people. To the Corinthians and Galatians he could say, an apostle of Jesus Christ; but to the Philippians he says, "the servant." He was so filled with what he had in common with them, in a risen Jesus, that he did not want a place of honour down here; and it was this joy that he wished to see in the Philippians: "I joy and rejoice with you all: for the same cause also do ye joy," etc. It delighted Paul to get the people with himself, in a place above the world's temptations, and their only safety was to be kept in nearness to Jesus. The rejoicing in Him dulls every other joy.

Php_2:19-24. There is something very lovely to see how regardless of self Paul was. He could give up Timothy, who was to him as a son of his own heart; he was above himself, and so he could let go the one who was most dear to him, if he could but get good news of those he was so anxious to serve; and he was ready to go and help them himself when the Lord made the way. "Yet I supposed it necessary," etc. (Php_2:25-30.) Of Epaphroditus we do not hear save in this epistle; but Paul was rejoiced to put himself upon a common level with him. "My brother, companion in labour, and fellow-soldier; but your messenger, and him that ministers to my wants." How pleasant it was to Paul to have fellowship with those who were true-hearted to Christ, and how ready always to acknowledge any service done unto Him, as done unto himself! What I see in this is — we ought to cultivate a spirit of fellowship with all those who are in heart servants of Christ, and to rise above the little marks that distinguish them in either station or gift. If I am seeing them as they are in Christ, I am looking at them in the living power of the true servant. If my eye is fixed on Jesus, I shall learn not only what He came down from, but what He is gone up to, and it is for me. God grant that our ways down here may yield some, little fragrance of Him!

It is now no question of acquiring dignity. I cannot rise higher than I am; and, in a way, I cannot think too highly of what I am. I belong to the risen Jesus at God's right hand. I am united to the glorified One in heaven, a member of His body: this settles every question of honour; and the more I am occupied with my place and portion in Christ, the more I shall be guarded against seeking honour for self; the more I am entering into the glory given me in my risen Lord, the more I shall be lifted above self-exaltation. The Lord grant our hearts may be kept above self-seeking, resting in Jesus, and may our ways be to His glory. God will keep a register of all our works, but not of our sins: blessed be His name, He has promised not to remember them. He will keep no record to the shame or hurt of His people.

Vol 03 - New Testament Synonyms.

New Testament Synonyms.

No. 2

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Teknon, huios, pais, paidion, teknion.

Teknon appears to me, as applied to Christians, to set forth the family-name towards God; huios the character of the standing before the world. The latter therefore is rather the term of dignity and privilege, as contrasted (see Galatians 4:6-7) with the servant or slave under the law (the heir, in his nonage, being nepios, "infant," no better in law,) the former is the expression of the nearest relationship to God, as really born of Him. Hence it would be well uniformly to distinguish, rendering the one always "child," and the other "son." This is often done in the Authorised Version, but not as thoroughly as might have been. Thus, passing over cases of a more natural kind, parables, etc., in John 1:12, and John 3:1-2, the English reader should understand not "sons," but children. In the Authorised Version there is much confusion of the two meanings under huios. Nevertheless, they are kept distinct in Romans 8:1-39 where there is an interesting example of both words rightly rendered.

Pais, again; though often used for a young person, male or female, is more vague, and is very frequently employed for a "servant," as in Matthew 8:6; Matthew 8:8; Matthew 8:13; Luke 1:54; Luke 1:69, Luke 12:45, Luke 15:26. It is evident, I think, that the latter is the only right rendering of Acts 3:13; Acts 3:26; Acts 4:27; Acts 4:30, as it clearly is of Acts 4:25. There is admirable order in the unfolding of the testimony to the Lord in the Acts. Peter's preaching does not go beyond the Messiahship of Jesus, and hence views Him as the holy servant of God; though, of course, he well knew and believed Him to be the Son of God. Stephen goes a step farther, and bears witness to Him as the exalted Son of man. Paul preached, straightway Jesus in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God: If Acts 8:37 be cited as marring the symmetry of this, it ought to be known that the entire verse is wanting in the Alexandrian, Vatican, and Parisian MSS., of first-rate authority, not to speak of sixty more of inferior antiquity and worth, the best copies of the Vulgate, the Coptic, the Sahidic, the Syriac (save with asterisk in Syr. Pol.), with the Æthiopic. The Laudian Greek-Latin MS. (of the seventh century, according to Wetstein), and about twenty more support it, though with singular variation; also the Armenian Version, and others of no great account. I am aware that Irenæus (Contra Hæres; Lib. 3:) is cited in favour of its insertion; and certainly he does give substantially the same as the Vulgate text, though perhaps in better Greek. But that little stress can be laid on this appears to me manifest, if we compare his citation of Acts 9:20, in the following section. He may have depended for both on his memory. On the whole, I cannot doubt but that the great majority of the ablest critics are right in rejecting the verse.

As to the difference between paidion and teknon, in their spiritual application in 1 John 2:1-29, nothing can be clearer. Both have the diminutive form, as expressive of endearment; but the teknia throughout, mean the entire family of God addressed, and embrace fathers, young men, and paidia, i.e., babes, or the least ripe in experience of that family. Hence, as has been often observed, when all are meant, paidia is employed, as in 1 John 2:1; 1 John 2:12; 1 John 2:28; 1 John 3:7; 1 John 3:18; 1 John 4:4; 1 John 5:21. The distinctive use of paidia for what we may call the infants of God's family, appears only in 1 John 2:13; 1 John 2:18. Elsewhere the word is used generally as in John 21:5; but this or any other use of it, in no way weakens its special bearing in 1 John 2:1-29. The reader may conceive what confusion is introduced by those, like Alford, who take paidia, no less than teknia, as designative of all Christians. Besides its doctrinal moment, the distinction is important critically; for, in my judgement, this is one of those cases where very strong internal evidence turns the scale of scanty external testimony in favour of grapho for egrapsa, in the last clause of verse 13.

Vol 03 - Dr. M'Neile on Joh_7:39.

Dr. M'Neile on John 7:39.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, June 1860.

(1st. Edition, June [03 1860 094])

Sir,

I have long thought that the doctrine which denies to the saints of God, since our Lord's death and resurrection, any special blessing beyond what was previously enjoyed, is not only untenable in itself, but also mischievous in its tendency.

Of all the attempts which have been made to uphold this error, I have met with none so preposterous as that of the well-known Canon of Chester, Dr. M'Neile, at a recent and numerous clerical meeting in Lancashire. The Dr. delivered an address with the purpose of reconciling Psalms 51:11, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me," with John 7:39, "The Holy Ghost was not yet [given]." This he endeavoured to effect by assigning to the latter passage the meaning that, "during the incarnation of Christ, the Spirit was imparted to Him exclusively. This would account for the promise He gave to His disciples that the Spirit should be bestowed on them when He departed, and for the advantage He said they would receive in consequence of His leaving them. Thus, as it appeared to him, it was that 'the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.'" Dr. M'N. had before stated his disagreement with the interpretations. "The Holy Ghost was not yet working," "the Holy Ghost was not yet endowed with His miraculous powers," "the Holy Ghost in His sanctifying influences was not yet given." Here we agree with him; for these notions are vain and groundless. If he had said that the Holy Ghost had personally come to dwell in Christ, as He had never done in man before, and that on Christ's departure, He had been in like manner poured out upon believers at and since Pentecost, we must also agree. But his view seems to be that, whereas the Holy Ghost had been given to men under the Old Testament, He was not so given during the life of our Lord. "During the incarnation of Christ the Spirit was imparted to Him exclusively" In other words, the Canon evidently believes the Holy Ghost to have been no longer given to men during the time that the Lord was here below. Hence it follows that what David so earnestly deprecates as a chastening for his sin, viz., the removal from him of the Holy Spirit, became the universal condition of men when the Son of God was born in this world! According to his scheme, that blessed event must have proved, instead of a source of increased light and joy, the occasion of the greatest spiritual darkness and sorrow. The deluge itself, on this absurd view, had not been such a calamity to mankind.

How different is the pictured drawn by our Lord Himself of the then position of His disciples. "Blessed," He says, "are the eyes which see the things that ye see. For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." (Luke 10:23-24.) Surely it will not be said that it was to mere outward seeing and hearing that the Lord attached this blessedness.

This He elsewhere otherwise describes and contrasts with the intelligent apprehension of the disciples, "because they seeing, see not, and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear."

It was clearly a superiority of real soul-blessedness, as well as of outward privilege, which the Lord spoke of. But could this be the portion of the disciples, if the Holy Spirit, imparted before Christ's coming, had been absorbed into His sole person? For the mere presence of Christ with them, without the action of the Holy Spirit, would, indeed, have been a decrease rather than an accession of spiritual blessing.

Does Dr. M'Neile believe that the disciples (Judas of course excepted) were really children of God? Does he deny that those who then believed in Him were born of God — born of water and of the Spirit? Does he mean that the "good tidings of great joy" were to consist in the total absence of the Spirit's gracious dealing with the souls of men? If this be not his thought, it appears to me that his argument is null and his statement without meaning; if it be, the case is yet worse.

The fact is, as Scripture makes plain, God had from the beginning of the world been converting souls to Himself through the faith of the Saviour. Assuredly the epoch of our Lord's life and ministry was no exception. Of this the gospels furnish abundant proofs, which undeniably could only be accounted for by the effectual operation of the Holy Ghost. Spiritual regeneration is a truth common to all dispensations. There may be a greater ingathering at one time than another, but at no period can this be save by the Spirit, who quickens souls through the word of God that reveals Christ to them. Is it really conceived by the Canon of Chester that all this was suspended during the lifetime of the Lord Jesus, (save the exclusive indwelling of the Spirit in Him,) only to recommence with men after His departure? Wherever does this gentleman find such serious difficulty? And why does he gravely propound such a distressing idea? It is because he denies the peculiar standing of the saints since Pentecost! Hence his violent effort to escape the plain statement, that the Holy Ghost was not yet given (i.e., in the blessed and unprecedented way which followed our Lord's ascension.) "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." In other words, that (in addition to the everlasting life which, as believing on Him, they already possessed through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit,) the disciples should, in consequence of His death and glorification, receive the Holy Ghost in a new and special manner; or rather, I would say, receive not His gifts or effects only, but, for the first time, Himself. They were already born again of Him, even as the saints had been in Old Testament times; NOW they should, besides, receive not merely life more abundantly in Christ risen, but the personal presence of the Spirit sent down from heaven to be in and with them. This same truth is presented often and in various forms throughout the Epistles, and very clearly in John 14:1-31; John 15:1-27; John 16:1-33.

For this it was expedient that Christ should go away. It was an immense privilege over and above what the disciples had enjoyed during Christ's life, and still more above what any saint had possessed before Christ. G.W.G.

To the Editor of the Bible Treasury.

P.S. — To many readers of the Bible Treasury it will be a new and strange thing to hear that Dr. M'N., in a work published some years ago, under the title of "The Church and the Churches," sought to turn aside the force of Matthew 11:11, by applying the "least in the kingdom of heaven" to Christ! He, evidently not knowing that the greater part of the New Testament could be cited to the same end, supposed that this was the main foundation for the claim of peculiar privileges for the present dispensation, and therefore set himself with extraordinary zeal to destroy the stronghold, as he thought, of that error. For it is plain enough that, interpreted according to its obvious meaning, this scripture predicates a higher place of the least Christian than God was pleased to give John the Baptist, 1:e., the highest under the old economy and up to the eve of the new dispensation. But, such a thought being assumed to be false, some other turn must be given to the passage. Is it not solemn to see how tradition habitually nullifies, as far as it can, the word of God? and, what is worse, to see how error persevered in, notwithstanding adequate light, ever tends to lower the glory of Christ? The truth is, that the kingdom of heaven was not set up till Christ went to heaven, and therefore cannot refer to His humiliation. Further, it would be more true to say, considering who HE was, that the kingdom was in Him, than that He was in the kingdom. But to make Christ the "least in the kingdom" is at once foolish and irreverent; and the end (viz., the denial of the special blessedness of the saints since Pentecost) is only less evil than the means. It is not surprising that he who misunderstood the "one body" then, should now be in like error as to the "one Spirit."

Vol 03 - Correspondence.

Correspondence.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, January 1861.

(1st. Edition, January [03 1861 207])

Isaiah 53:11; Daniel 12:3.

(To the Editor of the Bible Treasury)

The writer on Daniel in the Bible Treasury of this month objects, and I think correctly, to the generally received idea that, in Isaiah 53:11, "by his knowledge" means, by the knowledge of him.

On Consulting the Englishman's Hebrew Concordance, I find the precise form of the Hebrew word occurs only in one other place: "By his knowledge the depths," etc., (Proverbs 3:20,) clearly by God's knowledge. "By his knowledge," (Isaiah 53:11,) I take to be Christ's knowledge of God. (Comp. Matthew 11:27; John 1:18; John 3:13-19; John 17:3-26; 1 John 5:20, etc.)

The Son is the exponent of the Father. All was an enigma, so to speak, until He came, who uttered things kept secret from the foundation of the world. Now that God desired mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. (Hosea 6:6.) He that teacheth man knowledge. (Psalms 94:10.) I cannot concur with the writer in altering "shall justify" for "instructing in righteousness." The word translated "justify" occurs in that precise form of the verb only in Exodus 23:7 : "I will not justify the wicked;" 1:e., God will not make or pronounce a wicked man a just man. Again, "God forbid that I should justify you;" (Job 27:5;) 1:e., acknowledge you to be just in what you have spoken. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." (Isaiah 53:11.)

God is now known as the God that justifieth the ungodly. He is the just God and the Saviour, just and the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus; for He gives the ungodly, the poor sinner, a righteousness, and in doing so demonstrates His own righteousness. (Romans 3:21-26.) Thus grace reigns through righteousness. (Romans 5:21.)

December. R.S.

If R.S. had more fully weighed the context of the scriptures in question, he would have found the key with far more certainty than the mere occurrence of the word, indicated by a concordance, can afford. Everyone who consults a Hebrew lexicon may see that the usual, regular meaning of tsadaq is "justify;" but this sense, even where it, or something like it, might be given in English, is susceptible of very considerable modification according to the proposition in which it occurs. Hence it is even used for cleansing the sanctuary in Daniel 8:14. And I find that Gesenius (in voce) takes the word substantially as I do, in the two passages we are discussing. "Justum s. probum, pium reddidit aliquem, exemplo et doctrinâ. Indeed, R.S.'s admission, that "by his knowledge" means Christ's own knowledge of God, seems to me decisive of the question. He might teach

many thereby; but how could knowledge "justify?" This would be strange doctrine. "To instruct in righteousness", restores the balance. Still plainer is Daniel 12:1-13. We can understand Christ justifying by His blood, by His obedience, though not by His knowledge; but how human teachers could "justify " anyone, is to me an enigma. Here the Authorised Version is to my mind much nearer the truth; for there "justify" is dropped for "turn to righteousness." But I have already given reason enough in the "Remarks" for preferring instruct in righteousness. For the object here is "the many," not many; and this phrase is a standing one in our prophet for the apostate mass in Israel, who may be instructed in, but assuredly are not turned to, righteousness. This, the necessary meaning in Daniel 12:1-13, makes an excellent and consistent sense in Isaiah 53:1-12.

Vol 03 - Scripture Queries and Answers.

Scripture Queries and Answers.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, May 1860.

(1st. Edition, May [03 1860 080])

Q. John 1:16. Grace for grace?

A. There are two ways of interpreting this passage; both, however, amount to grace answering to grace. The question is, in what sense does grace answer grace? Either

(1) by grace succeeding to grace — one grace, so to speak, following another — grace upon grace; or

(2) grace in the effect answering to, 1:e., equalling in quality, the grace in the cause — grace in the stream answering to grace in the fountain.

Thus in Christ there is infinite fullness; and what we receive out of that fullness is abundant, precious, lasting, divine, heavenly, according to those qualities which exists in the source.

The Lord will give grace and glory. (Psalms 84:1-12.) But the gift of glory is one form of grace. To what, then, does an inheritance of glory answer? To His glory. (See Php_3:21; 1 John 3:2.) Again, the value of a promise depends upon the power and faithfulness of the party that promises, just as the value of a banknote depends upon the credit of the bank that issued it. Why do men prefer a Bank of England note to a provincial banknote? Because they have more confidence in the Bank of England than in a country bank.

Correspondence.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, July 1860.

(1st. Edition, July [03 1860 111])

(See Scripture Queries and Answers, [03:064])

[03:112] The Editor agrees with G.H.L. that the believing Gentile can now claim in principle all the benefits of Christ's redemption, though he may not have to be delivered from the law like the Jew, who was in bondage to it. All the saints are equally free. The death of Christ puts all on the same ground, both as to sin and as to grace.

Fragments.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, August 1860.

(1st. Edition, August [03 1860 114])

Holiness is separation to God from evil. The new nature, besides its intrinsic character as being of God, has a positive object and that is God in Christ.

This is the true character of the Church for worship in its full sense: it remembers the cross, it worships (the world left out, and all known in heaven before God).

We cannot walk out of darkness but by walking in the light, that is, with God;. and God is love: and were He not, we could not walk there. [J. N. Darby]

Fragments Gathered Up.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, November 1860.

(1st. Edition, November [03 1860 176])

The great question of the day is, whether God is love, or love is God.

Vol 03 - Poetry.

Poetry.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, March 1860.

(1st. Edition, March [03 1860 048])

Oh! that my bark were safe on shore,
Lodged in the port where Jesus is;
Where neither winds nor waters roar,
And all the tides are tides of bliss. But while my floating bark shall ride
And beat on life's tempestuous sea,
My dang'rous course may Jesus guide,
May He my constant pilot be!
Though surges swell as mountains high —
Though death and dangers threaten me —
Though sleep may seem to close Thine eye,
Stay faithless fear from waking Thee. On the dark wave may I behold
Thy Spirit form, my Lord Most High.
And with these words my heart enfold,
"Be not afraid; 'tis I! 'tis I!"
Thus have I found that blessed shore —
That port whose titles are only bliss;
And though the winds and waters roar,
Know Him, my pilot and my peace.

Vol 03 - Scripture Queries and Answers.

Scripture Queries and Answers.

Bible Treasury, Volume 3, 2nd Edition, May 1860.

(1st. Edition, May [03 1860 080])

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